



Beyond Empathy
Capability Statement and Service Offering



Beyond Empathy acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the country in which we work across Australia and pays our respect to the Elders both past and present.

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who we are

Beyond Empathy (BE) collaborates with communities across Australia to shift perceptions and generate positive social change through the process of creating and sharing art.

Over the past 18 years BE has developed a unique way of working, influenced by the First Nations communities we have partnered with. We are a team of artists, mentors, community workers, local practitioners and leaders who form creative relationships with communities and individuals in need. While some of our projects take place over a long period of time, and others are for a specific purpose or timeframe, they are always driven by the needs and aspirations of those who participate. Everyone is welcome to contribute and each person involved is treated as an equal.

where we work

Since 2005 Beyond Empathy has been working to cultivate mutual trust and a shared willingness to build close-knit and trusting neighbourhoods. Through the process of creating and sharing art, we support these neighbourhoods to unravel the effects of social disadvantage by building new pathways into improved health and wellbeing, learning, employment, and social inclusion.





vision

Beyond Empathy's vision is for a compassionate and resilient society in which creativity is at the forefront of driving change.

mission

Beyond Empathy works in partnership with communities and individuals living under pressure to reimagine positive futures and develop new responses through the process of creating and sharing art.

values

- **Generosity** – We approach all activities with an open and giving spirit and we turn no one away.
- **Audacity** – We are responsive and have the courage to tackle challenges that might otherwise be seen to be too difficult.
- **Humility** – We seek to listen, hear and witness one another. We recognise our limitations and constantly seek to improve and grow.
- **Respect** – We respect everyone equally and recognise the First Nations peoples as the sovereign people of this land and as our greatest teachers.
- **Determination** – We are driven by a strong sense of purpose which ensures that we are resilient and we persevere in the face of obstacles.'

strategic goals

Create culturally ambitious, excellent artwork by employing our proven, robust processes.

We support world-class artists to make outstanding artwork with communities by providing a strong structure of tested and quality processes. We recognise the combination of great artists, engaged communities and best-practice methods can result in the creation of groundbreaking new artworks. Artistic outcomes and mediums are not predetermined, but evolve from the collaborative process undertaken by artists and communities. This is supported with skills and knowledge development to empower everyone in this space equally, and to ensure high quality artistic outcomes. Our CACD processes create a space of generosity, kindness and humility, which encourages artists and participants to safely take risks, explore new ideas and push boundaries together. This results in the creation of artworks that are imaginative, original, and have local, national and international significance. Great artwork determined and created in safe and inclusive environments has the capacity to beneficially transform individuals, communities and audiences.

Facilitate unique, artistic collaborations to determine ingenious responses to acute social need.

We enable collaborations between international, national and local artists, community partners, and participants with a focus on determining relevant local responses to social need. Art, particularly when approached collectively, has the capacity to see things holistically and provide perspective and hope in the face of wicked problems. We recognise the strength and ability of communities to determine responses to their own needs. This potential is unlocked through collaborative artistic processes, empowering participants to take charge of their own positive change. We also recognise the unique ability of artists to facilitate these discoveries in communities. Creativity allows us to explore new ways of thinking about social issues. In attracting the right artists we can use creativity to disrupt conventional approaches and failed responses, and instead open up new ways of thinking and thus new solutions.

Present abundant opportunities to support First Nations artists to thrive and lead.

We give primacy to the voice and leadership of First Nations artists by nurturing an environment in which they initiate and run their own projects, making positive contributions to their individual and collective futures. We do this because Australia's First Nations people maintain the oldest living culture on earth, and are the traditional and current caretakers of the land on which we work. We recognise that in order for our country as a whole to thrive, First Nations people must thrive. Essential to the wellbeing and longevity of First Nations communities is the preservation and intergenerational transmission of cultural practices, experience, knowledge, protocols, and stories. This can be achieved through art-making processes which are determined and led by First Nations artists and participants. Our way of working supports opportunities for artistic autonomy, independence and self-determination, and these processes enable First Nations communities to reimagine their own futures, and our national future, more positively.

Showcase art that exceeds expectations of the makers and the audiences who see it.

The art created through Beyond Empathy projects resonates with traditional arts audiences as well as with people who do not usually have access to the arts. We make thought-provoking artwork of the highest aesthetic standard in order to capture the imagination of audiences and shift their way of thinking. Artworks are presented first to the communities in which they were made, offering local artists and participants the opportunity to have ownership over the outcomes. World-class art being premiered in host communities creates a sense of pride, as they see the transformation that occurs as seemingly ordinary people make extraordinary contributions. A deep transformation occurs when audiences outside the host community connect with the art that we make and the people who have made it. Our artistic outcomes elicit an emotional response, fostering an understanding of what makes us all alike. This is the first step in truly appreciating the experience of others. This response drives people to action, moving beyond empathy, to contribute their time, attention, money, encouragement, or participation. This action has the power to transform our realities.

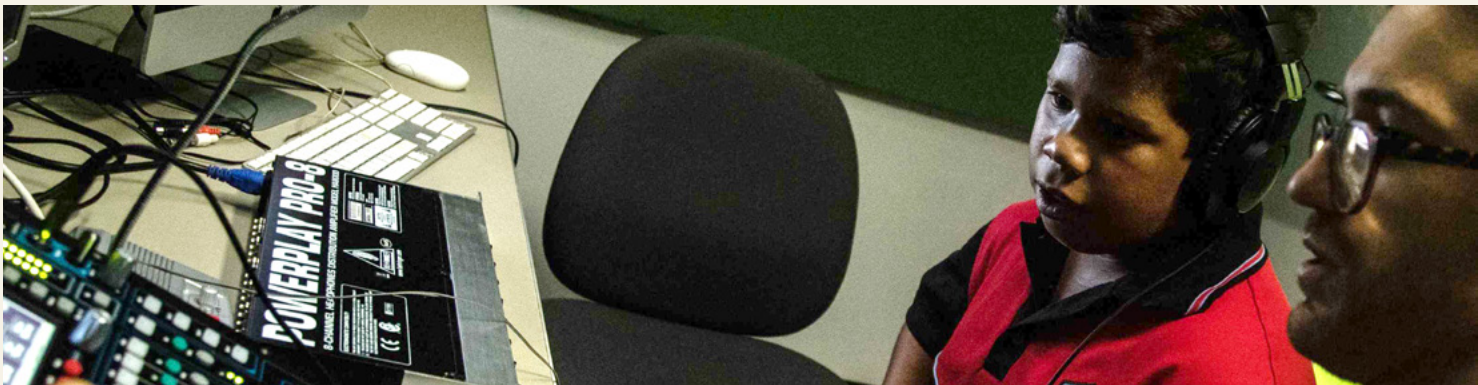
strategic goals *continued*

Offer vital contributions to the CACD sector.

We are committed to furthering best practice in the Community Arts and Cultural Development (CACD) sector across Australia. This is evidenced by our openness and willingness to share knowledge and resources with our peers. We encourage community stakeholders to choose art as the first response to social challenges, rather than as a last resort when all else has failed. To support this, we are rigorous in documenting our processes and outcomes so as to prove the efficacy of CACD practice. We measure the success of our work through the tangible and positive impacts it has on the individuals and broader communities involved. We continually evaluate the difference we make in order to ensure that our work is innovative, relevant, process-driven, and at the cutting-edge of what matters most to communities and individuals. We work with artistic collaborators and strategic partners to stretch the boundaries of invention, achieving greater outcomes for stakeholders and audiences and contributing to the wellbeing and sustainability of the sector. We teach, mentor, guide and support individuals and communities to use our processes to achieve positive artistic and social outcomes on their own.

Ensure we are a sustainable, professional organisation that honours and builds on our 17-year history.

We are proactive in maintaining and reviewing our resources, systems, procedures and leadership in order to best promote our growth, development and resilience. We foster long-term sustainability through diversified funding and robust financial planning. All organisational risk is carefully monitored and managed by our deeply committed Board. We build autonomous and specialist teams, empowering them to nurture their own projects with the support of the broader organisation. This trust builds a sense of loyalty and collective responsibility for the wellbeing of the organisation. Beyond Empathy's core and project teams are driven by a strong sense of purpose that sees us through adversity and results in great outcomes.



key stats

129217

Digital Engagement

4122

Participant Face to Face hours

584+

Activities

515+

Participants

48+

Community Partnerships

62

Artists Employed

69

Presentations/performances/
exhibitions

114

Professional development
artist/staff



theory of change

Our goal and focus

Beyond Empathy's goal is for a compassionate and resilient society in which creativity is at the forefront of change.

So we use the arts in a collaborative and hands on way to create opportunities for people who experience constant or recurring hardship.

The opportunities created may be related to learning, skills development, self awareness, communication, social skills, leadership and more. BE's works one on one, one by one and our focus is on creating an individual engagement pathway through the project based on participants needs and interests.

Most often we work with young people and children, but our approach is inclusive of whole families and their communities, and projects not focused on young people sometimes evolve.

In working towards our goal our aim is that people who experience constant or recurring hardship will

- have their creativity stimulated
- experience feeling valued
- gain new knowledge, insight and ideas
- improve their wellbeing

And we present our collaborative art to audiences in our communities and beyond. These art works are often eclectic and diverse but they are unified by the core of honesty and respect.

Our aim is that people in our communities and audiences will

- gain new knowledge, insight and ideas, particularly about the experience of people and communities who experience constant or recurring hardship.
- and that social differences are bridged by allowing our participants and audience to realise what we all have in common.

Through our years of experience, the efficacy of our programs and current research we know:

- Self-esteem is increased through arts participation (Dr Mary Hunter, September 2005 A study of four arts-based programs Jointly commissioned by Department of Education, Science and Training & Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts.); and
- feeling valued helps children to feel more positive about themselves as learners (Dr Mary Hunter);
- creative projects offer learning opportunities for children who do not fit the conventional mould of institutional learning (Hunter);
- creative projects have a levelling effect between children and their peers (Hunter); and
- children's reading comprehension, confidence to express ideas, skills in written and oral communication, level of confidence and pride in their work and school and achievement are all improved through creative projects (Anne Bamford, Reg Newitt, Jan Irvine with Rachel Darell. (c2004). EAPI Report: Promoting the Value of the Arts. NSW Ministry for the Arts, The University of Technology, Sydney, and the NSW Department of Education and Training.

theory of change *continued*

In addition, we also know:

- parents perceived increased opportunities to be more involved in school activities through creative led projects;
- children are more motivated to learn and go to schools (Bamford et. al) through creative endeavours; and
- our programs improve well-being for high risk or vulnerable young people (Arjun Ravi, Emily Albert, SROI Evaluation of the Beyond Empathy – Rites of Passage project, 2013, Coca Cola Foundation).

Because of this, we understand:

- it is important to engage participants over a sustained period of time and design programs that offer a wide range of entry and exit points suited to participants of all kinds of needs and this will potentially increase the creation of social value across identified outcomes (Ravi et al);
- many of the children who will be participants (and their families and community peers) will have experienced trauma and that the presence of supportive adults who create safe environments that help children learn to cope with and recover from major adverse experiences is one of the critical ingredients that make serious stressful events tolerable (Center on the Developing Child, 2014);
- children and adolescents who have repeated opportunity to develop new skills and cognitive capacities in relational environments in which they feel safe and supported, are more likely to overcome the deficits suffered as a result of experiencing complex trauma.” (Howard, 2018); and
- presenting artworks made by community and for community shift perceptions and enable ‘the audience’ to see young people in a more positive light.



Beyond these instrumental uses, the making and sharing of art has a special role in communities.

We know works of art:

- serve to bind communities together, to communicate complex ideas that include historical, social and even scientific concepts;
- they provide a voice to people who may otherwise struggle to be heard.
- adds to our wellbeing in a vital way by bringing beauty into our lives; and importantly
- challenge us by drawing us closer to our neighbours, adding dimensions to our existence.

Because we know projects steeped in culture and delivered through a cultural context including First Nations artists, Elders and community leaders, we can:

- provide a cultural framework for individuals and communities to reflect on issues of identity and self-image, to step outside their own personal experience and see this experience objectively through the artistic process;

theory of change *continued*

Our Cultural advisors have told us:

“All art forms, especially with Aboriginal communities, work. Because that’s the way we been teaching all the time. We been teaching that way since time began. These kinds of projects, what BE does, it gives a little bit of balance for our little ones. It gives them a belonging.”

Matt Priestley, artist and Moree community member.

Because of this we know our programs:

- build self-confidence and individual and community pride through skills development, discipline, performance and presentation;
- give voice (or physical presence) to people who would otherwise be unheard or unseen; and
- Activate opportunities to explore issues of culture and authenticity in cultural expression.

And therefore, we understand the vital importance of ensuring projects with First Nations people must use language to reinstate culture and First Nations stories must be led and told by First Nations people.

To achieve this rich learning environment and the positive social outcomes desired we will:

- run workshops over a sustained period allowing children to engage at their level and their pace and always have new entry points;
- shape every workshop interaction in to reflect the needs and opportunities of the children involved;
- allow repeated opportunities for children to develop skills and cognitive capacities with skilled and supportive staff;
- bring together stories into larger works such as podcasts to inform each other and communicate to the broader community about the issues of people who experience constant or recurring hardship and their communities;
- promote art works through social and traditional media allowing participants to lead the conversations about the issues and their stories;
- create opportunities for participants to present their work to people in a live setting so that they get direct feedback and applause for their hard work and talents;
- create small presentation moments as the project develops to build confidence and leadership and allow for multiple opportunities; and
- set up a story and steering group of stakeholders and consult with Elders on project strategies and stories connected to First Nations experience.

commitment to child safety

Policy Statement

At Beyond Empathy (BE) we believe that every child regardless of gender, race, country of origin, socio-economic status, or religious belief, has the right to BE safe, BE respected, BE protected, BE valued, BE seen, and BE heard. Our policy guides staff, volunteers and students on how to honour and fulfill these beliefs and rights with children and youth connected to our organisation.

Beyond Empathy is committed to encouraging Workers, Volunteers, Children, Carers or Community Members to raise any concerns or provide their views on the well-being of children engaged with BE including any perceived risks to a child's safety or signs of abuse or harm.

The Child Safe Standards

Standard 1

Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.

Standard 2

Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

Standard 3

Families and communities are informed and involved.

Standard 4

Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account.

Standard 5

People working with children are suitable and supported.

Standard 6

Processes to respond to complaints of child abuse are child focused.

Standard 7

Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training.

Standard 8

Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur.

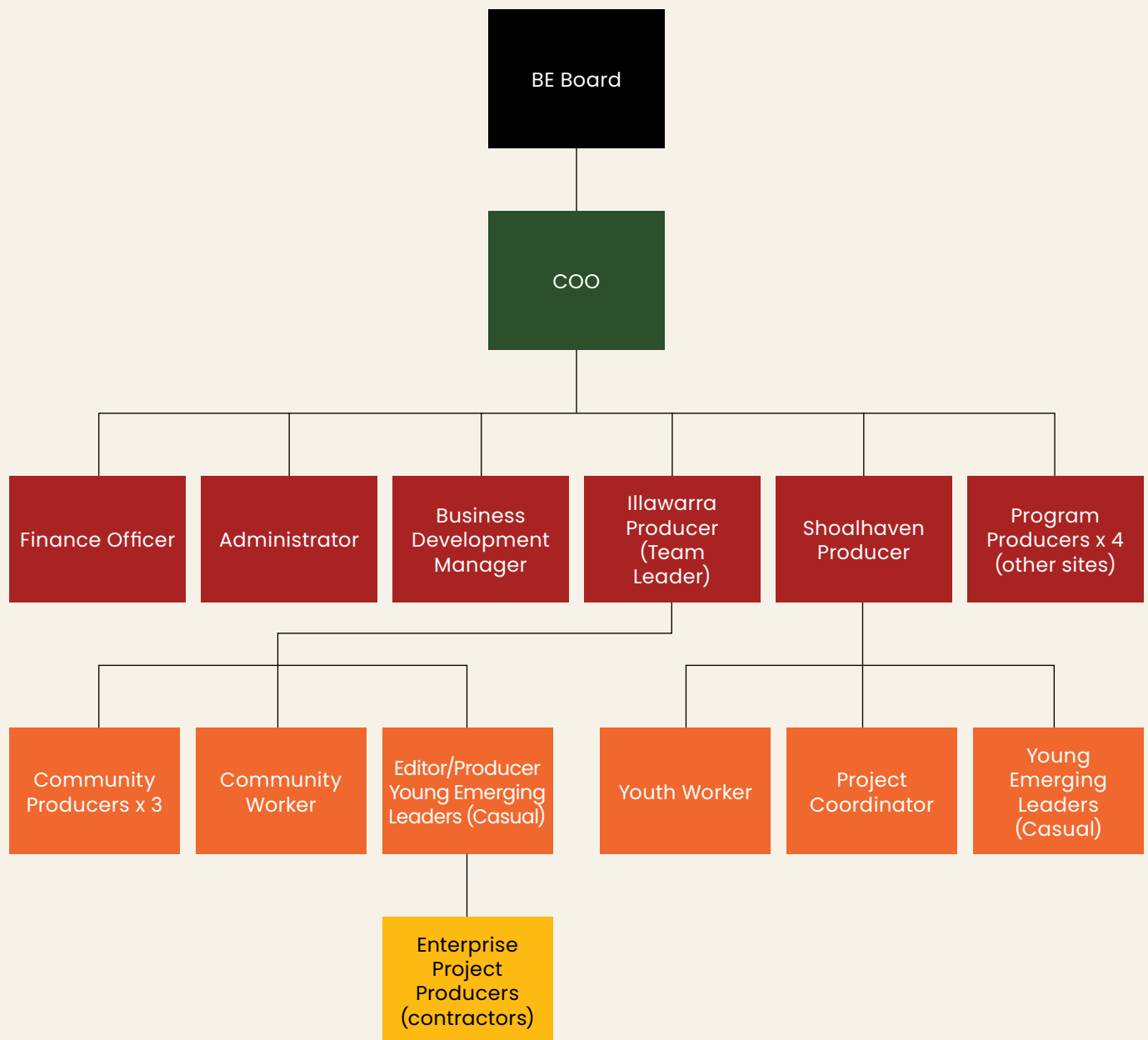
Standard 9

Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved.

Standard 10

Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe.

organisational chart



our services

Beyond Empathy offer a range of services delivered under our Social Enterprise, BE Studios. Our cinema-level production equipment will capture and showcase your project with expert results.



Services offered:

Documentary and promotional film-making

This is an excellent tool to show funding bodies and stakeholders the impact of your work and can be long or short-form to suit the needs of your project.

Creative Film-making

We can bring your stories to life through the medium of film.

Podcasts

Use the medium of sound to document and showcase the important work that you do and elevate the voices of your participants.

Photography

Our talented photographers can visually capture events, projects or set up portrait shots for you.

Social Media Content

We can help you capture images and short video pieces to highlight your work.

Custom music production

Our in-house composers can work with you to develop an original sound bed that is tailored to your project.

Professional live streaming

Using our state-of-the-art equipment we can stream your online seminars, performances and events.

Skills building workshops

We can work with you to design skill-building workshops in sound production, podcasting, storytelling, visual arts, and filmmaking.

BE Studios provide mentorship and paid work experience for young people, (our emerging leaders) who have taken part in BE community projects. By choosing to partner with us you will positively impact the communities we work in and help the young people we employ to build new pathways out of hardship.

All work completed by BE Studios reinvests 100% of profits back into our Community Arts for Community Development work.



contact us

Talk to our creative team about how we can work together to make your next project shine.

For more information, visit be.org.au or contact Melissa Andrews on 0491 153 834 or partnerships@be.org.au



be.org.au