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University

Integrating art production and economic development in the Kimberley

NATIONAL SURVEY OF REMOTE ABORIGINAL AND
TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ARTISTS

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National Survey of Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Artists

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

An overarching purpose of the present study is to investigate and analyse the extent to which art and cultural production that has market potential can provide a viable pathway towards economic empowerment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in remote towns, settlements and outstations across the Kimberley region of Western Australia. The present study is a part of a wider project – a National Survey of Remote Indigenous Artists. The objective of the National Survey is to produce a nationally representative database on how individual Indigenous artists in remote Australia establish, maintain and develop their professional art practice. The Kimberley region of northern Western Australia is the first region to be included in the database.

MOTIVATION

This study is motivated by two basic propositions:

- Production of art and cultural services has the potential to make a substantial contribution to the economic sustainability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in remote Australia.
- To understand how to design policy strategies in this area, basic data are needed about individual art practice on the ground. We have this information for practising professional artists working in urban and regional Australia; the present project is the first opportunity to collect the same policy-relevant data for Indigenous artists working in remote and very remote areas.

THE KIMBERLEY SURVEY

The survey was implemented in the Kimberley region in 2015-2016. Taking into account data from the 2011 Census and from the ABS's National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) of 2014-15, we calculate the minimum sample size needed for this study at $n=93$ at a confidence level of 95 percent and a margin of error of 10 percent. In fact in the survey a total sample size of 112 completed responses was achieved.

The survey investigated:

- the range of cultural-economic activities that Kimberley artists undertake or have undertaken;
- the pathways for acquiring the knowledge and skills (the cultural capital) to become an artist in remote areas of the Kimberley;
- respondents' current economic engagement with arts and cultural production;
- aspects of professional creative art practice in the region; and
- the role of cultural production in sustainable community development.

For the purposes of this study, cultural-economic activities were classified into three groups, as follows:

- *Creative artistic cultural activities*
 - Painting, printmaking, sculpting, carving, weaving, making textiles, ceramics, glass, jewellery, photography (visual artists making original visual art works in any medium or form)
 - Performing (actors, dancers, musicians and other performance artists)
 - Composing or choreographing (composers and choreographers)
 - Writing or storytelling (authors)
 - Making film, television, audio or multimedia work (filmmakers and multimedia artists)
- *Cultural maintenance activities*

- Participating in ceremonies
- Caring for country
- Interpreting, translating or cross-cultural consulting
- Cultural archiving, record keeping
- Serving on a cultural board, committee or council (cultural governance)
- Teaching others in arts and culture (arts and cultural educators)
- *Applied cultural activities*
 - Fishing, hunting, gathering or preparing bush food
 - Making Indigenous medicines or cosmetics or providing Indigenous health services
 - Arts management
 - Arts administration
 - Providing cultural tourism services.

Note that in tabulating the data from the survey in this Report we have combined the second and third of these categories into a single group (11 activities) under the heading “arts- and culture-related activities”.

RANGE OF ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN

Artists in the Kimberley have undertaken a wide range of cultural-economic activities during their lifetime. The visual arts is the most widespread creative artform in the region, with almost 90 percent of respondents having been involved in producing visual art at some point in their lives, and 70 percent currently earning income from this source. The performing arts are also important, with two-thirds of the Kimberley artists having performed music, dance or theatre and one-third currently being paid to do so.

Cultural maintenance activities, particularly caring for country, participating in ceremonies, and arts and cultural education, have featured prominently in the lives of artists. Other cultural activities such as fishing, hunting, making Indigenous medicines, and providing Indigenous health services are pursued by a majority of cultural practitioners in the Kimberley, but few earn income from these sources.

PATHWAYS TO KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL ACQUISITION

In identifying the pathways by which artists have acquired their cultural capital, we make a distinction between cultural knowledge pathways and industry skills pathways. The survey results show clearly the critical role that family members, elders and other community members play in transmitting knowledge and inculcating creative skills.

Virtually every respondent nominated learning from family and other community members as one of the ways through which their cultural knowledge was acquired, with a majority identifying this as the most important pathway. Of particular interest is the importance of being on country as a source of cultural knowledge. After family transmission noted above, being on country is the second most important pathway for acquiring knowledge. In regard to skills acquisition, observing or participating with a family member, learning on the job, and learning from friends and other community members together comprise the “Big Three” as the most important pathways for acquiring skills in the arts industries in the region.

FORMAL EDUCATION

Almost a quarter of artists in the Kimberley have had no schooling, a third completed between Year 10 and 12 or their equivalents, 27 percent completed a diploma or certificate, and only a handful earned bachelor or postgraduate degrees. Does an artist’s formal education lead to a higher income? Our results suggest that success in earning an income from creative artistic activity is likely to be determined more by the sorts of

non-formal skill-acquisition pathways discussed earlier than by formal school and post-school education. On the other hand, being able to find employment of any sort in the labour market outside the arts is importantly dependent on possessing the necessary literacy and numeracy skills that formal education provides.

CURRENT ECONOMIC ENGAGEMENT WITH CULTURAL PRODUCTION

In the creative arts, the largest proportion of artists in the Kimberley who are currently engaged in cultural production are producing visual art (almost 90 percent). Among the cultural maintenance activities, caring for country is the most widely practised. Importantly, our results show that there is a significant pool of unutilised skills in the region – these are those artists with experience in particular activities who are currently not engaged in these activities. This points to opportunities for the expansion of the arts and cultural sector in the region, as the cultural and human capital are already there.

How many of those currently engaged in the various activities are being paid for it? Within the creative arts, a majority of those working in the visual and performing arts are being paid, whereas more than half the authors are not being paid. In regard to cultural maintenance activities, a majority of the interpreting, translating or cultural governance work that Aboriginal artists in the Kimberley perform is volunteered, with fewer than half of these respondents being paid. Activities such as caring for country, fishing and gathering food, making medicines, and providing Indigenous health services are done mostly for the family, self-use and to provide wider community benefits, and are rarely paid.

For the majority of artists receiving income from one or more of the creative activities, this income is only incidental. Indeed creative activities provide the main income for only about 30 percent of artists and the remainder (about one-quarter of artists) receive it as extra income. A similar pattern is evident for arts- and culture-related activities, with about half of paid artists on average receiving only incidental income from these sources. Specific activities that supply the main income of a majority of artists engaged in them include those which offer the possibility of a full-time or part-time job, such as with a media company, an art centre or other organisation.

Turning to time allocations, we find that a majority of artists in the Kimberley spend between one full day per week and one full day per month on arts- and culture-related activities such as translation, cross-cultural consulting, caring for country, arts administration or cultural tourism. In terms of the creative artistic activities, the artists in the region choose a diversity of time allocation strategies, with about one-fifth working in the creative arts on a full-time basis, about one-third spending between one and three days per week, and almost a half spending between one full day per month to a few full days per year working in this area on average.

SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF CREATIVE ARTS PRACTICE

In the survey we asked respondents to identify the artistic occupation in which they are currently most engaged, in terms of time. We call this activity the artist's principal artistic occupation (PAO). We then grouped respondents according to their PAO into visual artists and performers. For other PAOs, including authors, film-makers and multimedia artists, our sample sizes were too small to allow separate analysis.

Some of the results from the more detailed analysis of the data by PAO are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Population size: We estimate that there are between about 2.5 and 3.1 thousand creative artists in the Kimberley.

Length of experience: Just over half of respondents have been practising their art for more than 20 years; the data suggest that most artists have been practising their art for all or most of their adult lives.

Working space: For both visual and performing artists, working at home or at a family member's home is common. The importance of community-based art centres in providing a place for visual artists to work is clear. About half of performing artists use a dedicated studio space. One-third of visual artists and almost a half of performers work on country from time to time.

Satisfaction with work time: About half of the visual artists in the survey indicated that they were happy to continue with the amount of work that they currently do; by contrast, the great majority of performers would like to be working more at their PAO, but cannot do so – an important obstacle for these artists is a lack of opportunities to perform.

Career management: Most artists in the Kimberley benefit from having their work managed by an art centre or similar non-commercial organisation, and regard this as having had a positive impact on their work; the small number managed on a commercial basis were less satisfied with their situation.

Capital cities and overseas exposure: Around one-third of artists have had their work exposed overseas, and two-thirds have experienced capital cities exposure – respondents ranked the effects of both as strongly positive on their artistic career.

Technology: About 80 percent of visual artists in our sample do not use any of the common forms of technology in their artistic work; performing artists such as musicians utilise technologies in their practice more often, mostly using equipment with sound capturing and reproducing capabilities.

Grants: The majority of artists in our sample did not apply for a grant last year. Of those who did apply, most did not do so themselves – someone else applied on their behalf (most common among performing artists) or an organisation applied on behalf of a group (most common among visual artists).

Copyright: The proportion of Aboriginal visual artists in remote areas of the Kimberley whose copyright has been known to have been infringed is 1 percent, a significantly lower number than the proportion of all visual artists working Australia-wide; organisations representing these have been very active in ensuring copyright protection of the artworks and educating their artists about copyright issues. On the other hand, almost 40 percent of performing artists believed that some unauthorised use of their creative work had occurred.

FINANCIAL RESULTS

Despite the difficulties of collecting financial information in surveys, we were able to collect reasonably accurate income data either through self-reporting or through an organisation such as an art centre which maintained individual sales records or an organisation acting as an employer. In summary, we found that on average visual artists and performers earned \$8.1 thousand and \$9.5 thousand respectively from their creative artistic activities, and \$4.1 thousand and \$13.4 thousand respectively from their engagement in arts- and culture-related activities. When all sources are combined, the average annual total incomes amounted to \$23.2 thousand for visual artists, \$32.7 thousand for performing artists and \$27.8 thousand for all artists in the Kimberley. These incomes are significantly less than those for all artists Australia-wide – for example, the average total income of Australian professional artists in 2007-08 was \$41.2 thousand.

Nevertheless it appears that artists in the Kimberley may be better off on average than the rest of the Indigenous population of the region; our estimate of the median annual income of artists in the Kimberley (\$25 thousand) is significantly higher than the median personal income for all Indigenous people in the region (\$15.7 thousand) as derived from 2011 ABS Census data. This is a significant difference; given the regional context and the realities of working remotely, it reinforces our proposition that working in the arts and cultural sector can provide an important means toward economic empowerment for Indigenous people in the Kimberley.

ROLE OF CULTURE IN SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

In the survey we sought the opinions and attitudes of artists themselves as to the importance of the arts to sustainable community development, particularly in regard to:

- engagement of young people in art and cultural production
- infrastructure availability
- role of cultural tourism
- educational aspects

First, respondents agreed very strongly that artistic activities such as painting, music, dance and writing can provide jobs and incomes for young people in their community. For cultural maintenance activities, the employment and revenue-generating potential was seen as being almost as strong.

Second, in regard to infrastructure, there was virtually unanimous endorsement of the economic importance of art centres. There would appear to be scope for further infrastructure development in some remote communities.

Third, although cultural tourism exists in the Kimberley, the industry remains relatively underdeveloped. Artists in our survey expressed very strong agreement that cultural tourism can bring jobs and incomes to the community.

Finally in regard to education and training as avenues for economic and cultural development, respondents endorsed the importance of bilingual education in school. In a post-school context, the value of arts-practice workshops in providing people in the community with the skills to do more artistic activities was supported by almost all respondents.

When looking at the longer term, we can draw the inference from the views artists expressed that while the development of the art economy in the Kimberley has significant potential to contribute to community sustainability, the market on its own will be insufficient. The way is open for new targeted public- and private-sector programs specifically designed to support the production of cultural goods and services by Indigenous artists across all art forms in the Kimberley.

POLICY ISSUES ARISING FROM THIS STUDY

This survey has provided data that can contribute to evidence-based policy making not only specifically for the Kimberley but also in a wider State and national context. Some relevant issues are the following:

Indigenous cultural capital – an unrealised resource: The survey data indicate the significant numbers of artists who are able and willing to work at cultural production but unable for various reasons to do so.

Integration of economic, social and cultural development: This study has clearly demonstrated the pervasive nature of cultural engagement among the population of cultural practitioners in the Kimberley; economic development through expansion of art and cultural production goes hand in hand with social development, flowing from the well-recognised benefits of the arts to community life and social cohesion. Development strategies need to comprehend the holistic nature of sustainability when applied to remote communities.

Opportunities for small-business development: Our data demonstrate that artists in the Kimberley have skills and experience in a variety of areas relevant to small business operations. Policy can facilitate small business establishment and development by providing support services, investment advice, assistance with finance, and so on.

Cultural maintenance: An essential aspect of sustainability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture is to ensure that mechanisms for cultural maintenance are protected and encouraged; without cultural maintenance there is no creative arts. Moreover cultural maintenance activities offer substantial economic benefits to Indigenous people who engage in them.

Training for the arts and cultural sector: Training programs provided in the region need to acknowledge the “Big Three” educational pathways: observing/participating with a family member; learning on the job (self-learning); and learning from friends and other community members. Arts-practice workshops have also been successful.

Access to country: The survey data underline the importance of access to country for Indigenous people, as a source of cultural knowledge and art materials and as a place for creative inspiration and practice.

Role of art centres: Our data indicate clearly the important role that art centres play in providing facilities, supporting artists and supplying other services to their communities. Art centres have had a significant influence on the development of the visual art economy in the Kimberley, and artists in communities which currently do not have an art centre recognise the benefits that might accrue if such a centre were to be established in their community.

Need for further infrastructure and services: For art forms other than the visual arts, expansion of activity is constrained in many cases by the lack of infrastructure to support artistic work. In the case of music, for example, some communities could benefit from the establishment of studio space and other facilities, in particular to encourage the work of young and emerging musicians.

Remoteness issues: The arts and cultural sector has some advantages in supporting economic development in remote Indigenous communities: there is a large pool of people in these communities with relevant experience who do not need to be trained to do these jobs; the infrastructure required to support this sector is relatively small; and jobs in the arts and cultural sector allow for flexibility to address issues of seasonality, limited access and unstable markets that is a necessary condition of remote production.

Cultural tourism: The data in this Report point to possibilities for expansion of cultural tourism in the Kimberley, an area that offers considerable economic potential either independently or in association with environmental tourism.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study provide some pointers for the formulation of regional arts and culture development strategies for the Kimberley. Three particular aspects can be highlighted.

Firstly, production, distribution and marketing of cultural product in any context need to be supported at all stages in the supply chain by adequate infrastructure. Visual artists who are fortunate enough to be based in communities where an art centre has been established are well supplied with support through the centres, which in most cases receive Government funding. Performing artists on the other hand do not have access to widely available facilities to assist in the development of their creative work. They need the sorts of infrastructure facilities that can make a difference, especially for young people who have the potential to develop their musical skills and perhaps embark on a musical career.

Secondly, the distribution and marketing components of the value chain need to be well established if work produced is to find an appropriate market. To a large extent market development takes place in response to commercial incentives, but there is a role for judicious policy intervention, for example through seed-funding for start-up creative businesses, provision of market intelligence and so on.

Thirdly, the role of cultural tourism as a potential revenue source to support art and cultural production in the Kimberley remains to be further explored. Our survey found a strong belief amongst artists that tourists could bring jobs and incomes to their communities. They also acknowledged unanimously that tourists should visit their communities in order to experience their culture at first hand.

Overall, the prospect for expanding the role of art and cultural production as a means for generating incomes and jobs in remote communities, especially for young people, appears to be viewed favourably by artists in the Kimberley region. The results of our work support moves to integrate the arts and culture more

effectively into regional development strategies, as a source of both economic and cultural empowerment for Indigenous communities.

National Survey of Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Artists

Integrating art production and economic development in the Kimberley

1. BACKGROUND

Ensuring the sustainability of Indigenous communities in remote and very remote regions of Australia underlies a number of government policies and initiatives in efforts to improve the livelihoods of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Nevertheless many problems and challenges remain: employment prospects for community members, especially the younger generation, tend to be sparse; excessive welfare dependency can be an issue; and difficulties associated with social dislocation often affect community life. In circumstances where these problems arise, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may face a future characterised by lack of economic opportunity on the one hand, and challenges in maintaining traditional cultural values on the other.

An overarching purpose of the present study is to investigate and analyse the extent to which art and cultural production that has market potential can provide a viable pathway towards economic empowerment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in remote towns, settlements and outstations across the Kimberley region of Western Australia. These are areas where cultural production, and the support services associated with it, has the potential to be one of the most important means for providing a sustainable and culturally-relevant livelihood for Indigenous people in the region. Cultural production is taken to include:

- creative artistic activities such as the visual and performing arts as well as artistic production in newer formats such as film and multimedia;
- cultural maintenance activities such as caring for country and participating in ceremonies; and
- applied cultural activities such as making Indigenous medicines and providing tourism services.

Notwithstanding the wide range of cultural activities covered, the primary focus of this study is on the first of these forms of cultural production, i.e. the creative arts.

Indigenous Australians possess significant cultural skills and knowledge, and participate in a wide range of arts and cultural activities. These are the activities that allow Indigenous cultures to be maintained, developed and expressed, ensuring their continuation. They also encourage a strong sense of community identity. Yet surprisingly little is known about the conditions under which cultural production occurs in remote communities or about its economic and cultural outcomes. The contribution of cultural production to the economic sustainability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in remote Australia remains a poorly researched area, notwithstanding the significant contributions of several research projects that deal with issues of Indigenous artistic practice in various parts of Australia that have been undertaken in the past.¹ At present there are no reliable data on the economic circumstances of individual Indigenous cultural producers in contemporary Australia that we can turn to as a basis for addressing these sorts of questions at either a local or a national level.

In any context the making of art begins with the individual artist working alone or in collaboration with others. While information about the working circumstances of professional artists Australia-wide have been

¹ For example Jon Altman's work in Maningrida (Altman 1982; Cooke and Altman 1982) and his Review of the Aboriginal Art and Crafts Industry in the late 1980s (Altman 1989); the Canning Stock Route project 2007-2009 Ngurra Kuju Walyja (2014); several modules of the research undertaken under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Economies Project of the Cooperative Research Centre for Remote Economic Participation (CRC-REP 2015), including the Art Economies Project's data from the supply and demand sides of the primary market (Acker and Woodhead 2015a and 2015b); the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations' study *At The Heart of Art* (ORIC 2012); national-level data about Indigenous participation in selected forms of creative arts from the ABS National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) (ABS 2002, 2008, 2016).

collected on a regular basis since the 1980s,² there are no reliable or comprehensive data on the conditions under which individual cultural production occurs in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The present study is a part of a wider project designed to fill that gap – a nationwide survey of individual Indigenous artists working in remote areas in all forms of artistic and cultural production.

The Kimberley is the first region in which the survey has been implemented. The results presented in this Report provide an extensive range of data concerning the circumstances of remote Indigenous cultural production, participation and employment in the cultural industries in the Kimberley. Analysis of these results, as discussed later in this Report, provides essential information on which to base the formulation of strategies and policies to stimulate and develop sustainable, economically viable and culturally relevant employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians in the region.

The structure of the Report is as follows. To begin, Section 2 outlines the context within which art and cultural production in the Kimberley is placed – in particular, issues concerning the sustainability of remote Indigenous communities in the region have a bearing on the research questions to be investigated in this study. The objectives of the survey are outlined in Section 3. We discuss the identification of the target population for the study in Section 4, and in Section 5 we provide a detailed account of the sampling procedures and the methodologies of survey implementation. In the major central section of the Report (Section 6), results of the survey are presented and discussed, and some policy issues to which the survey findings are relevant are summarised in Section 7. We finish with some conclusions and recommendations in Section 8.

2. CONTEXT

Aboriginal outstations provide a range of social, cultural and health benefits to residents who are able to live on or close to their ancestral lands. Over the past four decades there has been debate about the viability of homeland and outstation communities because of their remoteness from mainstream markets and from employment and educational opportunities. At the same time a number of reports and studies have articulated the essential role of the homelands movement in allowing Indigenous people to live on their own country and to maintain their culture, law, ceremonies, songs and language.³

A basic premise of this study is that art and cultural production can be a source of economic development for remote communities at the same time as it maintains and enhances the practice and revitalisation of Indigenous cultural traditions and customs. Such a linkage between cultural and economic opportunity is made possible when artists are “living on country, maintaining their cultural traditions and creating art arising from cultural knowledge”.⁴

It should be noted that cultural production extends beyond the creative arts, in keeping with the all-encompassing sense of *culture* in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander life. So, for example, caring for country is a basic cultural practice that comes into play in land management and conservation projects such as those implemented under the *Working on Country* program. In this study we use the term “cultural practitioner” as well as “artist” to refer to individuals engaged in art and cultural production, as an acknowledgment of the broad-ranging cultural engagement of Indigenous people.

There have been many research studies, official reports and policy documents dealing with various aspects of the role of artistic production and cultural participation in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs. For example, much is known about the many benefits to communities resulting from participation in the arts,

² See the surveys and consequent economic studies of professional artists in Australia carried out by Professor David Throsby and colleagues at Macquarie University and published by the Australia Council: *The Artist in Australia Today* (1983), *When Are You Going to Get A Real Job?* (1989), *But What Do You Do For A Living?* (1994), *Don't Give Up Your Day Job* (2003) and *Do You Really Expect to Get Paid?* (2009); the next edition of the survey (2016) is presently underway.

³ See, for example, Australian Human Rights Commission (2015).

⁴ AHRC (2015: 130).

including improved health, social cohesion, school retention, crime reduction and so on.⁵ Likewise, peak organisations such as the Association of Arnhem, Northern and Kimberley Artists (ANKA)⁶ have compiled a range of evidence concerning the importance of the arts to remote communities and their ongoing development.⁷

Furthermore, no account of the development of the Indigenous art economy in remote Australia could ignore the crucial role played in the development of that economy by art centres. Collectively they have been a major force in facilitating the production and marketing of visual art and in some cases the performing arts, language revitalisation programs, cultural archiving and also tourism. They have provided employment and training grounds for Indigenous people⁸ and have often taken on community service functions not necessarily connected to the arts to support their artists and the wider community where such services simply would not be provided otherwise.⁹ They provide a space and facilities in which artists can work and they supply resources, infrastructure and administrative services to support art production and participation.

Despite the existing information about the art economy in remote Australia mentioned earlier, there are some significant gaps. In particular we lack objective data on how individual artists and cultural practitioners actually function in the art industry and in the broader regional and national economy. Thus, in regard to the Kimberley, this study asks a range of questions, including the following:

- what is the variety of specific arts and cultural practices that artists have engaged in and are currently engaged in?
- how do artists allocate their time between different arts and cultural practices?
- how much of their existing arts and cultural practice yields a financial return?
- what proportion of the incomes of cultural practitioners comes specifically from their creative artistic practice?
- what proportion of their time do artists spend on cultural maintenance activities?
- how do artists acquire their knowledge and skills?
- what are the mechanisms for cultural transmission?
- are there potential pathways for economic and cultural development in the Kimberley through facilitating, supporting and expanding individual cultural practice?

Answers to these questions will provide a wide range of information on which to base the formulation of immediate and longer-term strategies for linking economic and cultural development in the remote areas of the Kimberley.

3. THE SURVEY OBJECTIVES

As noted in the Introduction, this project forms a component of a National Survey of Remote Indigenous Artists. The objective of the National Survey is to produce a nationally representative database on how individual Indigenous artists in remote Australia establish, maintain and develop their professional art practice. This database aims to provide reliable data on how cultural knowledge and creative skills are accumulated and transmitted within and between generations in different remote regions of Australia and how individual Indigenous artists utilise their knowledge and skills to serve both cultural and economic purposes, while pursuing their artistic aspirations. The database is intended to cover all major remote regions of Indigenous art production in Australia and will be able to be updated over time to add further

⁵ See, for example, Vicki-Ann Ware (2004).

⁶ Formerly known as ANKAAA.

⁷ See *ANKA Arts Backbone*, various issues.

⁸ Acker and Congreve (2016).

⁹ Cooper et al. (2012); Petersen (2015).

information and account for changing conditions. The Kimberley region of northern Western Australia is the first region to be included in the database.

Overall, it is expected that the survey findings will inform:

- Indigenous individual artists and art and cultural businesses and organisations involved in the production, promotion and marketing of Indigenous art with regard to decision making in business operations and development.
- Indigenous individual artists and art and cultural businesses and organisations with regard to economic opportunities; the survey findings will enhance their knowledge about the ways in which cultural heritage can be used to achieve more sustainable economic futures.
- Government agencies and peak bodies in the arts and cultural sector about outcomes and the development of more targeted strategies to support Indigenous arts and cultural production in remote Australia.
- Policy decisions concerning economically viable and culturally relevant employment opportunities for Indigenous people residing in remote regions.

4. THE TARGET POPULATION

4.1 DEFINING THE POPULATION

The study region includes the following locations: Broome, Bidyadanga, Derby, Halls Creek, Fitzroy Crossing, Yiyili, Bawoorrooga, Warmun, Kalumburu, Kununurra, Wyndham and Balgo. Apart from the Broome area and the Kununurra town area, all of these locations are classified as ‘very remote’ in the 2011 ASGS Remoteness Structure. Broome and the Kununurra town are classified as ‘remote’.¹⁰ For the purpose of this survey, the boundaries of the study region coincide with the Kimberley Statistical Area Level 3 (SA3) boundaries¹¹ as defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

The target population in this study are adult Indigenous artists residing in the remote and very remote areas of the Kimberley region as defined above. The region is home to Aboriginal people of diverse languages and cultures that includes the Balanggarra, Bardi, Jawi, Bunuba, Dambimangari, Wilinggin, Uunguu, Gooniyandi, Karajarri, Nyangumarta, Miriuwung Gajerrong, Malarngowem, Ngarrawanji, Ngurrara, Noonkanbah, Nyikina Mangala, Wunambal Gaambera and Yawuru people.

The following requirements were introduced to determine eligibility for inclusion in the survey. Potential survey respondents were required to satisfy all three of the following criteria: (1) they had to be Indigenous adults (aged 15+); (2) they had to be residing in remote and very remote areas of the Kimberley region; and (3) they had to have had previous experience in at least one of the *creative artistic* activities, as defined below.

4.2 DEFINING REGIONAL CULTURAL PRODUCTION

Mapping of cultural-economic activities that contribute to art and cultural production in the Kimberley region was undertaken by the research team in July-August 2015. This mapping used as a basis the results of a similar mapping exercise of cultural-economic activities carried out by the present authors in the East Arnhem Land region in 2012-2014.¹² The East Arnhem Land mapping exercise allowed identification of the major cultural-economic activities being practised in remote areas, broadly classified into the following three

¹⁰ *Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) Volume 5 – Remoteness Areas*, July 2011 (cat. no. 1270.0.55.005). Note that throughout this Report the word “remote” strictly refers to “remote and very remote” unless otherwise indicated.

¹¹ Statistical Areas Level 3 (SA3s) are built from aggregations of whole Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2) boundaries to represent regions of between approximately 30,000 people and 130,000 people to cover the whole of Australia.

¹² Throsby and Petetskaya (2015).

categories (1) creative artistic activities; (2) cultural maintenance activities; and (3) applied cultural activities. The mapping that was completed in the Kimberley followed this classification and allowed identification of those cultural-economic activities that are relevant specifically to the arts and cultural sector in the Kimberley region. The activities identified (and corresponding occupations for the creative activities) are defined as follows:

- *Creative artistic cultural activities*
 - Painting, printmaking, sculpting, carving, weaving, making textiles, ceramics, glass, jewellery, photography (visual artists making original visual art works in any medium or form)
 - Performing (actors, dancers, musicians and other performance artists)
 - Composing or choreographing (composers and choreographers)
 - Writing or storytelling (authors)
 - Making film, television, audio or multimedia work (filmmakers and multimedia artists)
- *Cultural maintenance activities*
 - Participating in ceremonies
 - Caring for country
 - Interpreting, translating or cross-cultural consulting
 - Cultural archiving, record keeping
 - Serving on a cultural board, committee or council (cultural governance)
 - Teaching others in arts and culture (arts and cultural educators)
- *Applied cultural activities*
 - Fishing, hunting, gathering or preparing bush food
 - Making Indigenous medicines or cosmetics or providing Indigenous health services
 - Arts management
 - Arts administration
 - Providing cultural tourism services.

Note that in tabulating the data from the survey in this Report we have combined the second and third of these categories into a single group (11 activities) under the heading “arts- and culture-related activities”. All cultural-economic activities listed above can be interpreted with reference to standard industrial definitions as determined under the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) 2006 (Revision 2.0), as shown in Appendix 1.

5. SAMPLING AND SURVEY METHODOLOGY

5.1 DETERMINING SAMPLE SIZE

In this survey we have used the findings of the most recent National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) 2014-2015 that was released in 2016 to estimate how many Indigenous adults in the Kimberley participate in cultural production for economic purposes.

The 2014-15 NATSISS survey asked respondents whether in the 12 months before interview they had taken part in any of the following three creative artistic activities: (1) made Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander arts or crafts; (2) performed any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander music, dance, theatre; (3) written or told any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander stories. The NATSISS data show that 31.4 percent of Indigenous people aged 15 years or over in remote areas of Western Australia and 31.2 percent in very remote areas of Western

Australia had participated in at least one of the three creative artistic activities in 12 months during 2014-15. We can therefore assume that these percentages can be applied to Census data on the adult Indigenous population in the areas covered by our survey in order to estimate a lower bound on the number of cultural practitioners located in the region. The resulting calculations lead to an estimate of about 2,800 artists, as shown in Table 5.1. This total is likely to understate the true figure because our definition covers a wider range of creative artistic activities than are included in the NATSISS data and incorporates those who are experienced in a particular art form but who may not have practised it in the 12 months prior to participating in the NATSISS survey interview. Nevertheless, for the purposes of estimating appropriate sample sizes in our study, we can adopt the estimates from Table 5.1.

Taking these considerations into account, we calculate the minimum sample size needed for this study at $n=93$ at a confidence level of 95 percent and a margin of error of 10 percent. In fact in the survey a total sample size of 112 completed responses was achieved.

Table 5.1. Indigenous adult population and target population in the study region

| Statistical areas covered in the survey | Area | Indigenous adult population (Census 2011) | Share of Indigenous artists (NATSISS 2014-15) | Estimated number of adult Indigenous artists |
|---|----------------|---|---|--|
| | Sq km | no. | % | no. |
| Roebuck SA2 | 55,603 | 920 | 31.2 | 287 |
| Kununurra SA2 | 117,664 | 1,720 | 31.2 | 537 |
| Halls Creek SA2 | 135,358 | 1,772 | 31.2 | 553 |
| Broome SA2 | 50,000 | 1,975 | 31.4 | 620 |
| Derby - West Kimberley SA2 | 110,884 | 2,658 | 31.2 | 829 |
| Total - Kimberley SA3 | 419,559 | 9,045 | - | 2,826 |

Source: ABS 2011 Census, NATSISS 2014-15

Note: While the Kununurra town area is classified as “remote” in the 2011 ASGS Remoteness Structure it constitutes only a small proportion of the Kununurra SA2 area, which is apart from the Kununurra town and is classified as “very remote”.

5.2 SAMPLING PROCEDURE

In principle, a sample frame for a survey such as this can be determined by reference to a complete list of names of individuals in the target population¹³. Such an approach was impossible to apply in the present study, since there is no list of adult Indigenous artists residing in the Kimberley region, i.e. the target population. Hence a limited sampling procedure was used for this survey with the option of weighting the resulting sample using known characteristics of the target population to standardise the results obtained. In order to determine how representative our survey sample is of the entire population of Kimberley Indigenous artists, we compared the socio-demographic characteristics of the sample with the corresponding characteristics of the target population – adult Indigenous Australians in remote and very remote areas of Western Australia involved in selected creative artistic activities as determined above using the NATSISS data.

¹³ For a more detailed discussion of sampling issues in surveying remote Indigenous populations, see Throsby and Petetskaya (2015: 8-9).

The NATSISS 2014-15 allows the stratification of their survey data for those Indigenous adults who participated in the selected artistic activities in ‘the last year’. As noted earlier, our survey uses a wider definition for artists to include those who have had experience but may not currently participate in any of the defined creative artistic activities. Therefore to make a comparison between these two datasets we used the data from our own survey on “practising artists”, i.e. those artists who participated in the creative artistic activities in “the last year” or “the last 12 months”.

A comparison between the NATSISS data and our survey sample following the above procedure is shown with respect to age and gender in Table 5.2. It is apparent that gender tracks very closely but some correction will be necessary to adjust for age differences between the sample and the target population. On the basis of the data in Table 5.2, we calculate the weights shown in the last row of the table. In constructing the various tables of results in this report, we applied these weights to the raw data to obtain estimates adjusted to reflect the age/gender characteristics of the target population. Accordingly, and subject to normal caveats relating to statistical inference, we can take our results to be broadly representative of the population of adult Indigenous arts and cultural practitioners in the Kimberley region at the present time.

Table 5.2. Age and gender of Indigenous people who participate in cultural activities: comparison of sample with NATSISS 14-15 survey (percent)

| | Male | | | | Female | | | | Total |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
| | 15-34 | 35-54 | 55+ | Sub-total male | 15-34 | 35-54 | 55+ | Sub-total female | |
| | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | |
| Our sample | 8 | 21 | 16 | 46 | 13 | 21 | 21 | 54 | 100 |
| NATSISS 14-15 | 8 | 15 | 25 | 48 | 12 | 19 | 21 | 52 | 100 |
| Weights applied in the survey | 1.05 | 0.68 | 1.54 | 1.05 | 0.96 | 0.95 | 0.97 | 0.96 | 1.00 |

5.3 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SURVEY

Pilot testing of the questionnaire was carried out in Broome, Mowanjum, Kununurra and Warmun in April 2016. The survey interviews took place throughout the region in May 2016.

The research was conducted with individual remote Indigenous artists, the majority of whom work with the regional Indigenous-owned art centres or other arts organisations. The research team travelled to the Kimberley region prior to the start of the project to receive permission from the regional art centres and other arts and cultural organisations to conduct research with their artists. The following art centres gave their permission to be part of the research: Mangkaja Arts, Bidyadanga Community Art Centre, Warmun Art Centre, Waringarri Aboriginal Arts, Yarliyil Art Centre and Mowanjum Art and Culture Centre. Other regional organisations dealing with writers, performers, film-makers and so on, including Magabala Books, Goolarri Media and Marrugeku Theatre, also agreed to participate in the survey. All of these organisations showed their support for the survey and agreed to facilitate interviews with their artists. In Broome, Wyndham and Kununurra, a number of individual artists who work outside regional arts and cultural organisations were also interviewed.

The first language for many Indigenous people in the Kimberley is not English. In this survey, only a third of respondents indicated that English was the language they were using most often these days, while 37 percent were using Kimberley Kriol. Although an ideal scenario might have been to translate the questionnaire into a number of local languages, this was logistically infeasible. The feedback from our collaborators in the region was that the English language would be the most neutral and would eliminate suspicions regarding an association of this survey with a particular language group. It was therefore decided that the survey questionnaire would be presented to respondents in English. The research team worked in collaboration with local Indigenous cultural consultants, translators and interpreters who were employed at the location of interviews. When required, the English version was translated orally into a language or dialect that was known to the respondent. The local translators and interpreters were paid Macquarie University casual rates for Professional Level 6-10, depending on their previous experience.

It is usual for some reward to be offered to people who complete surveys such as this. Typically researchers offer participants movie or shopping vouchers, entry into major prize draws and so on. We were advised by our Indigenous collaborators that it would be polite to give a small gift to those who agreed to participate in the survey. Accordingly, survey respondents received a shopping voucher valued at \$30 upon completion of the survey. In very remote locations, where not many people own a vehicle and even travelling to particular food stores could be problematic, alternatives such as power cards were used.

Over the course of this survey, the research team has had a number of meetings with, and received research support from, the Arnhem, Northern and Kimberley Artists (ANKA) regarding the different stages of the survey development and implementation. The initial idea of the national survey of remote Indigenous artists was presented to the ANKA members in November 2014 at the ANKA Regional Meeting at Mount Bundy Station at Adelaide River, Northern Territory. We have continued our collaboration with ANKA ever since, participating in their annual national and regional meetings and receiving feedback from the ANKA board directors and members. In the final stages of the project, we received feedback from the ANKA members and board directors during a presentation of the survey findings at the ANKA Kimberley Regional General Meeting in November 2016 at Charles Darwin University, Katherine, NT.

6. MAIN RESULTS

In this section we present and discuss the primary data collected in this study. Aspects covered are grouped as follows:

- the range of cultural-economic activities that Kimberley artists undertake or have undertaken;
- the pathways for acquiring the knowledge and skills (the cultural capital) to become an artist in remote areas of the Kimberley;
- respondents' current economic engagement with arts and cultural production;
- aspects of professional creative art practice in the region;
- the role of cultural production in sustainable community development.

6.1 CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

As noted earlier, in this study we define cultural-economic activities across a broad range, classified into three groups: creative artistic activities; activities related to cultural maintenance; and applied cultural activities. Table 6.1 shows the proportions of respondents who have ever done each activity, how many are currently engaged in the activity, and the proportion of those who are currently being paid. The most striking feature of this table is how far active cultural engagement and practice extends for a given individual in the artist population of the Kimberley, as Figure 6.1 also demonstrates. It was a survey requirement that all participating individuals had to have experience in at least one of the creative artistic activities listed and thus could be identified as artists. The visual arts is the most widespread creative artform in the region, with

almost 90 percent of respondents having been involved in producing visual art (painting, printmaking, weaving, carving, sculpting and so on) at some point in their lives, and 70 percent currently earning income from this source. The performing arts¹⁴ are also important, with two-thirds of respondents having performed music, dance or theatre at some point in their lives, almost half currently performing and one-third currently being paid to do so.

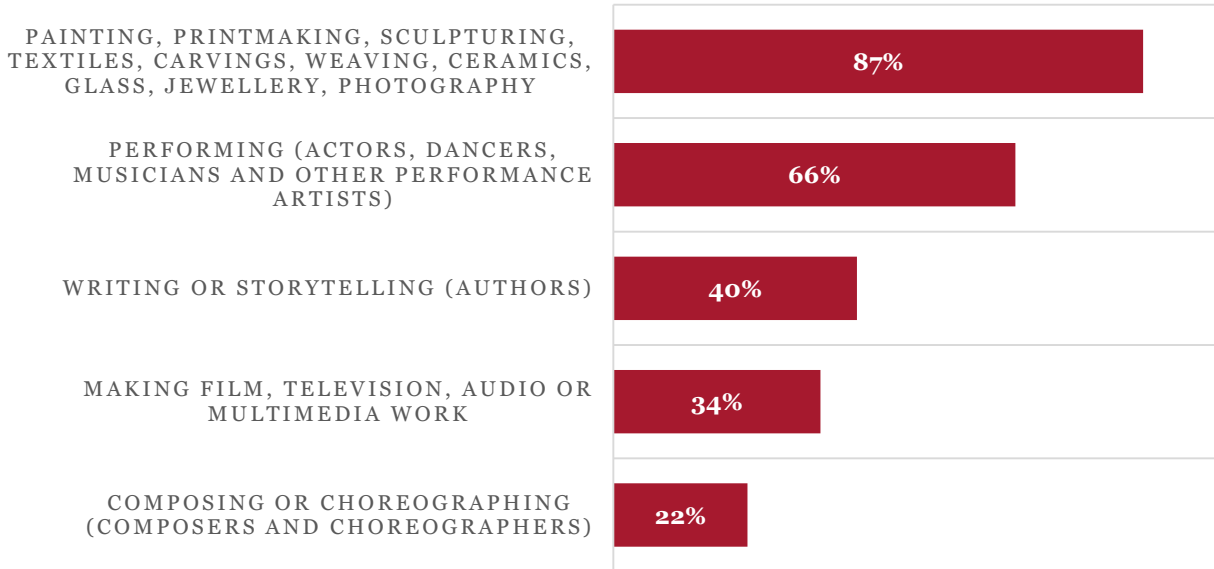
Table 6.1. Cultural-economic activities undertaken by artists (percent of all respondents)

| | | Proportion of all respondents (n=112), (%) | | |
|---|--|--|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| # | Cultural economic activities | Have ever done the activity | Currently doing the activity | Currently being paid for the activity |
| CREATIVE ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES | | | | |
| 1 | Painting, printmaking, sculpting, carving, weaving, making textiles, ceramics, glass, jewellery, photography | 87 | 77 | 70 |
| 2 | Acting, dancing, making music and other performing | 66 | 47 | 34 |
| 3 | Composing or choreographing | 22 | 14 | 9 |
| 4 | Writing or storytelling | 40 | 20 | 9 |
| 5 | Making film, television, audio or multimedia work | 34 | 20 | 12 |
| ARTS- AND-CULTURE-RELATED ACTIVITIES | | | | |
| 6 | Participating in ceremonies | 85 | 45 | - |
| 7 | Interpreting, translating or cross-cultural consulting | 57 | 36 | 15 |
| 8 | Cultural archiving, record keeping | 22 | 14 | 9 |
| 9 | Serving on a cultural board, committee or council | 61 | 41 | 19 |
| 10 | Teaching others in arts and cultural activities | 77 | 58 | 32 |
| 11 | Caring for country | 88 | 77 | 7 |
| 12 | Fishing, hunting, gathering or preparing bush food | 98 | 93 | 0 |
| 13 | Making Indigenous medicines or cosmetics or providing Indigenous health services | 73 | 49 | 6 |
| 14 | Arts management | 16 | 11 | 9 |
| 15 | Arts administration | 40 | 27 | 19 |
| 16 | Providing cultural tourism services | 32 | 19 | 14 |

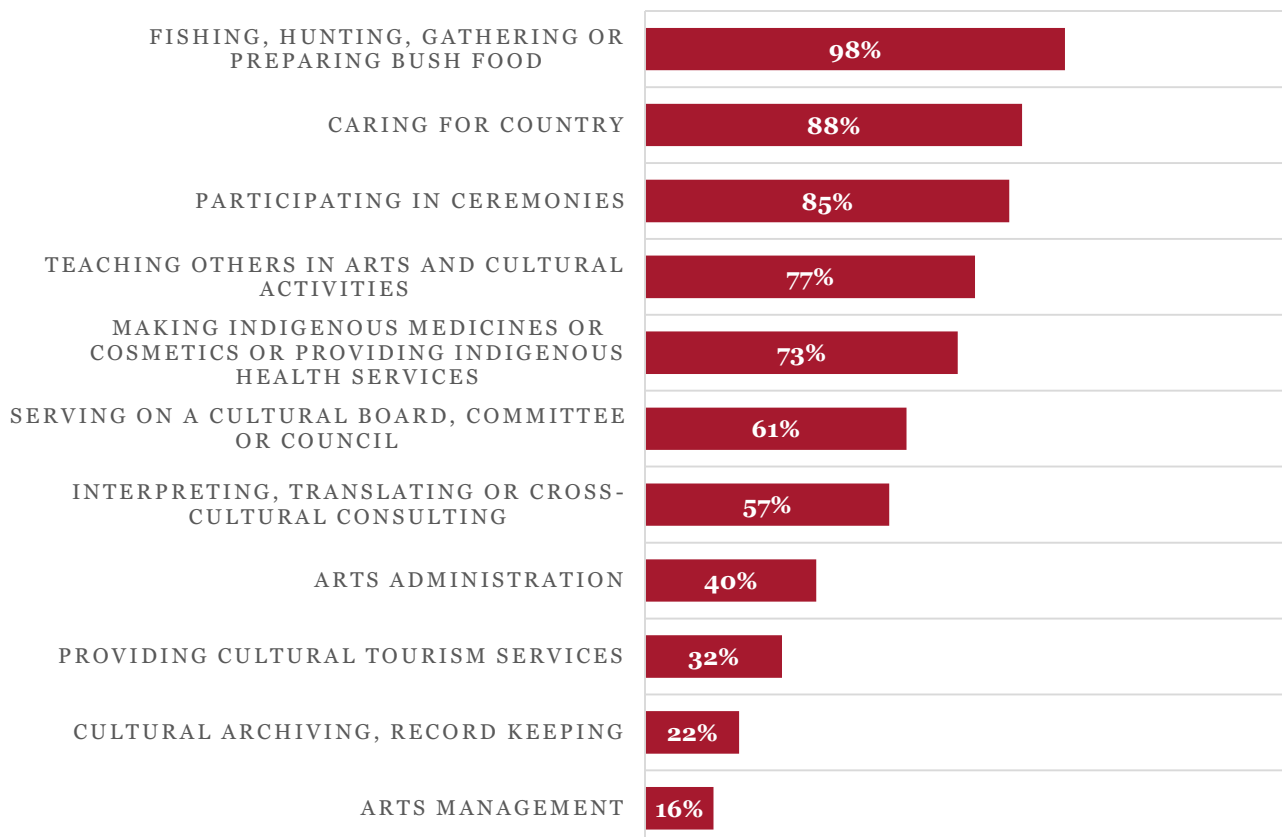
¹⁴ In this survey, “performing arts” is distinguished from “participating in ceremonies”. During survey interviews, respondents were asked if dance or music pieces they were engaged in were performed to outsiders as part of showcasing local culture. In the case of positive response the activity was defined as “performing arts”.

Fig.6.1. Experience in creative artistic and arts- and culture-related activities

CREATIVE ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES



ARTS & CULTURE-RELATED ACTIVITIES



Maintenance activities such as caring for country, participating in ceremonies, and passing on knowledge to others have featured prominently in the lives of artists, particularly in cases where these activities form part of a job, for example as a ranger or a teacher, or when artists engage in providing consulting services relating to art or culture. A third of the Kimberley artists (32 percent) rely on teaching as one of their sources of income. It is interesting to compare this figure with data for all Australian practising professional artists in from the 2009 national survey of artists¹⁵ – these data show that about the same share of all artists Australia-wide (31 percent) receive their income from teaching. In addition our data show that arts administration and cultural governance each provide income to about one-fifth of the Kimberley artists (19 percent each). While the involvement of Aboriginal artists in arts administration in the Kimberley is significant, it is however still lower than the involvement of all artists Australia-wide, which amounted to 36 percent of all artists in 2009. With regard to other applied cultural activities such as fishing, hunting, making Indigenous medicines, and providing Indigenous health services, it appears that while these cultural activities are pursued by a majority of cultural practitioners in the Kimberley, few earn income from these sources.

How many of these cultural-economic activities have artists in the Kimberley been engaged in during their lifetime? Table 6.2 shows that the average number of discrete cultural-economic activities engaged in by the artists at some time in their life is 8.9 activities. Of these, 2.5 activities are within creative arts. Of course not all the activities that an artist has ever undertaken are being pursued currently. Nevertheless Table 6.2 shows that an artist’s cultural engagement at the present time still involves multiple activities. The average artist is currently engaged in 6.5 discrete cultural activities and being paid for almost three of them; of these sources of income, 1.3 are creative artistic activities and 1.5 are arts- and culture-related activities.

Table 6.2. Average number of cultural-economic activities undertaken by artists

| Cultural economic activities | Have ever done the activity | Currently doing the activity | Currently being paid for the activity |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| | no. | no. | no. |
| Creative artistic activities | 2.5 | 1.8 | 1.3 |
| Arts and culture-related activities | 6.4 | 4.7 | 1.5 |
| All cultural activities | 8.9 | 6.5 | 2.8 |

To sum up, Tables 6.1 and 6.2 paint a picture of the remote-area artists for whom the longstanding activities that maintain their culture – ceremonies, caring for country and preparing bush food – continue to be of fundamental significance. Not surprisingly, amongst the range of cultural activities that artists are engaged in, those that generate income are to a large extent within the creative arts. Nevertheless, other cultural activities are also important as sources of revenue. Overall, it must be remembered that *all* cultural activities, whether they produce income or not, have high significance on account of the cultural value that they generate.

6.2 ACQUISITION OF CULTURAL CAPITAL

Many Indigenous artists draw from cultural knowledge in their creative artistic work. At the same time, it is apparent that all artistic practice requires skill – the technical ability to handle materials, to apply paint, to

¹⁵ Throsby and Zednik (2010).

dance, to write, to shoot or edit a film. Thus, in identifying the pathways by which artists have acquired their cultural capital, we make a distinction between cultural knowledge pathways and industry skills pathways. Data on these two avenues for acquiring cultural capital are shown in Tables 6.3 and 6.4 respectively.

It is immediately apparent from a glance at both tables that family members, elders and other community members play a critical role in transmitting knowledge and inculcating creative skills. Virtually every respondent (98 percent) nominated learning from family and other community members as one of the ways through which their cultural knowledge was acquired, with a majority (77 percent) identifying this as the most important pathway, a far greater proportion than for any other source.

Of particular interest in Table 6.3 is the importance of being on country as a source of cultural knowledge. After family transmission noted above, being on country is the second most important pathway for acquiring knowledge, being the *most* significant source for almost 20 percent of respondents. It should be noted that during the interview, most of the respondents found it difficult choosing between “being on country” and “directly from family member, elders or other community members” as the most important pathway. However, most of these respondents decided that in order to understand and learn from country one needs to be “introduced to it”, and “shown what to look for”.¹⁶ This result is of particular relevance to discussion about the importance of maintaining remote communities and outstations. If art and cultural production is to become a stronger source of economic empowerment for Aboriginal people in remote communities, securing artists’ access to country will be an important factor in ensuring long-term success.¹⁷

Table 6.3. Pathways for acquisition of cultural capital (percent of all respondents)

| Cultural knowledge pathways | Important pathways* (n=112) | Most important pathway (n=112) |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | % | % |
| From artworks, songs or stories | 60 | 1 |
| Directly from family members, elders or other community members | 98 | 77 |
| From festivals or other cultural events | 28 | 0 |
| From ceremonies | 60 | 4 |
| From being on country | 87 | 17 |
| Some other way | 3 | 1 |
| Total | — | 100 |

* Multiple responses allowed

In regard to skills acquisition as shown in Table 6.4, it may be noted that again observing or participating with a family member is important to four in five respondents and is the most important means by which artistic skills are taught in the region (half of all respondents). Learning on the job, or self-learning, and learning from friends and other community members are also important for a majority (approximately 70 percent each) of artists. Together with observing/participating with a family member, these “Big Three” are

¹⁶ From interviews comments.

¹⁷ See further in Altman and Kerins (2012).

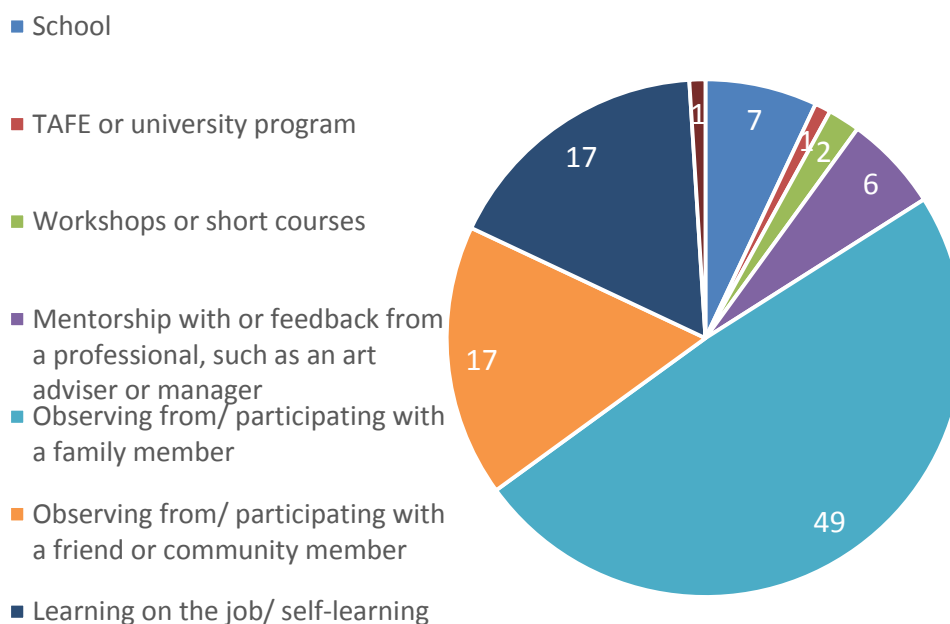
the most important pathways for acquiring skills in the arts industries in the region as Figure 6.2 demonstrates, with more than four in five artists (83 percent) identifying them as such.

Table 6.4. Pathways for gaining industry skills and experience (percent of all respondents)

| Industry skills pathways | Important pathways* (n=112) | Most important pathway (n=112) |
|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | % | % |
| School | 29 | 7 |
| TAFE or university program | 15 | 1 |
| Workshops or short courses | 42 | 2 |
| Mentorship with or feedback from a professional, such as an art adviser or manager | 18 | 6 |
| Observing from/ participating with a family member | 82 | 49 |
| Observing from/ participating with a friend or community member | 68 | 17 |
| Learning on the job/ self-learning | 70 | 17 |
| Some other way | 3 | 1 |
| Total | – | 100 |

* Multiple responses allowed

Figure 6.2. Most important pathways for acquiring industry skills (percent of artists)



Among more formal means for the teaching of artistic skills, school provides an initial opening for about a third of the artists. Short courses and workshops were utilised more frequently (42 percent of respondents) than longer and more formal course structures, such as TAFE or university training (15 percent). This result underscores arguments for an expanded role for short programs, which can be provided in-community as a means towards both skill refreshment for established practitioners, and an introduction to artistic practice for beginners.

It can also be observed in regard to Table 6.4 that high dependency on learning on the job or self-learning does not necessarily imply that there is a lack of availability of more systematic opportunities for skills development such as through school, TAFE or university programs, professional mentorships, workshops or short courses. Indeed a significant proportion of those artists we interviewed identified these as important pathways in acquiring skills and thus have been exposed to these forms of training in one way or another. However, only 17 percent identified these pathways as the most important to them.

Table 6.5. Highest level of formal education (percent of all respondents)

| Level of education | Visual artists (n=80) | Performing artists (n=18) | All creative artists (n=112) |
|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| | % | % | % |
| No schooling | 32 | 0 | 23 |
| Completed Year 6 or lower | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Completed Year 7 (or equivalent) | 5 | 0 | 3 |
| Completed Year 8 (or equivalent) | 6 | 0 | 4 |
| Completed Year 9 (or equivalent) | 4 | 12 | 5 |
| Completed Year 10 (or equivalent) | 14 | 13 | 13 |
| Completed Year 11 (or equivalent) | 11 | 11 | 10 |
| Completed Year 12 (or equivalent) | 9 | 14 | 10 |
| Completed Diploma or Certificate | 16 | 51 | 27 |
| Completed Bachelor Degree | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Completed Postgraduate Degree, Diploma or Certificate | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Overall the data in Tables 6.3 and 6.4 provide a clear picture of the importance of family and community for the processes of acquiring not only cultural knowledge but also industry skills for participation in the arts and cultural industries that could generate further economic opportunities in the Kimberley. However, such influences must not be seen in isolation – the transfer of cultural knowledge from one generation to the next is a complex process involving a range of cultural practices and experiences, as the data presented here suggest.

6.3 FORMAL EDUCATION OF ARTISTS

The highest levels of formal education received by the artists are summarised in Table 6.5. Almost a quarter of artists in the Kimberley have had no schooling (about a third in the case of visual artists), a third completed between Year 10 and 12 or their equivalents, 27 percent completed diploma or certificate, and only a handful earned bachelor or postgraduate degrees.

Does an artist's formal education lead to a higher income? As a first step in examining this question, we conducted a series of Spearman rank-order correlations to determine if there were any relationships between artists' formal education and the incomes they receive from their creative artistic activities, their arts- and culture-related work and their non-cultural work. We found in a two-tailed test of significance that there is no correlation between formal education and creative arts income $rs(112)=-.069$, $p=.432$; neither is there a correlation between formal education and arts- and culture-related income $rs(112)=-.072$, $p=.419$. However, we found a strong positive correlation between formal education of artists and their income from work that is not related to their cultural activities, $rs(112)=.283$, $p=.001$. These results suggest that success in earning an income from creative artistic activity is likely to be determined more by the sorts of non-formal skill-acquisition pathways discussed earlier than by formal school and post-school education. On the other hand, being able to find employment of any sort in the labour market outside the arts is importantly dependent on possessing the necessary literacy and numeracy skills that formal education provides, and hence an individual's earning prospects are likely to be enhanced by having had formal education experience.

6.4 CURRENT ECONOMIC ENGAGEMENT WITH CULTURAL PRODUCTION

As noted earlier, almost every artist who was a respondent in this survey is engaged in one or more of the maintenance and applied activities as well as in their creative activities. Table 6.6 shows those who are currently doing the activity as a proportion of those who have ever done each activity. It is apparent that in the creative arts, the largest proportion of artists that are currently engaged are producing visual art (almost 90 percent). Among the arts- and culture-related activities, caring for country is the most widely practised, whilst fishing, hunting, gathering or preparing bush food activities are being undertaken by almost everyone.

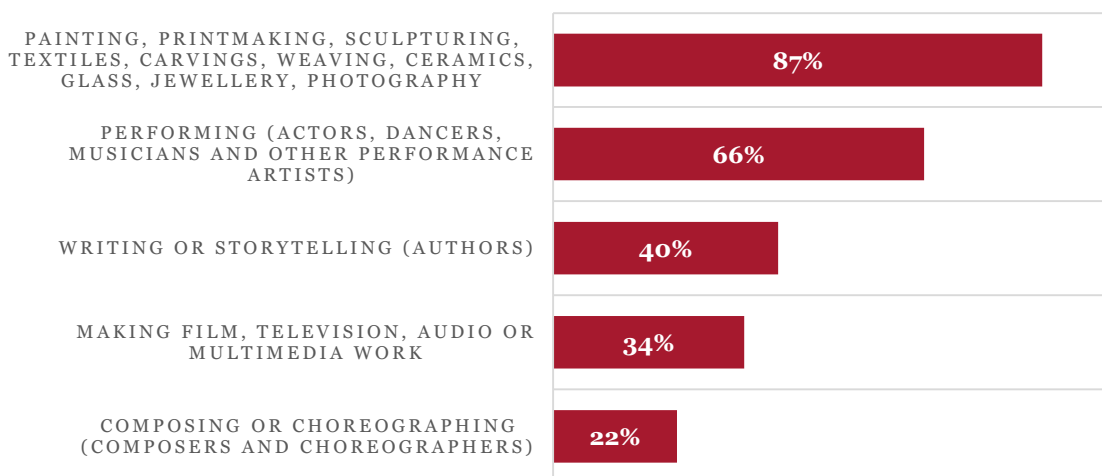
Importantly, Table 6.6 demonstrates that there is a significant pool of unutilised skills in the region – these are those artists with experience in particular activities who are currently not engaged in these activities, as illustrated in blue in Figure 6.3. This is true for several categories of respondents: authors; filmmakers and multimedia artists; those with experience in cultural tourism and cultural archiving; translators; interpreters; and cross-cultural consultants. At least two in five artists with experience in these activities are currently not engaged in them.

Table 6.6. Proportion of artists currently practising (percent of those who have ever done the activity)

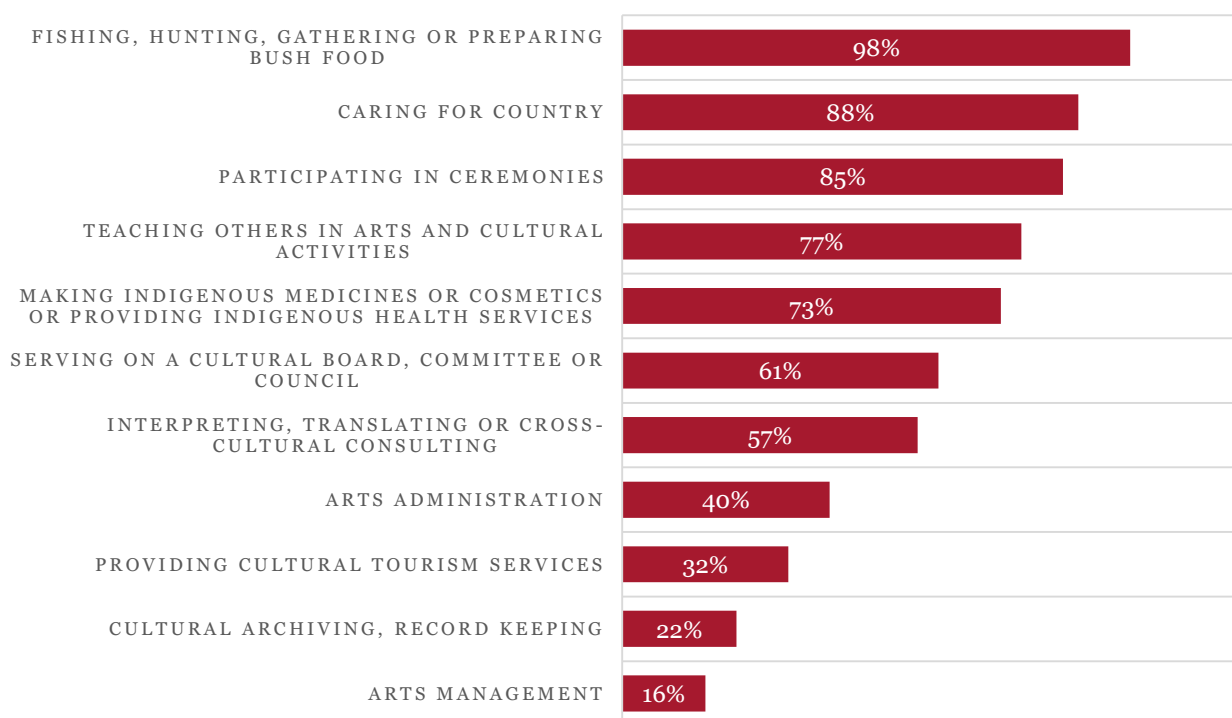
| # | Cultural economic activities | Currently doing the activity | Currently NOT doing the activity |
|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | | % | % |
| CREATIVE ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES | | | |
| 1 | Painting, printmaking, sculpturing, carving, weaving, making textiles, ceramics, glass, jewellery, photography (n=97) | 89 | 11 |
| 2 | Acting, dancing, making music and other performing (n=73) | 72 | 28 |
| 3 | Composing or choreographing (n=24) | 65 | 35 |
| 4 | Writing or storytelling (n=45) | 49 | 51 |
| 5 | Making film, television, audio or multimedia work (n=38) | 58 | 42 |
| | All creative artistic activities | 72 | 28 |
| ARTS- AND CULTURE-RELATED ACTIVITIES | | | |
| 6 | Participating in ceremonies (n=96) | 51 | 49 |
| 7 | Interpreting, translating or cross-cultural consulting (n=63) | 63 | 37 |
| 8 | Cultural archiving, record keeping (n=25) | 61 | 39 |
| 9 | Serving on a cultural board, committee or council (n=68) | 67 | 33 |
| 10 | Teaching others in arts and cultural activities (n=87) | 76 | 24 |
| 11 | Caring for country (n=99) | 83 | 17 |
| 12 | Fishing, hunting, gathering or preparing bush food (n=107) | 97 | 3 |
| 13 | Making Indigenous medicines or cosmetics or providing Indigenous health services (n=82) | 67 | 33 |
| 14 | Arts management (n=18) | 67 | 33 |
| 15 | Arts administration (n=44) | 68 | 32 |
| 16 | Providing cultural tourism services (n=36) | 59 | 41 |
| | All arts- and culture-related activities | 72 | 28 |
| NON-CULTURE-RELATED WORK | | | |
| | All non-culture-related work | 29 | 71 |

Figure 6.3. Current engagement in selected arts- and culture-related activities

CREATIVE ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES



ARTS- AND CULTURE-RELATED ACTIVITIES



How many of those currently engaged in the various activities are being paid for it? Table 6.7 presents the data. Within the creative arts, the proportions show significant variation. We can see that a majority of those working in the visual and performing arts are being paid whereas more than half the writers are not being paid. This observation reflects the fact that the market works reasonably well for the former but not so well for the latter – visual artists and performers particularly have more opportunities to sell their work or their services, while writers struggle to find openings to market their output.

Table 6.7. Proportion of artists currently paid (percent of those currently engaged in the activity)

| # | Economic activities | Currently being paid for the activity | Currently NOT being paid for the activity |
|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| | | % | % |
| CREATIVE ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES | | | |
| 1 | Painting, printmaking, sculpting, carving, weaving, making textiles, ceramics, glass, jewellery, photography (n=87) | 91 | 9 |
| 2 | Acting, dancing, making music, other performing (n=53) | 73 | 27 |
| 3 | Composing or choreographing (n=16) | 62 | 38 |
| 4 | Writing or storytelling (n=22) | 46 | 54 |
| 5 | Making film, television, audio or multimedia work (n=22) | 62 | 38 |
| | All creative artistic activities | 76 | 24 |
| ARTS- AND CULTURE-RELATED ACTIVITIES | | | |
| 6 | Participating in ceremonies (n=50) | n.a. | n.a. |
| 7 | Interpreting, translating or cross-cultural consulting (n=40) | 42 | 58 |
| 8 | Cultural archiving, record keeping (n=15) | 69 | 31 |
| 9 | Serving on a cultural board, committee or council (n=46) | 47 | 53 |
| 10 | Teaching others in arts and cultural activities (n=65) | 54 | 46 |
| 11 | Caring for country (n=86) | 9 | 91 |
| 12 | Fishing, hunting, gathering or preparing bush food (n=104) | 0 | 100 |
| 13 | Making Indigenous medicines or cosmetics or providing Indigenous health services (n=55) | 11 | 89 |
| 14 | Arts management (n=12) | 88 | 12 |
| 15 | Arts administration (n=30) | 72 | 28 |
| 16 | Providing cultural tourism services (n=21) | 74 | 26 |
| | All arts- and culture-related activities* | 25 | 75 |
| NON-CULTURE-RELATED WORK | | | |
| | All non-culture-related work (n=32) | 87 | 13 |

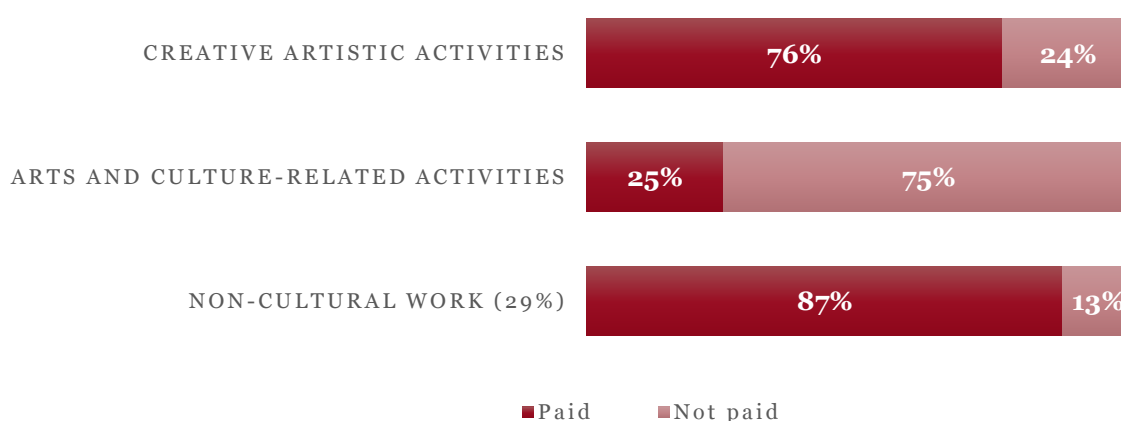
*Not including participating in ceremonies.

In regard to arts- and culture-related activities, it is apparent that a majority of the interpreting, translating or cultural governance work that Aboriginal artists in the Kimberley perform is volunteered, with fewer than half of these respondents being paid. Activities such as caring for country, fishing and gathering food, making medicines and providing Indigenous health services in many cases are done for the benefit of self, family, or

the wider community and are rarely paid. Other activities, such as arts administration, arts management or providing cultural tourism services provide income to between 70 and 90 percent of respondents currently participating in those activities.

Overall, the aggregated data show that on average approximately three-quarters of creative artistic work by the Kimberley artists is paid and a quarter of this work is unpaid (see Figure 6.4). Exactly the opposite situation exists in the case of arts- and culture-related activities – on average a quarter of this work is paid and three-quarters is done as volunteering. Finally, most of non-cultural work is paid and only a small proportion of this type of work is undertaken on a voluntary basis on average.

Figure 6.4. Paid and unpaid contribution of artists: creative artistic activities, arts- and culture-related activities and non-cultural work



Of those currently being paid, how much income do they earn? We provide monetary estimates later in this Report. Here we are concerned with the detail of artistic and cultural production and the relative significance of the various activities in contributing to individuals’ total incomes. Table 6.8 shows perceptions of individual artists as to whether the income they earn from the various activities comprises their main income, or is it regarded as extra income, or simply incidental income?¹⁸

For those being paid for producing visual art, there is an even spread across income types. One-third of practitioners earn their main income from this source, one-third make some extra income, while the remainder earn only incidental income from their visual art. On the other hand, fewer performing artists make a significant proportion of their income from this source; indeed the majority (around 70 percent) make only incidental income from work as a performer. Filmmaking, television, audio and multimedia work is the only creative artistic activity that provides the main income for the majority of the artists (60 percent) who are being paid for this activity.

Among the cultural maintenance activities, it may be noted that, even though almost half of those artists engaged in cultural governance are being paid for it (from Table 6.7), of these the majority (almost seven in ten) get only a little income for this activity. Of those currently engaged in interpreting, translating or cross-cultural consulting more than half are doing so on a voluntary basis (see Table 6.7); however among those

¹⁸ It was explained to the interviewees, that “main income” is the primary source of income; “extra income” is the income that is not primary but sufficient to cover some significant expenses or make a significant purchase; and “little income” or “incidental income” relates to occasional income of small amounts of money.

who are paid for this activity almost two in five see the income from this work as their main income. Caring for country is another activity that most of the artists in the region engage in on a voluntary basis; for the majority of those who are paid for this activity (about seven in ten of those who are paid) it provides only a source of extra income.

The data in Table 6.8 show that for those artists being paid for arts administration or management more than half get their main income from this source. The rest would appear to be earning little income from this activity. These respondents include those artists who assist in some way in the work of art centres, occasionally being paid and sometimes not. It is noteworthy in Table 6.8 that providing cultural tourism provides only a little income to the majority of those who are currently being paid for this activity. This result reflects the relatively undeveloped state of the cultural tourism market in the Kimberley at the present time. This is an area which offers considerable potential for further development, as we will discuss later in this Report.

Looking at the aggregated results across each of the categories of cultural activities, we can see that, for the majority of artists receiving income from one or more of the creative activities (44 percent), this income is only *incidental* (see Figure 6.5). Creative artistic activities provide the *main* income for nearly 30 percent of artists and the remainder (about one-quarter of artists) receive it as *extra* income. On the other hand, arts- and culture-related activities are the main source of income for 29 percent of the Kimberley artists; with about one-fifth of paid artists on average generating extra income and about a half receiving only *incidental* income from these sources. It is apparent from the data in Table 6.8 that, not surprisingly, those specific activities that supply the *main* income of individuals engaged in them are those which offer the possibility of a full-time or part-time job – this applies, for example, to filmmakers and multimedia artists who can work for a media company, or those cultural practitioners working in archiving, administration or management who can find employment in an art centre or other organisation, as discussed further in the following paragraph.

Figure 6.5. Type of income of artists in creative artistic activities, arts- and culture-related activities and non-cultural work

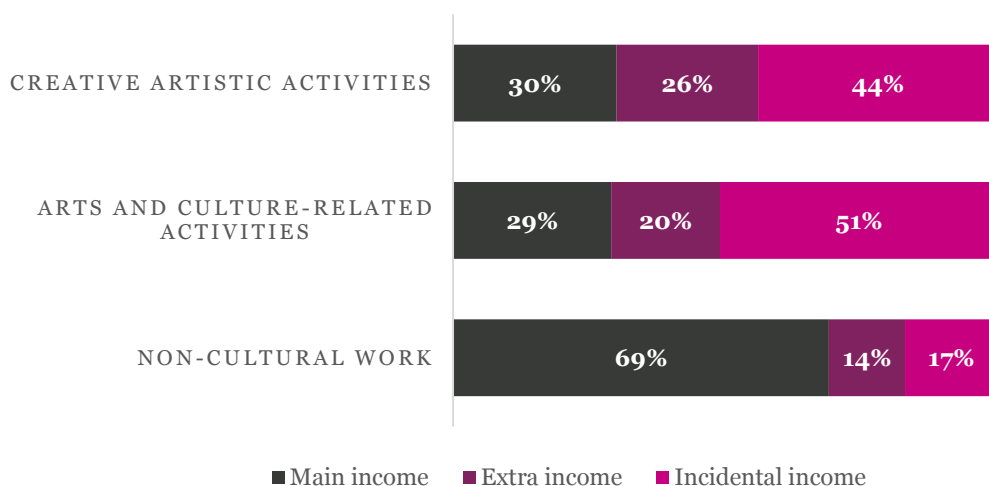


Table 6.8. Type of income earned from cultural and non-cultural activities (percent of those currently paid for the activity)

| # | Economic activities | Main income | Extra income | Incidental income | Total |
|---|---|-------------|--------------|-------------------|------------|
| | | % | % | % | % |
| CREATIVE ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES | | | | | |
| 1 | Painting, printmaking, sculpturing, textiles, carvings, weaving, ceramics, glass, jewellery, photography (n=79) | 35 | 32 | 33 | 100 |
| 2 | Performing (actors, dancers, musicians and other performance artists) (n=38) | 16 | 16 | 69 | 100 |
| 3 | Composing or choreographing (composers and choreographers) (n=10) | 16 | 42 | 42 | 100 |
| 4 | Writing or storytelling (authors) (n=10) | 17 | 32 | 51 | 100 |
| 5 | Making film, television, audio or multimedia work (n=14) | 60 | 0 | 40 | 100 |
| All creative artistic activities | | 30 | 26 | 44 | 100 |
| ARTS- AND CULTURE-RELATED ACTIVITIES | | | | | |
| 6 | Participating in ceremonies (n=20) | 0 | 5 | 95 | 100 |
| 7 | Interpreting, translating or cross-cultural consulting (n=17) | 38 | 26 | 36 | 100 |
| 8 | Cultural archiving, record keeping (n=10) | 72 | 21 | 7 | 100 |
| 9 | Serving on a cultural board, committee or council (n=22) | 28 | 5 | 68 | 100 |
| 10 | Teaching others in arts and cultural activities (n=35) | 22 | 43 | 35 | 100 |
| 11 | Caring for country (n=8) | 0 | 69 | 31 | 100 |
| 12 | Fishing, hunting, gathering or preparing bush food (n=0) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100 |
| 13 | Making Indigenous medicines or cosmetics or providing Indigenous health services (n=6) | 11 | 25 | 64 | 100 |
| 14 | Arts management (n=10) | 61 | 0 | 39 | 100 |
| 15 | Arts administration (n=22) | 56 | 9 | 35 | 100 |
| 16 | Providing cultural tourism services (n=16) | 16 | 4 | 80 | 100 |
| All arts and culture-related activities | | 29 | 20 | 51 | 100 |
| NON-ARTS- AND CULTURE-RELATED WORK | | | | | |
| Non-arts and culture-related work (n=28) | | 69 | 14 | 17 | 100 |

Table 6.9. How income from cultural and non-cultural activities was paid (percent of those currently paid for the activity) *

| # | Economic activity | Salaries or wages in a full-time job | Salaries or wages in a part-time job | Casual wages | Payments per piece | Fees per service | Hourly rate payments | Advances | Grants or prizes | Commissions | Royalties or licence fee | In-kind payments | Other | Total |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------------|----------|------------------|-------------|--------------------------|------------------|-------|-------|
| | | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % |
| CREATIVE ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Painting, printmaking, sculpting, carving, weaving, making textiles, ceramics, glass, jewellery, photography | 5 | 0 | 0 | 79 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 8 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 100 |
| 2 | Acting, dancing, making music and other performing | 3 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 90 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 100 |
| 3 | Composing or choreographing | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 30 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 50 | 10 | 0 | 100 |
| 4 | Writing or storytelling | 6 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 41 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 29 | 0 | 0 | 100 |
| 5 | Making film, television, audio or multimedia work | 18 | 7 | 7 | 0 | 21 | 18 | 7 | 7 | 0 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 100 |
| ARTS- AND-CULTURE-RELATED ACTIVITIES | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | Participating in ceremonies | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100 | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100 |
| 7 | Interpreting, translating or cross-cultural consulting | 24 | 12 | 6 | 0 | 29 | 29 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100 |
| 8 | Cultural archiving, record keeping | 45 | 9 | 27 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 100 |
| 9 | Serving on a cultural board, committee or council | 9 | 5 | 9 | 0 | 68 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100 |
| 10 | Teaching others in arts and cultural activities | 11 | 6 | 14 | 0 | 37 | 29 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 100 |
| 11 | Caring for country | 0 | 0 | 13 | 0 | 50 | 38 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100 |
| 12 | Fishing, hunting, gathering or preparing bush food | 14 | 0 | 0 | 29 | 29 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 29 | 0 | 100 |
| 13 | Making Indigenous medicines or cosmetics or providing Indigenous health services | 36 | 0 | 18 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 18 | 18 | 100 |
| 14 | Arts management | 32 | 18 | 9 | 0 | 14 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 9 | 100 |
| 15 | Arts administration | 0 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 76 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 12 | 100 |
| 16 | Providing cultural tourism services | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100 | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100 |
| NON-CULTURE-RELATED WORK | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Non-culture-related work | | 23 | 26 | 24 | 0 | 8 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 100 |

*Multiple responses permitted

The ways in which income is delivered to those artists who are currently being paid for various cultural activities are shown in Table 6.9. As would be expected, visual artists are mostly paid per piece, while performing artists are paid via fees for service. Most of the cultural maintenance activities undertaken for payment by artists are paid for via fees per service or hourly rate payments. However nearly half of those paid for cultural archiving and record keeping receive payments in full-time salaries or wages. Arts management and arts administration provide full-time salaried jobs for about one-third of artists in the Kimberley who engage in these activities. For those artists who engage in employment outside the cultural sector, about three-quarters are paid a salary or wages on a full-time, part-time or casual basis.

Aboriginal artists face choices in regard to the allocation of their time between the various cultural and non-cultural activities in which they are currently engaged – as we have noted, some activities yield a monetary return, others do not. Respondents to the survey were asked how much time they spend on the various work- or culture-related activities that they undertake. The results are shown in Table 6.10. In the case of visual artists, the time spread broadly follows the income spread; visual artists in the Kimberley on average work on a regular basis, with two in five working between four and five days a week (full-time employment) and just less than a third working between two and three full days a week (part-time employment). On the other hand, work in all the other creative activities is more sporadic; for example, on average three-quarters of performers spend only one day per month or less at these activities and none appear to work full-time; almost half of composers spend one full day a week on composing and about two in five spend one full day a month on this activity; five percent of authors spend four to five days a week writing and storytelling (full-time equivalent), a similarly small percentage work two to three days a week and the rest (about nine in ten) spend one day or less a week on this activity.

In regard to arts- and culture-related activities, ceremonies only occur occasionally and hence the amount of time spent participating in them in a full year amounts to just a few days for most respondents (about 80 percent). Caring for country and fishing, hunting, gathering or preparing bush food take up more time and are likely to be more regular – for example, roughly two in five artists spend about one day a week caring for country, and about the same proportion spends about one day a month. About three in five of the artists who are serving on a cultural board, committee or council (cultural governance) spend one full day a month on this activity; and almost half of those artists who are providing arts and cultural education services spend one full day a week on this work.

We noted above that cultural tourism yields only relatively small amounts of revenue for those currently engaged in providing these services. The lack of opportunity to participate in tourism is reinforced in Table 6.10 in terms of the time spent on these activities – 60 percent of artists in the survey who have some engagement with tourism do so for only a few full days in the year.

Looking again at the aggregated totals for each category of artists, we can see that the majority of artists in the Kimberley (about two-thirds) spend between one full-day per week and one full day per month on arts- and culture-related activities such as cross-cultural consulting, caring for country, arts administration or cultural tourism. In terms of the creative artistic activities, the artists in the region choose a diversity of time allocation strategies, with about one-fifth working in the creative arts on a full-time basis, about one-third spending between one and three full days per week and almost a half (47 percent) spending between one full day per month to a few full days per year working in this area on average. These results can be explained by a number of factors affecting participation in the cultural-economic activities in the Kimberley, such as seasonality of work, not being able to access necessary facilities or equipment on a regular basis throughout the year, taking turns between different cultural-economic activities, or having to undertake multiple activities at the same time due to variations in demand. It can also be seen from Table 6.9 that the majority of the artists (54 percent) who also work outside the arts and cultural sector work on a more regular basis, as in full-time or part-time jobs.

Table 6.10. Time spent on cultural and non-cultural activities (percent of those currently engaged in the activity)

| # | Economic activities | 4-5 full days/week | 2-3 full days/week | 1 full day/week | 1 full day/month | Few full days/year | Total |
|---|---|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|------------|
| | | % | % | % | % | % | |
| CREATIVE ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Painting, printmaking, sculpting, carving, weaving, making textiles, ceramics, glass, jewellery, photography (n=87) | 39 | 30 | 9 | 14 | 9 | 100 |
| 2 | Acting, dancing, making music and other performing (n=52) | 0 | 7 | 17 | 43 | 33 | 100 |
| 3 | Composing or choreographing (n=17) | 0 | 9 | 45 | 38 | 8 | 100 |
| 4 | Writing or storytelling (n=22) | 5 | 4 | 34 | 37 | 20 | 100 |
| 5 | Making film, television, audio or multimedia work (n=20) | 19 | 5 | 9 | 3 | 64 | 100 |
| All creative artistic activities | | 19 | 17 | 17 | 25 | 22 | 100 |
| ARTS- AND CULTURE-RELATED ACTIVITIES | | | | | | | |
| 6 | Participating in ceremonies (n=50) | 0 | 0 | 2 | 19 | 79 | 100 |
| 7 | Interpreting, translating or cross-cultural consulting (n=38) | 0 | 9 | 28 | 40 | 23 | 100 |
| 8 | Cultural archiving, record keeping (n=15) | 0 | 20 | 10 | 41 | 29 | 100 |
| 9 | Serving on a cultural board, committee or council (n=45) | 0 | 2 | 20 | 63 | 15 | 100 |
| 10 | Teaching others in arts and cultural activities (n=65) | 1 | 7 | 48 | 31 | 13 | 100 |
| 11 | Caring for country (n=85) | 0 | 10 | 39 | 38 | 13 | 100 |
| 12 | Fishing, hunting, gathering or preparing bush food (n=104) | 2 | 10 | 45 | 35 | 8 | 100 |
| 13 | Making Indigenous medicines or cosmetics or providing Indigenous health services (n=53) | 1 | 0 | 19 | 48 | 32 | 100 |
| 14 | Arts management (n=12) | 0 | 32 | 9 | 59 | 0 | 100 |
| 15 | Arts administration (n=30) | 10 | 26 | 28 | 29 | 7 | 100 |
| 16 | Providing cultural tourism services (n=21) | 0 | 7 | 16 | 17 | 60 | 100 |
| All arts- and culture-related activities | | 1 | 9 | 30 | 37 | 23 | 100 |
| NON-CULTURE-RELATED WORK | | | | | | | |
| All non-culture-related work (n=32) | | 20 | 34 | 17 | 16 | 12 | 100 |

6.5 CREATIVE ARTS PRACTICE

We turn now to a focus specifically on the creative artistic activities of Indigenous cultural practitioners in the Kimberley. We do so by examining in more detail the activities captured in the first group of cultural practices identified in our survey, i.e. visual arts activities including painting, printmaking, weaving, carving, sculpting and so on; performing music, dance, or theatre; composing or choreographing; writing or storytelling; and making film, television or audio work or multimedia work. We have already noted (Table 6.1 above) the wide spread of artistic activity that individuals undertake. For the purposes of our further analysis we asked respondents to identify the artistic occupation in which they are currently most engaged in terms of time. We call this activity the artist's *principal artistic occupation* (PAO). It follows exactly the definition of PAO utilised in other national surveys of practising professional artists in Australia.¹⁹ Despite their multiple cultural engagements, all respondents to the survey were able to identify a PAO to define their artistic practice.

For further analysis of the conditions of artistic practice affecting the different artistic occupations, we group respondents in the following discussion into visual artists and performers, as defined by their PAO. The sample sizes for authors, composers, filmmakers and multimedia artists are too small to enable us to derive valid results for them, so they are simply included in the totals for all artists shown in the tables below. Not surprisingly given the predominance of the visual arts among the cultural industries in the Kimberley, the majority of artists in the survey identified themselves as visual artists.

Respondents were asked how long they had been practising at their principal artistic occupation. Just over half of them had been practising their art for more than 20 years as shown in Table 6.11. In fact the distribution of lengths of experience shown in Table 6.11 follows quite closely the age distribution in the sample and in the artist population, suggesting that the majority of artists, both young and old, have been practising their art for all or most of their (adult) lives.

The practice of art requires a space in which the work can be done. The various places where Kimberley artists practise are shown in Table 6.12. For both visual and performing artists, working at home or at a family member's home is common (around 70 percent of artists). The importance of community-based art centres in providing a place for visual artists to work is clear, with two-thirds of them working in one of the centres. Performing artists on the other hand need different facilities, and the data show that about half of them use a dedicated studio space, including a recording studio, editing suite, etc. Of particular interest in Table 6.12 is the importance of working on country. One-third of visual artists and almost a half of performers work on country from time to time, a fact that reinforces yet again the significant role that access to country needs to play in any development strategy for Indigenous artists working in remote communities. The places where artists spend the *most* time working are shown in Table 6.13 and Figure 6.6. Art centres emerge again as the most important location nominated by visual artists (48 percent). For performers, given limited access to performing spaces and facilities in remote areas, the places where they work most frequently are their homes, or on country (30 percent each).

¹⁹ See the surveys of individual artists referred to in footnote 2 above.

Table 6.11. Length of experience of creative artists (percent of all respondents)

| Art forms | 1-2 years | 3-5 years | 6-10 years | 11-20 years | 20+ years | Total |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-------------|-----------|------------|
| | % | % | % | % | % | % |
| Visual artists (n=80) | 7 | 15 | 8 | 15 | 55 | 100 |
| Performing artists (n=18) | 0 | 4 | 28 | 4 | 65 | 100 |
| All creative artists (n=112) | 6 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 52 | 100 |

Table 6.12. Usual places of practice (percent of all respondents)*

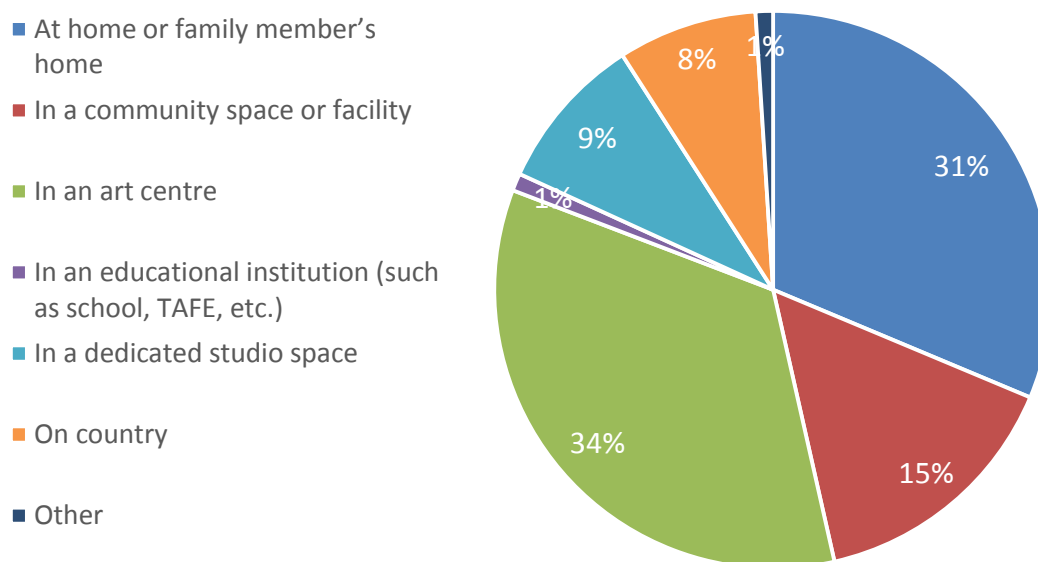
| Place of practice | Visual artists (n=80) | Performing artists (n=18) | All creative artists (n=112) |
|---|-----------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| | % | % | % |
| At home or family member's home | 69 | 71 | 68 |
| In a community space or facility | 21 | 34 | 23 |
| In an art centre | 66 | 11 | 50 |
| In an educational institution (such as school, TAFE, etc.) | 6 | 18 | 8 |
| In a dedicated studio space, such as artist studio, recording studio or editing suite | 4 | 47 | 18 |
| On country | 33 | 46 | 35 |
| Other | 1 | 16 | 4 |

*Multiple responses allowed

Table 6.13. Most common place of practice (percent of all respondents)

| Place of practice | Visual artists (n=80) | Performing artists (n=18) | All creative artists (n=112) |
|---|-----------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| | % | % | % |
| At home or family member's home | 31 | 30 | 31 |
| In a community space or facility | 14 | 18 | 15 |
| In an art centre | 48 | 0 | 34 |
| In an educational institution (such as school, TAFE, etc.) | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| In a dedicated studio space, such as artist studio, recording studio or editing suite | 1 | 12 | 9 |
| On country | 5 | 30 | 8 |
| Other | 0 | 7 | 1 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Figure 6.6. Most common place for creative artistic practice (artists across all art forms)



Artists in this survey were asked whether they would like to be spending more or less time on working at their principal artistic occupation. Only five percent of respondents said they would prefer to spend less time, as seen in Table 6.14. About half of the visual artists indicated they were happy with the status quo, with just over 40 percent wanting to do more. By contrast, the great majority of performers (about 80 percent) would like to spend more time at their principal creative work. However, no clear picture emerged as to the reasons why those artists who would like to spend more time at their PAO do not do so. For some, family or health-related issues were noted as taking precedence, and the work of some performers was constrained by lack of local facilities. Apart from these obstacles, a range of specific issues were identified by individuals, including: lack of materials, equipment and facilities; lack of skills or experience; and the discouragement presented by difficulties of getting work to market.

Table 6.14. Satisfaction with time allocation to creative artistic work (percent of all respondents)

| Willing to spend less, about the same or more time on PAO | Visual artists (n=80) | Performing artists (n=18) | All creative artists (n=112) |
|---|-----------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| | % | % | % |
| Less time | 7 | 0 | 5 |
| About the same | 49 | 21 | 43 |
| More time | 43 | 79 | 51 |
| Don't know | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Looking at this situation from a different perspective, it is possible to identify issues relating to professional practice that may have a positive effect in enabling artists to do what they do, or in encouraging them to continue. Table 6.15 shows a range of professional experiences that artists may have had that could have had positive (or possibly negative) effects on their practice, and the overall effect of these experiences is shown in Table 6.16. We make the following observations on the data presented in these tables.

Table 6.15. Professional experiences of creative artists (percent of respondents)

| Previous professional experience | Visual artists (n=80) | Performing artists (n=18) | All creative artists (n=112) |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| | % | % | % |
| Showing your work overseas (such as in an exhibition or festival or publishing a book or recording, etc.) | 36 | 20 | 35 |
| Showing your work in capital cities (such as in an exhibition or festival or publishing a book or recording, etc.) | 61 | 70 | 64 |
| Winning an award or prize | 26 | 30 | 32 |
| Being managed by an art centre, community organisation or artist-run initiative | 84 | 24 | 70 |
| Being managed by a private company (such as a commercial gallery, record company or publisher) | 5 | 25 | 10 |
| Working with an established artist/ writer | 22 | 55 | 28 |
| Taking a loan to continue your work | 0 | 22 | 5 |
| Receiving a grant or funding to continue your work | 1 | 51 | 15 |
| None of these | 7 | 26 | 11 |

Firstly, in regard to the management, marketing and promotion of their work, around 70 percent of respondents said their work was managed by an art centre or similar non-commercial organisation, and of these the great majority (95 percent) regard this as having had a positive impact on their work. Only ten percent of artists were managed by private (commercial) companies, and although more than half of these were satisfied, about one-third thought the effect was negative.

A particular avenue for career development for remote artists is via showing work in major Australian cities or overseas, such as in an exhibition or festival, or by publishing a book, releasing a recording and so on. Around one-third of artists had had their work exposed overseas, and a third had experienced capital cities exposure – respondents ranked the effects of both as strongly positive, especially for overseas exposure. When compared with the national artists' data for 2009, it appears that in proportional terms only slightly fewer Aboriginal artists from the Kimberley have an overseas experience (35 percent) than all artists Australia-wide (38 percent).²⁰ Similar comparisons for the specific art forms show that there is not a significant difference in the visual arts – only slightly more Aboriginal visual artists have overseas exposure (36 percent) compared with visual artists Australia-wide (29 percent). However, the difference is more dramatic for performing artists – just one-fifth for the Kimberley Aboriginal artists compared to almost two-

²⁰ Throsby and Zednik (2010: 38).

fifths (37 percent) nation-wide. Other aspects of professional experience that artists have benefited from include working with an established artist, winning an award or prize, receiving a grant or taking a loan to continue creative practice. As Table 6.16 shows, all of these experiences have been overwhelmingly positive, except the experience of taking a loan – this experience was overall perceived by respondents as “fairly negative”.

Table 6.16. Significance of the professional experiences (weighted average score)

| Significance of the previous professional experience | Visual artists (n=74) | Performing artists (n=13) | All creative artists (n=100) |
|--|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| | Weighted average score* | | |
| Showing your work overseas (such as in an exhibition or festival or publishing a book or recording, etc.) | 4.6 | 4.4 | 4.8 |
| Showing your work in capital cities (such as in an exhibition or festival or publishing a book or recording, etc.) | 4.3 | 4.0 | 4.4 |
| Winning an award or prize | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.6 |
| Being managed by an art centre, community organisation or artist-run initiative | 4.6 | 4.3 | 4.4 |
| Being managed by a private company (such as a commercial gallery, record company or publisher) | 4.5 | 3.0 | 3.5 |
| Working with an established artist/ writer | 4.4 | 4.2 | 4.3 |
| Taking a loan to continue your work | - | 2.9 | 1.9 |
| Receiving a grant or funding to continue your work | 5.0 | 4.4 | 4.8 |

* 0 – “Don’t know”; 1 – “Very negative”; 2 – “Fairly negative”; 3 – “No effect”; 4 – “Fairly positive”; 5 – “Very positive”

The survey data show that visual artists working in a remote community typically do not rely on technologies in the production of art works. In fact about 80 percent of visual artists in our sample do not use any of the common forms of technology in their artistic work. Those that do make use of technologies employ a range of different image-making devices, as shown in Table 6.17. On the other hand, performing artists such as musicians are more likely to utilise technologies in their practice, with around 80 percent doing so. Table 6.17 shows that again a range of devices is used, this time with an emphasis on equipment with sound capturing and reproducing capabilities.

Two further professional practice issues are of interest. Firstly, although there exist some programs providing grants to individual artists, the majority of artists in our sample (75 percent) did not apply for a grant last year. Of those who did apply, most did not do so themselves – someone else applied on their behalf (most common among performing artists) or an organisation applied on behalf of a group (most common among visual artists). Because of the fact that the artists themselves were not directly involved in the application process, and many of them were grouped with others in the application, about 40 percent of artists who applied did not know the outcome. For around 60 percent, the application was successful. It is interesting to compare these findings with the data in Table 6.15, which shows that only one percent of all individual visual artists have experienced receiving a grant directly to continue their practice, while more than half of performance artists have received such a grant or funding.

Table 6.17. Use of technology by artists in the production of art works (percent of those who use technology)

| Use of technology (among those who use technology) | Visual artists (n=17) | Performing artists (n=14) | All creative artists (n=46) |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | % | % | % |
| Websites | 11 | 20 | 23 |
| Social media platforms | 20 | 47 | 39 |
| Desktop computer, laptop computer, iPad, etc. | 32 | 66 | 61 |
| Mobile or smart phones | 37 | 61 | 52 |
| Still photography camera | 42 | 22 | 38 |
| Video or film equipment | 24 | 24 | 33 |
| Sound recording or playing equipment | 9 | 58 | 49 |
| Other | 6 | 0 | 2 |

The second issue of interest is copyright. Like any other artists, Indigenous artists' work may be subject to unauthorised reproduction or other infringement of the artist's rights. Among visual artists the majority of our sample did not think that their creative work had ever been reproduced without their permission. The proportion of Aboriginal visual artists in our survey whose copyright is known to have been infringed is one percent, a significantly lower number than the proportion of all visual artists working Australia-wide (30 percent). This can be explained by the fact that a large proportion of Aboriginal visual artists in the region (84 percent) have experienced working with an art centre, community organisation or artist-run initiative; these organisations have been very active in ensuring copyright protection of the artworks and educating their artists about the copyright issues. On the other hand, almost two in five of performing artists believed that some unauthorised use of their creative work had occurred. This is a sufficiently large number to be of concern, particularly when compared with all performing artists Australia-wide (20 percent). Perhaps this can be explained by the fact that the performing artists in the Kimberley do not have as much support as the visual artists – only a relatively small proportion (just under a quarter) of Aboriginal performing artists in the region have been supported by an art centre, community organisation or artist-run initiative. Details of these responses are shown in Table 6.18.

6.6 FINANCIAL RESULTS

The use of population surveys as a means of collecting data about people's incomes and expenditures faces particular difficulties. Such information is private and respondents are often sensitive about divulging details of their financial affairs. These considerations are just as relevant to Aboriginal people as they are to anyone else. Having said that, however, we can report that we received full cooperation in this regard from respondents to our survey; no-one refused to provide information about their incomes, and all did so to the extent that they could. This significant result is a testimony to the fact that we placed a great deal of stress on securing the confidence and trust of the artists we interviewed, as we have described in Section 5 above.

Nevertheless, despite such cooperation from interviewees, there remain serious constraints on deriving accurate income data in a survey such as this. Many of the respondents have low numeracy levels²¹ and most do not keep accurate accounting records. Many of the respondents also could not recall exactly how much they have received as income and when it might have been received, particularly as most receive income from a variety of sources. Moreover, monies paid to Indigenous artists could also be immediately shared with family members and others, so it is not clear how much of any payment actually accrues to the individual.

Table 6.18. Infringement of copyright in creative work

| Infringement of artists' copyright | This Survey | | | Artists' Survey 2009* | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | Visual artists (n=80) | Performing artists (n=18) | All creative artists (n=112) | Visual artists (n=201) | Performing artists (n=492) | All creative artists (n=1,031) |
| | % | % | % | | | |
| No | 93 | 59 | 85 | 68 | 76 | 72 |
| Yes | 1 | 36 | 9 | 30 | 20 | 25 |
| Don't know/ Not sure | 6 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 4 | 3 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

*Source: Throsby and Zednik (2009: 61).

We were able to deal with these problems for the component of income derived from creative work through the following avenues. For those visual artists whose creative income was managed more or less solely through an organisation, such as an art centre or gallery, we were able to collect accurate statistics direct from the organisation – of course we obtained the written permission of the artists to allow us to access their income data in this way. In regard to other types of artists, a number of them were paid as employees (e.g. filmmakers, multimedia artists), so again their salaries could be determined.

For income from other cultural and non-cultural activities recollection was often hazy, particularly as there were generally multiple sources of income in varying amounts during any given period. For example, Government benefits are affected by other income earned in the same period; similarly, income from art sales or performances is likely to be intermittent and variable. In cases where the respondent received a more consistent income through salary or wages (e.g. as a ranger, arts worker, teacher, administrator) more precision was possible. Other sources of income (non-work) were even more difficult to pin down. In the full sample, a number stated that in the last twelve months they had been supported by income from a partner (18 percent of respondents) or money received from family (21 percent), and approximately half of the respondents had received unemployment or other government benefits, such as pensions. These sources were likely to be irregular, such that respondents had difficulty nominating the total amount they would have received last year.

In all cases it was not possible to obtain precise dollar figures; rather, we asked respondents to choose the range within which their income fell. In compiling tables from these data, we assume the point estimate to be the mid-point of the range.

²¹ For data on competency levels derived from a survey of a small sample of Indigenous arts workers carried out for Desart in 2014, see Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (2014); see also Wright (2000).

Bearing all these issues in mind, we present in Table 6.19 the estimated average incomes received last year by visual artists and performers in our survey, covering both creative and other types of work. We have not included other artists separately in the table – composers, authors, filmmakers and multimedia artists – because the sample sizes are too small for statistical validity. Since many of these other artists are working in salaried jobs, as noted above, their creative income tends to be greater than for the visual artists and performers; this raises the mean creative income for all artists, as is evident in the first row of Table 6.19. The total creative income of Indigenous Kimberley artists (\$10.6 thousand) is considerably less than that for all Australian artists, which in the 2007-08 financial year was \$18.9 thousand.²²

Table 6.19. Estimated average income earned last year from different types of work: visual artists, performing artists and all artists (\$,000)

| Type of work | Visual artists (n=80) | Performing artists (n=18) | All creative artists (n=112) |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| | \$'000 | \$'000 | \$'000 |
| Creative artistic activities | 8.1 | 9.5 | 10.6 |
| Other cultural activities | 4.1 | 13.4 | 5.7 |
| Other non-cultural work | 3.1 | 7.0 | 5.4 |
| Total income from work | 15.3 | 29.9 | 21.7 |
| Other sources of income | 8.0 | 2.8 | 6.1 |
| Total income from all sources | 23.2 | 32.7 | 27.8 |

We show in Table 6.20 the proportions of the total incomes of artists made up by creative, arts-related and non-arts income for both the Kimberley artists in our survey, and all Australian practising professional artists. A broad similarity can be seen between the distributions for the Kimberley artists and all Australian artists, with just under half of their incomes (41 and 46 percent respectively) coming from creative work, and between one-quarter and one-third coming from non-arts work. However there are more noticeable differences for the different artforms – for example, the relative disadvantage in creative income shares for Kimberley performers compared with performers Australia-wide is apparent. We also find that the Kimberley Aboriginal artists rely somewhat less on income from work outside the cultural sector than do artists Australia-wide. Our sample indicates that Aboriginal visual and performing artists practising in the Kimberley receive about 20–25 percent of their work income from non-cultural work, while all Australian artists nation-wide who are engaged in these two art forms receive about one-third of their work income from work outside the arts.

Notwithstanding the importance of earned income to the livelihood of practising artists in the Kimberley, more than two-thirds of respondents in our survey (70 percent) indicated that they had relied on income from another source in the last 12 months. Among different sources of external income about half of all artists (53 percent) received unemployment or other government welfare benefits, such as a pension (age or disability), parental leave payments and so on. The dependency on government pensions and allowances is somewhat lower for artists than for the Indigenous adult population in general - the NATSISS 2014-15 data show that 63 percent of Indigenous adults in very remote areas of WA received a government pension or allowance. Our data indicate that mining royalties (distributed via community trusts) also provide additional

²² Throsby and Zednik (2009: 45).

income to 18 percent of artists; and a small proportion of artists (4 percent) received a loan from a financial institution. Almost one fifth of the Kimberley artists rely on the incomes of their partners (18 percent) and about one fifth (21 percent) receive financial support from their families. It is interesting to compare these results with similar data for all professional artists in Australia. It appears that for Aboriginal artists in the Kimberley the support of their partners is a significantly less important factor in advancing their creative careers than it is for all artists Australia-wide; around two-thirds of all artists Australia-wide who live with a spouse or partner regard that person's income as important in sustaining their creative work. Indeed in remote Aboriginal communities such as are found in the Kimberley, anecdotal evidence suggests a reverse of this situation – Aboriginal artists in these communities are more likely to be supporting their partners than the other way round.

Table 6.20. Share of estimated average annual incomes: Indigenous Kimberley artists and all Australian artists (percent)

| Type of income | Indigenous Kimberley artists | | | All Australian artists | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| | Visual artists | Performing artists | All creative artists | Visual artists | Performing artists | All creative artists |
| | % | % | % | % | % | % |
| Creative income | 53 | 32 | 41 | 44 | 52 | 46 |
| Arts/culture-related income | 27 | 45 | 14 | 22 | 21 | 21 |
| Non arts/culture income | 20 | 23 | 45 | 34 | 29 | 33 |
| Total income from work | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

6.7 ROLE OF CULTURAL PRODUCTION IN SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A key issue of concern in this study has been to consider the extent to which art and cultural production has the potential to promote the sustainability of remote communities in the Kimberley region. In the final sections of this Report we will draw together a number of aspects of this issue as indicated or implied by the results of this study. In the present section we present some data on the opinions and attitudes of artists themselves as to the importance of the arts to sustainable community development.

As a component of the survey, we presented respondents with a range of statements, both positive and negative, relating to this question and sought the extent of their agreement or disagreement. We consider the following:

- engagement of young people in art and cultural production
- infrastructure availability
- role of tourism
- educational aspects.

Table 6.21. Opinions regarding impact of arts and cultural activities on the economic sustainability of remote Indigenous communities (weighted average score)

| Statements | Visual artists (n=69) | Performing artists (n=16) | All creative artists (n=96) |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | Weighted average score* | | |
| Artists/ writers like myself can train young people in the community to become artists/ writers | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.5 |
| Artistic activities like painting, music, dance, writing, can provide jobs and incomes for young people in my community | 4.4 | 4.5 | 4.5 |
| Cultural maintenance activities can provide jobs and incomes for young people in my community | 4.3 | 4.6 | 4.4 |
| The facilities in my community, such as community centres, venues, are not enough to support more artistic activity | 3.6 | 4.0 | 3.7 |
| Having an art centre creates (could create) jobs and incomes in my community | 4.6 | 4.4 | 4.4 |
| Arts-practice workshops can provide people in my community with necessary skills to do more artistic activities | 4.4 | 4.6 | 4.6 |
| It is good (would be good) for tourists to visit our community to see our culture at first hand | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.7 |
| Tourists can bring jobs and incomes to my community | 4.4 | 4.3 | 4.5 |
| Over the long term, sales of art and tourism could bring in enough money to make our community sustainable | 3.3 | 3.5 | 3.6 |
| Bilingual education in the school can help young people in my community with jobs and incomes later on | 4.5 | 4.6 | 4.5 |
| Sending young people to study in TAFE or university can help them to become artists/ writers | 4.2 | 3.9 | 3.9 |

* 1 – “Strongly disagree”; 2 – “Disagree”; 3 – “Don’t know/ No opinion”; 4 – “Agree”; 5 – “Strongly agree”

Details of the statements and of the response scores for each one are shown in Table 6.21, where a score of 1.0 indicates strong disagreement, and a score of 5.0 indicates strong agreement. The results are summarised as follows.

First, respondents agreed very strongly that artistic activities such as painting, music, dance and writing can provide jobs and incomes for young people in their community (97 percent of respondents). For cultural maintenance activities, the employment and revenue-generating potential was seen to be almost as strong; even so, a significant majority (87 percent) saw these activities as having economic potential. Respondents noted a significant role for practising artists in all art forms in training others to become artists, reaffirming the importance of inter- and intra-generational transmission of knowledge and skills that we have observed earlier in this Report.

In regard to infrastructure, there was virtually unanimous endorsement of the economic importance of art centres; for those respondents from communities with an existing art centre, this importance was an

observable reality, whereas those artists from communities without such a facility could only say that having an art centre would potentially create jobs and incomes in their community. In this regard, there would appear to be scope for further infrastructure development in some remote communities, with around 70 percent of respondents agreeing with the proposition that facilities such as community centres, venues, etc. in their community at present were not enough to support more artistic activity.

The third issue we considered was a possible role for cultural tourism. As we have already noted, although cultural tourism exists in the Kimberley, the industry remains relatively underdeveloped. Artists in our survey acknowledged unanimously the cultural value in having tourists visiting their communities to experience their culture at first hand. Moreover there was very strong agreement (93 percent of respondents) that tourists can bring jobs and incomes to their communities. These results suggest that there is some enthusiasm amongst the artist population of the Kimberley to see an expansion in cultural tourism in the region.

Finally we turn to education and training as avenues for economic and cultural development. Respondents endorsed the importance of bilingual education in school (94 percent of respondents); not only is this essential for the maintenance of Indigenous languages, the dual nature of such educational programs is seen to help young people in the community to get jobs and earn incomes later on. In a post-school context, the value of arts-practice workshops in providing people in the community with the skills to do more artistic activities was supported by 97 percent of respondents. More formal course programs such as those available in TAFE and university were not seen in such a positive light – about 80 percent of respondents were in favour, with 20 percent voicing a neutral or negative view of the value of such programs.

The results presented above paint a reasonably optimistic picture of a potential role for art and cultural production in supporting sustainable development of remote communities in the Kimberley. However, artists expressed some uncertainty when looking at the longer term; there was a mixed response to the proposition: “Over the longer term, sales of art and tourism could help bring in enough money to make our community sustainable”. Although a majority of artists (57 percent) agreed with this proposition, a significant minority disagreed (30 percent). The inference to be drawn from all the data discussed above is that while the development of the art economy in the Kimberley has significant potential to contribute to community sustainability, the market on its own will be insufficient. It would appear that continued targeted support will be required, as we will discuss further in the final sections of this Report.

7. POLICY ISSUES ARISING FROM THIS STUDY

This survey has provided data that can contribute to evidence-based policy making not only specifically for the Kimberley but also in a wider State and national context²³. Some relevant issues are the following:

Indigenous cultural capital – an unrealised resource

The survey data indicate the substantial stock of cultural capital in the Indigenous artist population of the Kimberley. The knowledge and skills of this population already contribute significant levels of cultural goods and services to the regional economy. But the data show considerable untapped potential – artists able and willing to work at cultural production but unable for various reasons to do so.

Integration of economic, social and cultural development

This study has clearly demonstrated the pervasive nature of cultural engagement among the population of cultural practitioners in the Kimberley, extending beyond the creative arts to include arts- and culture-related activities. Artists understand the fundamental significance of these latter activities in supporting the

²³ The strategic policy directions discussed in this section are consistent with the proposed “Cultural Investment Strategy” for Western Australia as put forward in the Discussion Paper *Investing in Aboriginal Culture: The Role of Culture in Gaining More Effective Outcomes from WA State Government Services*. (DCA Reference 15/751, May 2016).

arts and cultural sector in the region. The survey data show that on average artists have been engaged in six or seven of arts- and culture-related activities during their lifetime in addition to two or three creative artistic activities. Moreover, economic development through expansion of art and cultural production goes hand in hand with social development, flowing from the well-recognised benefits of the arts to community life and social cohesion. All of these considerations indicate that development strategies need to comprehend the holistic nature of sustainability when applied to remote communities.

Opportunities for small-business development

In many parts of the world, growth of the cultural industries at a local level occurs through the development of small businesses producing artistic and cultural goods and services for local or more general consumption. The same could apply in the Kimberley. Our data demonstrate that artists in the Kimberley have skills and experience in a variety of areas relevant to small business development including administration, arts management and governance. One particular area that requires a business orientation in any regional development strategy is tourism; the experience of many artists in cultural tourism presents opportunities for taking advantage of synergies between the art and cultural sector and the tourism industry in the Kimberley that could allow the industry to offer, for example, a wider range of attractive packages associating cultural with eco-tourism. Such initiatives would at the same time open up further art and cultural production possibilities for the Indigenous population. The very cross-cultural environment of the remote Indigenous communities presents other associated business opportunities that come with a growth in the tourism industry – for example, translation and interpretation services, cross cultural consulting services and cultural education services.

At a practical level, it can be pointed out that small business start-ups begin with individuals coming together, such as the individual artists and cultural practitioners depicted in this study. Policy can facilitate this process by providing small-business support services, investment advice, assistance with finance and so on, for groups aiming to set up or expand creative businesses in the region. The potential links between cultural policy and strategies for industry, business and regional development strongly suggest a need for policy coordination in this area.

Cultural maintenance

An essential aspect of sustainability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture is to ensure that mechanisms for cultural maintenance are protected and encouraged. This study provides a range of evidence that illuminates the significance of cultural maintenance in the activities of artists in the Kimberley, including the extent of their participation in cultural maintenance processes and the vital role of intergenerational cultural transmission that is seen in the pathways by which cultural knowledge and skills are handed down from generation to generation in remote communities. The impact of other maintenance activities such as archiving, teaching, participating in governance and so on may be less obvious but are no less important in sustaining the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of Indigenous people. The study also finds that apart from their cultural and social benefits, cultural maintenance activities offer substantial economic benefits to Indigenous people who engage in them. Opportunities exist for more artists to become involved in these areas, given their existing levels of experience.

Training for the arts and cultural sector

Training programs provided in the region need to acknowledge the “Big Three” educational pathways that have proved to be the most successful in the region: observing/participating with a family member; learning on the job (self-learning); and learning from friends and other community members. Family members are particularly important and their role and that of the two other pathways need to be considered in the planning of training and educational programs in the region. Arts-practice workshops that provide people in communities with the skills to engage in artistic activities have been successful, and work well in the context of the limitations of services that can be provided to remote communities.

Access to country

It is well understood that the relationship between people and the land is fundamental to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture²⁴. Our survey data underline the critical importance of access to country for Indigenous people, as a source of cultural knowledge and art materials and as a place for creative inspiration and practice. The data provide compelling evidence in support of the need for securing artists' access to country, if art and culture are to become a stronger source of economic empowerment for remote Aboriginal communities in the Kimberley.

Role of art centres

The art centre model has proved to be a major driver of growth in the visual arts industry in many parts of remote Australia, and our data indicate clearly the importance of that role in the Kimberley region. Artists are unequivocal in their recognition of this role in affecting their own individual and community circumstances. Artists in communities which currently do not have an art centre recognise the benefits that might accrue if such a centre were to be established in their community. While the art centre model has been working well, the model will need to rely on a continuation of public and private support in future²⁵ – the centres provide many social services and other public benefits to their artists and the wider community that are outside of their core business operations, but have become essential to the communities they serve.

Need for further infrastructure and services

For art forms other than the visual arts, expansion of activity is constrained in many cases by the lack of infrastructure to support artistic work. In the case of music, for example, some communities could benefit from the establishment of studio space and other facilities to encourage the work particularly of young and emerging musicians. An illustration from outside the Kimberley region is the studio and associated facilities available to the Irrunytju Community in Wingellina in the Ngaanyatjarra Lands (provided via the Broadcasting to Remote Aboriginal Communities Service); this case illustrates the way in which such facilities can encourage creative participation. All forms of infrastructure require resources, and there is much scope for further public-sector engagement and private-sector participation in the further development of infrastructure in the Kimberley that is of direct relevance to the art economy of the region.

Remoteness issues

Difficulties encountered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities that arise because of their remoteness are well known. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that although difficulties associated with remoteness will persist, the arts and cultural sector has some advantages in supporting economic development in remote Indigenous communities when compared with other economic sectors. Firstly, as mentioned before, there is a large pool of people in these communities with cultural competence and relevant experience who may need little or no additional training to do these jobs. Secondly, the infrastructure required to support this sector is relatively small compared to the requirements of other industries. Thirdly, jobs in the arts and cultural sector allow for flexibility to address issues of seasonality, limited access and unstable markets that characterise remote production.

Cultural tourism

The data in this Report point to possibilities for expansion of cultural tourism in the Kimberley, an area that offers considerable economic opportunity either independently or in association with environmental tourism. Scope exists for development of Indigenous business initiatives in this area, perhaps along the lines

²⁴ For a wider discussion of the importance of land in Indigenous cultures, see Throsby and Petetskaya (2016).

²⁵ Note that artists also contribute financially to supporting arts centres through the proportion of their sales income retained by the centres.

of successful ventures that already exist in the region, such as the Wundargoodie Aboriginal Safaris tourism operation in Wyndham, or in other regions, such as the Lirrwi Tourism business in North East Arnhem Land.

8. CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study provide the first comprehensive picture of the circumstances of Aboriginal artists in the Kimberley region. We argue that the visual artists, performing artists, composers, writers, filmmakers and multimedia artists in the region represent a rich resource of cultural capital of significance not just to the Kimberley but to the country and the world. The timeless cultural inheritance of these artists finds its expression in the works they produce. We have argued that the cultural value of this production is of fundamental significance, but also that its deployment for economic gain can in the right circumstances contribute to providing a sustainable basis for remote community development.

Our survey data indicate the wide range of cultural activities in which these artists have engaged during the course of their lives, including the production of artistic goods and services and a range of arts- and culture-related activities. The data emphasise the vital role played by this latter group of activities not only in supporting the continuing production of creative work but also as a source of income in their own right.

A striking result is the importance of being on country. After family transmission, being on country is the second most important pathway for acquiring knowledge. Moreover one-third of visual artists and almost half of all performers work on country from time to time. Both of these facts reinforce the fundamental role that access to country needs to play in any development strategy for Indigenous artists working in remote communities.

We have pointed to the need to understand the working conditions under which individual Indigenous artists in the Kimberley produce their artworks or pursue their artistic activities, as a basis for considering appropriate support and development strategies. The survey data provide a range of information documenting the spread of paid and unpaid work of different types, the allocation of time to different activities, and the nature and amounts of income earned. In particular the survey results illustrate the interconnectedness and the blurring of boundaries between work and life for the Kimberley artists. Cultural activities may be undertaken for purely cultural reasons, with no expectation that they will yield any money. In other cases these activities may be a source of income, either actual or potential; in such cases the value of the work produced or the service provided yields both cultural and economic value. Given the number of cultural practitioners in the region who have skills and experience in the various cultural-economic activities, our data suggest that there is a significant underutilised resource of cultural capital in the Kimberley that has the potential for further production of cultural goods and services that will yield both sorts of value.

The findings of this study provide some pointers for the formulation of regional arts and culture development strategies for the Kimberley. The use of the plural “strategies” is significant, as no single measure, either cultural or otherwise, will provide a “silver bullet” to build sustainability in remote communities. Moreover, there is no “one-size-fits-all” strategy; rather, different needs can be identified in different locations depending on a range of factors. Three particular aspects can be highlighted.

First, production, distribution and marketing of cultural product in any context need to be supported at all stages in the supply chain by adequate infrastructure. In regard to actual creative practice, at the production end of the chain in the Kimberley, visual artists who are fortunate enough to be based in communities or regions where an art centre has been established are supported through the centres, which in most cases receive Government funding. The art centre model has been adapted and developed over the years but has remained resilient in response to a changing environment. This model is a great contributor to the arts and cultural sector and needs to continue to be supported, not least because of the significant public benefits such centres provide in addition to their core activities. Performing artists on the other hand do not have access to widely available facilities to assist in the development of their creative work, and must often rely on their own resources – we found that for many musicians, for example, their main place of work was at home. Many of

the performing artists in the region also face problems with finding opportunities to present their work due to a lack of appropriate venues or events. There are examples in the region of community facilities with a capacity to foster musical work by creative individuals, including radio stations, such as those funded through the Broadcasting to Remote Aboriginal Communities Service. These are the sorts of infrastructure facilities that can make a difference, especially for young people who have the potential to develop their creative skills and perhaps embark on a creative career.

Secondly, the distribution and marketing components of the value chain need to be well established if work produced is to find an appropriate market. The demand for the output of artists may be local, for example a dance performance for visitors, sale of artworks or records through local outlets, or musical performances in local venues. Alternatively, markets may be found beyond the region, and even internationally. To a large extent market development takes place in response to commercial incentives, but there is a role for judicious policy intervention, for example through seed-funding for start-up creative businesses, provision of market intelligence and so on. Such support is particularly required in the relatively less well-developed area of the arts-and-culture-related activities that we have defined in this study. On a local level these activities are regularly provided by artists on a voluntary basis, for example in the form of: translation and interpretation for family or community members; cross-cultural consulting for a family business or local organisation; medicine and health services for self or family use; cultural tourism for friends and visitors to an art centre, and so on. At regional, national and international levels these activities have also been generating some economic opportunities for Aboriginal cultural practitioners who engage in them, for example via cultural archiving and museology services to museums and galleries, or cultural and language education for students outside the region. With the right support there could be significantly more economic opportunities that could be derived from these sorts of activities, contributing in turn to developing a stronger arts and cultural sector in the region.

Thirdly, the role of cultural tourism as a potential revenue source to support art and cultural production in the Kimberley remains to be further explored. There are some limited initiatives in place managed by art centres, and some commercial operators offer arts, cultural or cultural/environmental tours. Our survey found a strong belief amongst artists concerning the potential for cultural tourism: 93 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the proposition that tourists can bring jobs and incomes to their community. They also acknowledged unanimously that tourists should visit their communities in order to experience their culture at first hand.

Overall, the prospect for expanding the role of art and cultural production as a means for generating incomes and jobs in remote communities, especially for young people, appears to be viewed favourably by artists in the Kimberley region. The results of our work support moves to integrate the arts and culture more effectively into regional development strategies, as a source of both economic and cultural empowerment for Indigenous communities.

APPENDIX 1. CONCORDANCE BETWEEN CULTURAL-ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES IN THE KIMBERLEY AND THE AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND STANDARD INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION (ANZSIC) 2006

| Cultural-economic activities | Division – Subdivision | Group – Class |
|--|---|---|
| CREATIVE ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES | | |
| Painting, printmaking, sculpturing, textiles, carvings, weaving, ceramics, glass, jewellery, photography | R Arts and Recreation Services - 90 Creative and Performing Arts Activities | 900 Creative and Performing Arts Activities |
| Performing | R Arts and Recreation Services - 90 Creative and Performing Arts Activities | 900 Creative and Performing Arts Activities |
| Composing or choreographing | R Arts and Recreation Services - 90 Creative and Performing Arts Activities | 900 Creative and Performing Arts Activities |
| Writing or storytelling | R Arts and Recreation Services - 90 Creative and Performing Arts Activities | 900 Creative and Performing Arts Activities |
| Making film, television, audio or multimedia work | J Information Media and Telecommunications – 55 Motion Picture and Sound Recording Activities | 551 Motion Picture and Video Activities; 552 Sound Recording and Music Publishing |
| ARTS- AND-CULTURE-RELATED ACTIVITIES | | |
| Participating in ceremonies | S Other Services - 95 Personal and Other Services | 954 Religious Services |
| Interpreting, translating or cross-cultural consulting | M Professional, Scientific and Technical Services - 69 Professional, Scientific And Technical Services (Except Computer System Design And Related Services) | 699 Other Professional, Scientific and Technical Services |
| Cultural archiving, record keeping | J Information Media and Telecommunications – 60 Library and Other Information Services R Arts and Recreation Services - 89 Heritage Activities | 601 Libraries and Archives 891 Museum Operation |
| Serving on a cultural board, committee or council | O Public Administration and Safety - 75 Public Administration ²⁶ | 751 Central Government Administration; 752 State Government Administration; 753 Local Government Administration |
| Teaching others in arts and cultural activities | P Education and Training 82 Adult, Community and Other Education | 821 Adult, Community and Other Education; 822 Educational Support Services |
| Caring for country | R Arts and Recreation Services Subdivision - 89 Heritage Activities | 892 Parks and Gardens Operations |
| Fishing, hunting, gathering or preparing bush food | A Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing - 04 Fishing, Hunting and Trapping Q Health Care and Social Assistance - 85 Medical and Other Health Care Services | 041 Fishing; 042 Hunting and Trapping 851 Medical Services |

²⁶ Excluding the management of commercial and business activities or activities other than central, state or local government administration are included in the classes appropriate to these activities.

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| Making Indigenous medicines or cosmetics or providing Indigenous health services | C Manufacturing - 18 Basic Chemical and Chemical Product Manufacturing | 184 Pharmaceutical and Medicinal Product Manufacturing |
| Arts management | M Professional, Scientific and Technical Services - 69 Professional, Scientific And Technical Services (Except Computer System Design And Related Services) | 696 Management and Related Consulting Services |
| Arts administration | N Administrative and Support Services - 72 Administrative Services | 729 Other Administrative Services |
| Providing cultural tourism services | N Administrative and Support Services - 72 Administrative Services | 722 Travel Agency and Tour Arrangement Services |

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