



# EVENTS STRATEGY

2024–2028



Version 3  
December 2024



## Acknowledgement of Country

Woollahra Council acknowledges the  
Gadigal and Birrabirragal people who are the  
Traditional Custodians of this land and we pay our  
respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Artwork by Jordan Ardler (detail)



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**Cover Image:** *French Soiree* cultural event at  
Kiaora Lane, Double Bay.  
Woollahra Preschool celebrating NAIDOC Week.



# Message from the Mayor and General Manager



Woollahra Council hosts and supports a wide range of events that meet the diverse needs of our community and visitors to our beautiful area.

We recognise the social and economic value of events and the opportunity events provide to bring people together. Events provide us with a unique chance to foster community connection and demonstrate our Vision, Mission and values, and showcase our wonderful venues and open spaces.

This Events Strategy will help inform the decisions we make on new events and guide the actions we take to improve our events and ensure they are enjoyable, memorable and contribute to community wellbeing.

**Councillor Sarah Swan**  
Mayor of Woollahra



Our event purposes vary from providing opportunities to raise awareness, educate, celebrate and demonstrate our commitment to diversity, inclusion and sustainability.

Events help shape a sense of place and generate local pride and community engagement. They also provide our community with opportunities to share interests, ideas and creativity and stimulate the local economy.

This Events Strategy identifies four pillars, that will help us continue to develop and support a program of events that we are proud to manage and support. The pillars are:

1. Enhance community lifestyle and culture
2. Increase local social and economic benefits
3. Foster partnerships and collaboration
4. Drive excellence and continuous improvement.

There are many benefits to be gained from our commitment to evolving and improving our event offerings.

I am looking forward to seeing our event program and partnerships develop so we can offer the best possible experiences and outcomes for our community,

**Craig Swift-McNair**  
General Manager

# Woollahra Council's Vision

A thriving, inclusive, sustainable and resilient community that will benefit future generations.

## Our Mission

To lead climate action and promote respectful connections between people and place, so we can enhance, protect and celebrate Woollahra's beauty, heritage and quality of life, for the enjoyment of all.

## Our Values

Respect

Open

Accountable

Responsive

Excellence



# Executive summary

## Overview

An event is an organised group activity open to members of the community for purposeful gathering of people to achieve social, cultural, recreational and economic objectives.

Woollahra Council hosts hundreds of diverse events and programs every year, attended by thousands of residents and visitors. We aim to provide, welcoming, engaging, memorable and positive experiences for event participants and organisers.

We also support a wide range of events through the annual grants programs, donations and sponsorships, and in-kind support. We recognise that events provide us with incredible opportunities to connect with our community, celebrate important days and social issues, build awareness, educate, share skills and experience, collaborate with local organisations, demonstrate our Vision, Mission and values, stimulate the local economy and positively impact on our reputation and brand.

We are committed to supporting inclusive and accessible events which meet child safety and diversity standards.

There are also many third-party events that are delivered within our local government area that are not directly funded or supported by us, that require our approval or assistance. This Strategy addresses the kind of customer experience we offer these individuals or organisations which is important to our brand and reputation.

We are keen to ensure events make a positive contribution to our community.

Council's event staff are dedicated to offering professional events that are well received and address the dynamic needs or issues within the broader community. Continuous improvement is driven by formal and informal event feedback from the community and event attendees.

Our Event Strategy identifies pillars as focus areas and each pillar includes actions that will that will help guide our decisions on event delivery and support.

## Our strategic pillars are:

1. Enhance community lifestyle and culture
2. Increase local social and economic benefits
3. Foster partnerships and collaboration
4. Drive excellence and continuous improvement.

Each pillar has associated actions for the next 4 years which will promote community wellbeing, improve brand recognition, enhance professionalism and good governance, and maximise partnership and collaboration opportunities, to achieve social and economic benefits and positive customer experiences.

In the development of this Strategy we have been informed by recommendations of Council's Events Service Review 2023 (ESR). The Review included consultation with Council staff, Councillors, and relevant stakeholders. This Strategy has also been informed by consultation with staff and members of the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee and the Inclusion Advisory Committee, prior to consideration by Council.

# Executive Summary

Events offer a range of benefits, including:

- Create community connection, inclusion and participation
- Enhance social, mental, emotional and physical wellbeing
- Mobilise people to take action
- Increase creativity and innovation
- Positively impact on quality of life, liveability and sense of community pride and place
- Encourage collaboration, partnership, networking and volunteering.
- Drive awareness and action on climate change, environmental issues and sustainability,
- Generate cultural awareness and respect for our Indigenous heritage, history, language and truth telling
- Boost our brand and help deliver opportunities for Council to demonstrate leadership
- Deliver economic benefit, generate employment and promote visitation
- Provide opportunities for fun, entertainment, education and skills development
- Help us showcase our amazing location, wonderful assets and commitment to customer experience.

Gamay Dancers, Murray Rose Pool, Double Bay





# Our events profile

Woollahra Council hosts hundreds of one-off and reoccurring events each year, attended by thousands of residents and visitors. Our diverse portfolio of events includes exhibitions, workshops, talks, celebrations and experiences.

**Event types:**

**1. Public events organised and funded by Woollahra Council (see table).**



Citizenship Ceremony 2024, Woollahra Council

Event Category	Examples	Number of Events/Programs	Approx Attendance
Civic	Citizenship Ceremonies, International Women's Day, Anzac Day, Annual Community Reception.	17	1,820
Community Development	Seniors Week, Youth Week, Reconciliation Day, NAIDOC Week, Philosophy Club, Mental Health First Aid.	31	1,113
Woollahra Gallery	Small Sculpture Prize, Youth Photographic Award & Short Film Prize, Program of art exhibitions, Art workshops.	38	5,604
Library	Author Talks, Book Week, Digital Literary Award, Library programs for children, youth, adults and older people.	915	20,094
Preschool	Intergenerational program, Early learning sessions, Mother's Day, Father's Day and Grandparent's Day, fundraisers	26	2,224
Recycling and sustainability	Recycle it Saturday, International Composting Awareness Week, Environmental and educational programs, National Tree Day, Clean up Australia Day, Whale Walks, National Plant a Tree Day, Habitat Workshops.	74	1,999
		<b>1,101</b>	<b>32,854</b>

“Hi there! I can only say it was an amazing event last night.  
I was so happy to become an Australian citizen!  
Thank you everyone, and thank you Australia!”  
**Citizenship Ceremony attendee**



# Our events profile

## **2. Public events organised by individuals or external organisations that are funded or formally supported by Council (including through grants, donations and sponsorships).**

For example: Hot Jazz Picnic, German Cultural Day, Watsons Bay Markets, Dementia Alliance Intergenerational Connections through Art, Workshops and Morning Tea, Chanukah @ The Bay, Rockpool residency, Head On, Yoga Walks, South Head Anglican Parish Community Lunches, McKell Park Painting Group, Paddo Collective – Week of Live Music, Paddington Chamber of Commerce Collective, Double Bay Christmas Fair and Holdsworth Programs (Wellness Hub, Playgroup, Connect Program for older People, Men's Chat Group).

“Through our placemaking grants we have seen some creative and innovative activation ideas come to life that have helped boost support for local businesses and our unique urban villages,”

**James Granter, Coordinator Economic Development, Woollahra Council**



Intergenerational activity, Cultural Hub



# Our events profile

## **3. Third party events managed by individuals or external organisations using our venues or places for hire, requiring Council approval, permits or similar.**

For example: Organic markets at Double Bay (Thursdays), private birthday parties, City to Surf, Commercial pop-ups in parks and business and organisational meetings (AGM's, workshops, etc.) and corporate and public events in Library spaces for hire eg. Shalom literary events..

Events are promoted through Council's communication channels including: social media, enews, print newsletter, media interviews, editorial, advertising, flyers, posters, digital displays and website.

"Thanks for all your assistance in helping me to book Cooper Park Hall. It was a fantastic space for my daughter's birthday party last week. Everyone commented on how great the renovation looks too."

**Julia (Cooper Park Community Hall)**

Thursday Markets, Guilfoyle Park, Double Bay





# Woollahra at a glance

Woollahra LGA is surrounded by beautiful beaches, Sydney harbour and natural parklands, making it the perfect location for events.



Population  
**53,496**



Median age  
**41 years**



People per household **2.23**



Families **13,761**

Number of kids per family **1.8**

Couples with children **40%**



Couples without children **46.6%**



Single parent households **7.1%**

Age	Number
0–4	2,437
5–18	7,241
19–35	12,272
36–60	17,423
61–69	5,569
70–84	6,830
85+	1,723
<b>Total</b>	<b>53,496</b>



LGA Indigenous or Torres Strait Islander Population **0.3%**



Need for assistance due to a disability (2021)

**1,552**



Businesses active and registered for GST

**10,780**



Jobs in the LGA

**22,856**



Housholds earning more than \$3,000 per week

**50.1%**

Source: Census 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics  
dbr.abs.gov.au



“We partner with the City of Sydney and Waverley Councils to host regular Recycle it Saturday events that encourage our community to help us reduce the amount of waste going to landfill and the verbal feedback we receive has been very positive.”

**Pamela Mina, Waste Projects Coordinator,  
Woollahra Council**

“One of the best IWD events I’ve attended. The panel speakers were so engaging and the audience Q & A, very interesting event, along with the visual presentation on women’s depiction in photography. Well done”.

**Anne, Woollahra local and International  
Women’s Day 2024 attendee**



**18.8% of our population  
does voluntary work.**

Woollahra Council has over 200 active volunteers, collectively they provide 7,100 hours of service to our community. Our youngest is 14 and our eldest is in their 80s. Some have been with us just a short while, others have provided more than 20 years of service.

We are so grateful for the time, skills and energy our volunteers give our organisation and our community.

Source: Woollahra Council Data 2024

“Was wonderful to plant with everyone!  
Thanks for digging in.”

**Social media comment for National Tree Day 2023**



National Tree Day 2023, a popular event for local families

## Events Strategy and actions 2024–2028

### Our Vision

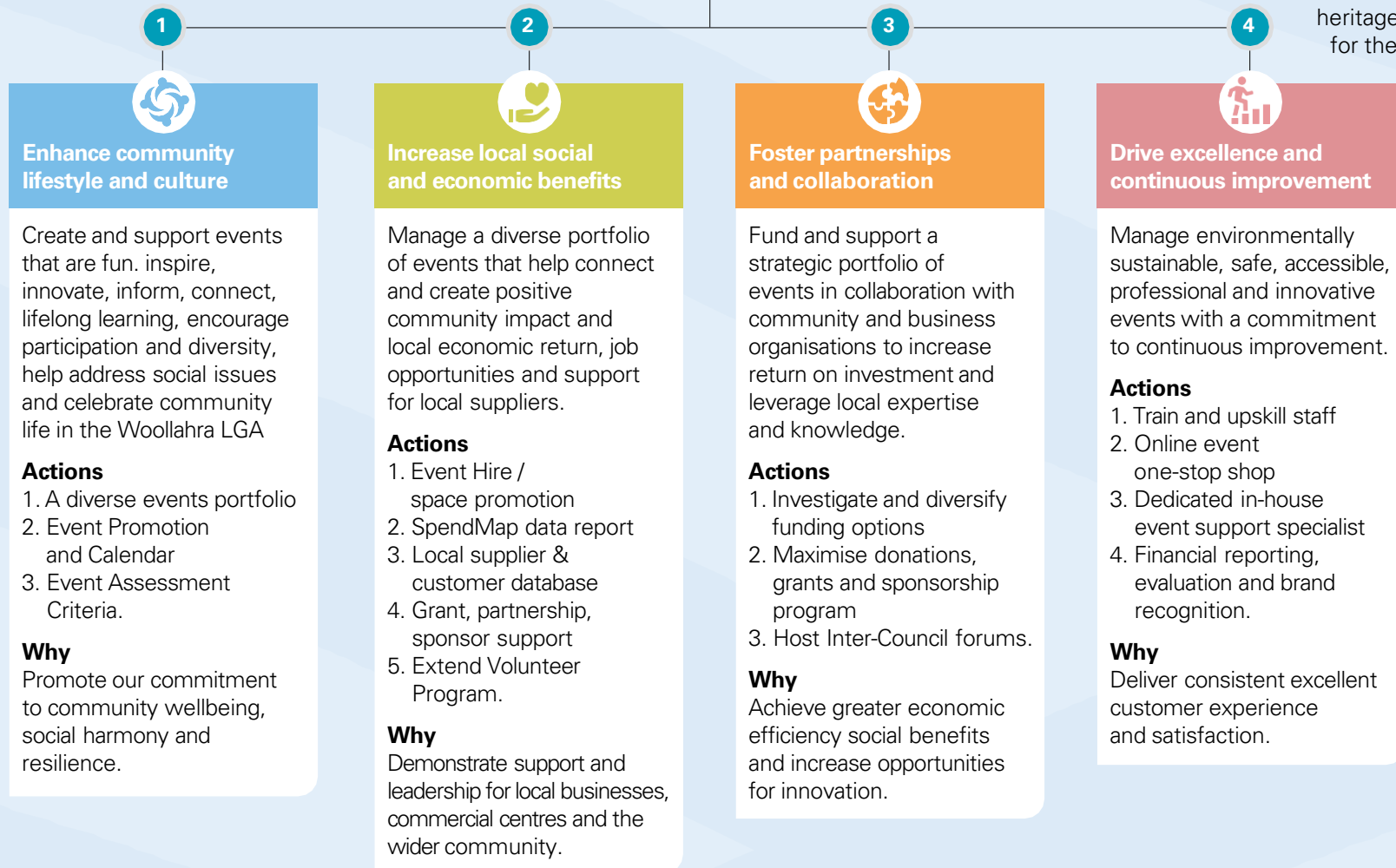
A thriving, inclusive, sustainable and resilient community that will benefit future generations

Our local events create social connection, celebrate community lifestyle, promote lifelong learning and information sharing, support the local economy and develop partnerships.

### Our Mission

To lead climate action and promote respectful connections between people and place, so we can enhance, protect and celebrate Woollahra's beauty, heritage and quality of life, for the enjoyment of all.

### Our 4 Pillars





## Enhance community lifestyle and culture



Heart in Art opening, Woollahra Gallery at Redleaf

We will choose to support and deliver engaging and relevant events and programs that promote community wellbeing and connection, celebrate our diversity and recognise First Nations people and history.

By delivering a diverse range of community events that promote our commitment to inclusion, resilience, accessibility, sustainability and a sense of place, we will receive public recognition for our support and generate the opportunity to build greater awareness of our priorities, services and projects.

	Actions*	Timeframe	Division
1.1	Continue to deliver and promote a range of events that are well received and reflect the dynamic interests, innovative ideas, social issues and needs of the community and Council's Vision, Mission and Operational Plan priorities.	Ongoing	All
1.2	We will provide a well maintained online annual What's On events calendar and resources.	Progressed	Communications and Engagement
1.3	We will develop and maintain event assessment criteria within our Events Policy that helps us to decide what events we support and deliver. Having a clear and transparent decision making process will improve our customer experience and brand.	Ongoing	Communications and Engagement in consultation with events staff

\*The actions outlined in each pillar respond to the Events Service Review recommendations.

## Increase local social and economic benefits



Family fun, Lyne Park Rose Bay

Council will demonstrate civic leadership by supporting and delivering events that produce benefits for the community, local businesses and commercial centres, and encourage greater visitation and local spend.

Council is in a unique leadership position to create and manage an events portfolio that showcases local interests and needs, addresses important social and economic issues and gaps and increases community awareness and action.

Actions*		Timeframe	Division
2.1	We will promote Council venues and parks for hire on our website and through our communications channels to increase participation, use and visitation that will encourage local spend within our urban villages and commercial centres.	Ongoing	Communications and Engagement
2.2	We will use and share spend data to track local spend associated with major local events we manage or support where appropriate.	Ongoing	Communications and Engagement in consultation with Strategic Planning and Place
2.3	We will create a local supplier and customer database for staff to use for Council events which will promote our commitment to local investment and sustainability.	2025	Communications and Engagement, in consultation with Procurement IT
2.4	We will continue to promote donation, grant and sponsorship recipients and their local projects through Council's communication channels, as these events add to our diverse events portfolio and reach diverse audiences.	Ongoing	All staff managing grants
2.5	We will engage local volunteers to help deliver council events which will reduce event overheads and enrich the lives of volunteers so they feel more connected to their community. The volunteer program can also help people gain a sense of purpose, learn new skills and develop new friendships.	2025	Communications and Engagement in consultation with staff managing volunteers

\*The actions outlined in each pillar respond to the Events Service Review recommendations.



## Foster partnerships and collaboration



Engaging our community through events

We will maximise our relationships with local community and business organisations to leverage resources and local expertise resulting in a good ROI and benefits.

Through our commitment to positive collaborations and partnerships we will support new ideas, projects and networking opportunities and empower the community to deliver valuable events.

	Actions	Timeframe	Division
3.1	Through our annual Donation and Grants and Sponsorship Programs we will provide funding and support to external individuals and organisations that deliver a wide range of events that align with our Vision, Mission, values and Operational Plan priorities.	Ongoing	All divisions
3.2	We will identify external funding opportunities, donations and sponsorships for Council events to improve economic outcomes.	2025 Ongoing	Communications and Engagement
3.3	We will explore collaboration opportunities with neighbouring Councils, we will host Inter Council events staff meetings to share ideas, resources and training opportunities.	December 2024 Ongoing	Communications and Engagement
3.4	Continually streamline the application and acquittal processes for grants, donations and sponsorships to improve customer experience and accessibility for recipients.	2025 Ongoing	Communications and Engagement, Grant Managers

## Drive excellence and continuous improvement

image: kath luu



*The Darlinghearts, performing at Woollahra Gallery at Redleaf.*

We commit to delivering high quality and professional events through continuous improvement of people, processes, systems and innovation.

By continually improving events we will increase customer satisfaction and experience, and achieve greater efficiency.

	Actions*	Timeframe	Division
4.1	We will implement event training and upskilling for Council staff involved in planning and managing events so that we can improve our professional development.	2025	Communications and Engagement, in consultation with People, Safety and Performance
4.2	We will create and develop an events one-stop shop webpage for external event organisers and staff to improve customer experience and streamline doing business with us.	April 2025 Ongoing	Communications and Engagement
4.3	We will improve professionalism through a dedicated staff member to assist event stakeholders with enquiries, navigating application and approval processes.	October 2023, Event Coordinator appointed.	Communications and Engagement
4.4	To improve events expenditure tracking we will develop more accurate reporting and modelling. We will peer review and improve the event management and risk management plan used by Council staff.	2025/26	Communications and Engagement, Finance
4.5	Add a sustainability and accessibility toolkit (to include waste minimisation measures and sustainability tips/resources).	2025	Sustainability
4.6	Grant recipients will receive a logo kit and guidelines for use as well as information on how to promote Council support. Compliance is checked during project delivery and assessed at the acquittal stage.	2024	All staff managing grants
4.7	We will investigate a consistent way of evaluating public feedback on Council events.	2026/27	Communications and Engagement

\*The actions outlined in each pillar respond to the Events Service Review recommendations.



# Consultation, evaluation and continuous improvement

## Event Evaluation and Monitoring

Event feedback will be used to direct improvements for future events and further innovative ideas and collaborative partnerships that benefit Council and the community. Event evaluation methods vary for each event and are subject to resources, budget and relevance.

In the latest Customer Satisfaction Survey (conducted by Micromex, April 2024) feedback indicates a high level of satisfaction. The satisfaction rating for events and programs run or funded by Council is 86% (79% male, 91% female), increasing to 90% for people aged 50-64 and 91% for people aged over 65.

“I have been attending the program for the past few months and have found it stimulating and good for my general wellbeing and great fun”.

**Mervyn, Darling Point resident at the Woollahra Preschool Intergenerational Program**

Intergenerational storytime at Paddington Library



# Consultation, evaluation and continuous improvement

## Evaluation of Council events

A range of evaluation measures will be used to assess our events, depending on the scale, reach, budget and resources.

## Events supported by grants, sponsorships and donations

These events will be subject to evaluation requirements outlined in the acquital process.

## Third party events

Third party events will not be assessed or evaluated formally by Council, but observations may inform future event collaborations with Council.

## Events can be evaluated in many ways, including:

<b>Event Assessment Criteria and KPIs</b>	<p>Individual events will be monitored, comparing outcomes using the Events Assessment Criteria and fed back into the pipeline of new event development for continuous improvement.</p> <p>Event attendance.</p> <p>Event participation.</p> <p>More accessible and inclusive events.</p> <p>Media and promotional interest and coverage.</p> <p>Number of external event organisers using our free What's On Calendar.</p> <p>Number of Partnerships.</p> <p>Increase in use of Council Venues and spaces for hire.</p> <p>Compliance with NSW Plastic Bans.</p>
<b>Operational Plan and Strategic Alignment</b>	<p>Event pillar actions will be built into the operational plan, budgeted and resources planned for and KPI's tracked.</p> <p>Council's events and events Council supports align with our Operational Plan strategic objectives, Vision, Mission and values.</p>



# Consultation, evaluation and continuous improvement

Events can be evaluated in many ways, including:

<b>Tracking and Feedback</b>	<p>High levels of event satisfaction and feedback will be captured in systems such as Culture Counts and Events Surveys for evaluation of social impact benefits.</p> <p>Post event survey feedback.</p> <p>Economic benefit (Levels of spend data and anecdotal evidence).</p> <p>Grant acquittals and reporting. Grant recipients acknowledge and promote Council’s support.</p> <p>Staff de-brief post event to discuss feedback and identify improvements for future repeat or similar events.</p> <p>Stakeholder or sponsor engagement and feedback.</p> <p>Customer Satisfaction Survey feedback.</p> <p>Event case studies and learnings will be shared with Council's event staff to create a culture of collaboration, continual improvement and celebration of best practice.</p> <p>The number of grants, donations and sponsorships approved.</p>
<b>Risk Evaluation</b>	<p>Insurance coverage is granted for all Council Event and risk management plans.</p> <p>Low number of incidents and accidents reported at events.</p>

*Festa Italiana cultural event, Paddington*



# Woollahra Municipal Council



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