VAPAC Member Meeting #74 & Professional Development Conference

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Date: Tuesday 8th & Wednesday 9th October 2024

Venue: The Lighthouse Theatre

Tuesday, October 8th

9.00am **Coffee and tea on arrival**

9.30am **Welcome to Country** - Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation

9.40am **Introduction to the Venue** - Meg Deyell, Service Manager, The Lighthouse Theatre

9.50am **Member meeting commences**

VAPAC Member Meeting #74 Agenda

1. Welcome & Introductions

2. General business

- Deputy Chair's Update – Shana Miatke, Geelong Arts Centre
- Executive Director's Update – Melenie Stevenson, VAPAC

3. Subnetwork Updates

- Box Office and Marketing Network Update – Bluzal Field, The Drum Theatre
- Technical Managers Network Update - Tara Ridley, Wyndam Cultural Centre

4. VAPAC Mentorship Program 2025

End of formal member meeting.

10:40am **Morning Tea**

Professional development conference commences

Join us for an inspiring meeting dedicated to enhancing positive psychology and organisational dynamics. You will be guided through a workshop crafted specifically for venue managers and arts and cultural leaders, focusing on building resilience. We'll dive into strategies for career development and progression within the performing arts sector, as well as effective succession planning, staff retention techniques and how to strengthen leadership in arts advocacy. Our goal is to help you create a thriving, supportive environment that recognises and values employee contributions, ensuring long-term success for both your team and venue.

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11.00am **Know your Players**

Join us for an engaging session featuring a panel of professionals sharing their personal journeys in the arts. Through insightful discussions and thought-provoking questions, we'll uncover the inspirations that guided their paths and explore how these influences can be applied to enhance your own venues. The conversation will also highlight the mentors and pivotal moments that shaped their careers, offering valuable advice for nurturing and guiding the next generation of leaders in the arts.

- Rhys Holden (CEO and Creative Director, Geelong Arts Centre)
- Melanie Burge (Creative Director and CEO, Burrinja Cultural Centre)
- Vanessa Pigrum (CEO, Theatre Royal)
- Facilitator: Kathy Corcoran (Team Leader Creative Program and Box Office, Wyndham Cultural Centre)

12:00pm **The Health and Wellbeing Program a Gasworks Arts Park industry case study.**

Tamara Jungwirth will take us through the bespoke professional development programs developed for staff at Gasworks Arts Park, the kinds of professional development used in the tool kit, the home cooked team lunches, and the staff health and wellbeing activities which serve to educate staff on the many aspects of Gasworks Arts Park's operations as well as features of the surrounding neighbourhood.

12:40pm **Creative Workplaces Update by Patrick McCarthy**

Creative Workplaces was established for artists, art workers and arts organisations to promote and enable fair, safe and respectful workplaces in the arts and culture sector. Creative Workplaces recognises artists as both creatives and workers. The sector is diverse and applying workplace laws to creative workplaces can be difficult. Our goal is to make it easier for everyone in the sector. Our work will support the sector to understand their rights and meet their workplace obligations by providing information, resources and referral information about pay, safety and wellbeing.

1:00pm **Lunch**

1.45pm **Wellbeing Leadership and Cultivating a Culture of Resilience Workshop by Glenda Chi**

Glenda Chi's vision is to see people live out their purpose, thrive in their work, and create a legacy for future generations. She believes that wellbeing isn't just about creating a policy. Her expertise is in helping teams and organisations explore what it would take to be their best and creating work environments where they can feel valued, motivated, and equipped to succeed. With a Master's in Applied Positive Psychology (Melbourne University) and experience in community building, Glenda integrates wellbeing science into organisational strategies that empower leaders and teams to cultivate workplace cultures that people want to be part of and work in.

As performing arts leaders and managers, we face immense pressure to deliver exceptional outcomes while balancing the needs and expectations of our team, suppliers, stakeholders, and audience. The demands of the industry—coupled with challenges like limited resources, global disruptions, or unexpected crises—can make it even more overwhelming.

Now, more than ever, the performing arts sector needs a strong focus on wellbeing and mental health. But what does wellbeing look like under stress? How can we strengthen resilience in an industry that is constantly changing? In this insightful session, we'll draw from the principles of positive psychology

to explore Wellbeing Leadership and Cultivating a Culture of Resilience. You'll leave with practical, actionable strategies to implement with your teams—ensuring they thrive even in challenging times.

Key Takeaways:

- The Power of Wellbeing Influence & Interconnectedness
- Understanding & Managing Stress
- Preventing Burnout Before It Happens
- Establishing a Culture of Care within Teams
- Cultivating Resilience Amidst Pressure

3.45pm	**Afternoon tea**
4:05pm	**Theatre Safe Australia Presentation**
4.15pm	**Breakout Discussions**
5.00pm	**Venue tour -** Meg Deyell, Service Manager, The Lighthouse Theatre
6.00pm	**Drinks & Dinner at The Cally Hotel** 112-114 Fairy Street, Warrnambool, Victoria, 3280

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Wednesday, October 9th

09.00am **Welcome back, coffee and tea on arrival**

09.05am **Take a Walk on the Wild Side: Innovative Strategies for Staff Retention**

09.55am **Industry Partner Presentation**

10.05am **Morning Tea**

10.35am **The Only Way is Up!**

How can arts and cultural organisations create pathways for growth in the Performing Arts Sector?

This session will offer practical guidance on navigating career trajectories within the performing arts industry, covering both vertical and lateral moves. Attendees will gain insights into professional development, identifying transferable skills, and finding valuable mentors. We'll also delve into career progression across various types of venues, highlighting the unique opportunities and challenges each presents. Join us to learn how to strategically advance your career and unlock new possibilities.

- Bronwyn Coulston (Stakeholder Liaison Manager, Service & Creative Skills Australia)
- Jim Dannock (Senior Skills Advisors, Victorian Skills Authority)
- Anna Reid (Coordinator Arts and Creative Industries Cardinia Cultural Centre)
- Meg Deyell (Service Manager, The Lighthouse Theatre)
- Facilitator: Gareth Hart (Independent Consultant)

11:35am **Provocation: Navigating Shifting Political Landscapes in Arts Advocacy**

As Local Government Association (LGA) Councillors change hands, arts and cultural organisations—whether venues or independent entities—face a critical challenge. The uncertainty stemming from new leadership can disrupt advocacy efforts, potentially impacting the support and recognition that the arts require to thrive.

How can we, as a sector, proactively engage with new councillors and decision-makers to ensure the arts remain a priority? What strategies can be employed to effectively communicate the indispensable value of the arts, beyond just economic metrics? It is crucial to craft compelling narratives that highlight not only the cultural and social contributions of the arts but also their broader impact on community well-being and resilience.

Join us as we explore how to navigate this shifting landscape and develop robust approaches to advocacy that transcend venue-specific challenges, fostering a unified and persuasive case for the arts that resonates with all stakeholders, including those outside traditional council-owned spaces.

This provocation encourages discussion on adapting advocacy strategies considering changing political contexts and emphasises the need for a unified, compelling narrative about the value of the arts.

- Jade Lillie (Manager, Sector Engagement & Development, Municipal Association of Victoria)
- Lauren O'Dwyer (CEO, Collingwood Yards)
- Patrick Fensham (Principal & Partner SGS Economics & Planning)

12.35pm **Conference Wrap Up**

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1:00pm **Finish**

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