



FROM DATA TO

DECISION

Hawkrige Entertainment Services respectfully acknowledges the traditional owners of the land on which we work; the Darug people. We give respect to Elders past, present, and emerging and extend those respects to the First Nations people of NSW and beyond.

# WARM-UP: ODD-ONE-OUT TERMINOLOGY GAME

“Which doesn't belong in an economic impact report?”



Jobs



Output



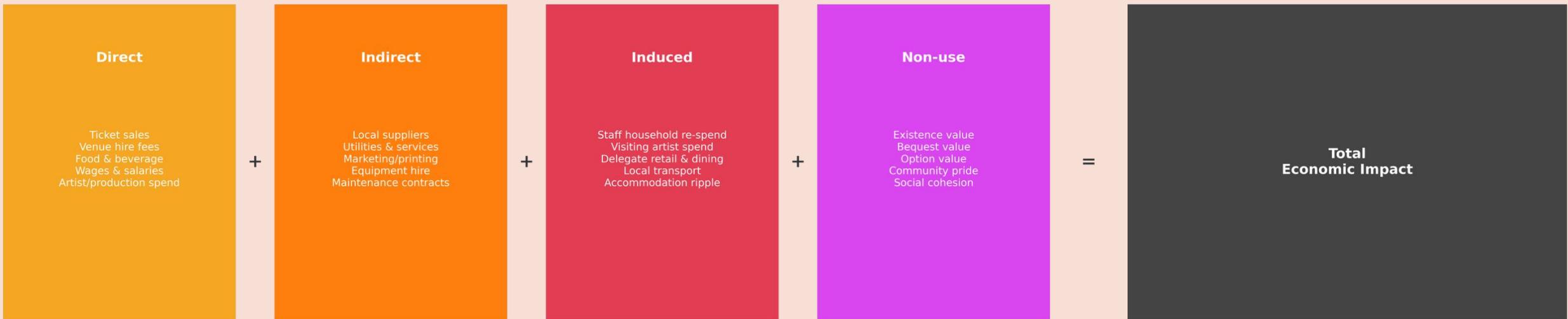
Visitor

Spend



Fluffy  
Unicorns

## What is in an economic impact report?



*What is in an economic impact report?*

**Direct Spending** – venue outlays, ticket income, wages

**Indirect (Supply-chain)** – flow-on purchases from local suppliers

**Induced (Household)** – staff and artist re-spend in the community

**Intangible / Non-use** – legacy, social value, pride of place

## Direct Effects



### Employment

The performing arts venue directly employs a range of professionals, including actors, technicians, administrative staff, and support personnel. These employees receive salaries and wages, contributing to their income and livelihood.



### Ticket Sales

The revenue generated from ticket sales directly contributes to the venue's operational budget, allowing it to cover expenses such as salaries, production costs, and maintenance.



### Venue Bookings

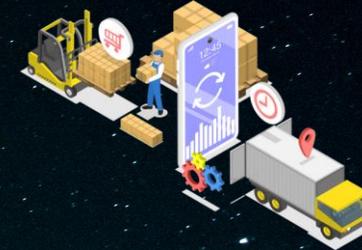
Bookings generate activity and revenue for the venue and enhance its financial sustainability.



### F&B/

### Merchandise Sales

Venues offer F&B to audience members which generates revenue. Merchandise may also be sold. These sales contribute to the venue's revenue.



### Operating Expenses

The venue's operating expenses such as utilities, maintenance, marketing, and administrative costs.

## Indirect Effects



### Visitor Spending

The influx of audience members attending performances at the venue boosts demand for nearby businesses, including restaurants, hotels, and shops. This local spending circulates within the community, providing economic support to these establishments.



### Tourism

The presence of a vibrant venue can attract cultural tourists: These visitors contribute to the local economy by spending on accommodation, dining, transportation, and other travel-related services.



### Tax Revenues

The indirect impact on government tax revenues generated through increased economic activity, including sales tax, payroll tax, and other applicable taxes.



### Job Creation

Indirect jobs created in other sectors due to increased demand for goods and services linked to the venue's operations.



### Supply Chain Impact

The venue's operations require the purchase of various goods and services, such as beverages and equipment. This generates revenue for local vendors and suppliers, supporting their businesses.

## Induced Effects

- **Multiplier Effect:** The initial spending by audience members and the venue's employees triggers a multiplier effect. As these individuals spend their earnings on various goods and services, each dollar spent generates additional rounds of spending, amplifying the venue's economic impact.
- **Employment and Income:** Additional employment opportunities and income generated in the local economy due to increased consumer spending resulting from the venue's activities.
- **Consumer Spending:** Increase in consumer spending that results from the direct and indirect economic activities related to the performing arts venue.
- **Local Business Viability:** Positive impact on the viability of local businesses. As consumer spending increases due to the venue's activities, businesses may experience improved sales and growth opportunities.
- **Tax Revenues:** Increased economic activity leads to higher tax collections

Non-use values place a value on the venue (or event), even though they do not experience the user benefits identified. This value stems from the following benefits:

- **Option value** – although an individual may not attend a performance/event, the knowledge that it will be indefinitely accessible in the future creates what is known as an “option value”. In this case, there is an understanding that if the venue was not available, the individual would feel a quantifiable loss.
- **Existence value** – this reflects individual perceptions of how the Venue contributes to the basic and essential elements of a local community as well as the benefit it gives to Artists. In essence, people are willing to pay for the venue so that others can benefit from its activities.
- **Bequest value** – individuals and communities value the Arts and Artists just so future generations might benefit from their existence. This cultural and historical legacy stems from the feeling of obligation and responsibility towards future generations, particularly around activities that have perceived community value and/or function to meet community needs.

# WHY IMPACT MATTERS FOR VENUES & ARTISTS

*Economic Impact is our  
passport to the rooms where  
decisions get made.*

# SCRUTINY HAS INTENSIFIED

ARTS & CULTURE

## Funding cut forces La Mama Theatre to pause shows in 2025



 Brendan Rees | 27th March, 2024



La Mamma

## The State of Australian Theatre

### Stage plight: The state of Australian theatre

by Alison Croggon

Theatre



The Dollhouse, directed by Daniel Schlusser, 2011. Image courtesy of Daniel Schlusser

A generation of small independent theatremakers has



### Behind the Scenes: The Challenges Facing Australian Theatre in 2024

14 January, 2025 Aussie Theatre

In 2024, Australian theatre confronts a range of complex challenges that influence its growth and sustainability. The industry must adapt to a rapidly changing cultural, economic and technological backdrop while preserving the values and traditions that have defined live performance for decades.

From financial struggles to evolving audience demands and the integration of technology, the sector faces both significant pressures and opportunities for innovation. Understanding these challenges is vital for evaluating the future trajectory of Australian theatre in an era marked by uncertainty and transformation.

#### Financial Pressures and Sustainability

A key challenge facing Australian theatre is the financial strain many companies experience. With budget cuts and economic constraints, particularly at the state and federal levels, many organisations struggle to secure the funding needed to sustain operations. As resources become scarcer, companies rely more on alternative

Understanding these challenges is vital for evaluating the future trajectory of Australian theatre in an era marked by uncertainty and transformation.

We live in the age of the ‘productivity dividend’. Treasury officials, councillors and funders ask the same question: **‘Great show... but what does it deliver?’**

*Example* – in NSW, submissions for the \$60 million Creative Capital Fund had to quantify projected jobs, tourism dollars and local gross value-add. Artistic excellence was necessary—but *insufficient*—to reach the shortlist.

“We don’t get to choose this landscape;  
we only choose how fluently we speak its language.”

# WHY IMPACT MATTERS FOR VENUES & ARTISTS

NSW Treasury: **70%** of arts capital bids cite economic impact.

**12 of last 15** Create NSW major grants demanded ROI calculation of some form.

Some fear that chasing numbers flattens the art. I see the opposite: **data is the shield that protects your artistic risk-taking.**

- It secures the runway for experimental work.
- It can convince risk-averse boards and Councils to back programming in the right context.
- It provides opportunities for investment in projects that activate the local economy.

Think of economic evidence as *subtitle text*. It translates your creative language for audiences who control budgets, without rewriting the script itself.

# THE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

1. **Headline number** – lead with one clear figure that matters to the listener (e.g. “Every dollar Council invests returns \$2.90 to the local economy”).
2. **Timeframe & scale** – say when and over what scope that return applies (“in the first full year of operation across the City of Fremantle”).
3. **Key benefit the audience actually values** – name the payoff that resonates most with them (jobs, visitor spend, brand profile, social cohesion—choose one).
4. **Proof-point source** – anchor the claim (“based on an independent SGS Economics impact study, 2025”).
5. **Real-world hook** – a vivid, concrete example that grounds the number (“that’s equivalent to filling every café on Market Street for an extra fortnight each year”).
6. **Next-step ask** – close with the action you want (“That’s why we’re seeking your support for the \$750 k fit-out in the ’26 budget”).

“Independent modelling shows every \$1 Council puts into the new black-box theatre returns \$2.90 to the local economy in its first year, driven mainly by 18 new hospitality jobs. That’s like adding two packed weekends of trade for every café on the strip. To lock in that return we’re asking for your commitment to fund the fit-out this budget cycle.”

**Our 200-seat black-box is the cultural heartbeat of Esperance, welcoming 55 000 patrons a year and injecting \$4 million into local cafés and hotels. But the real power is the 300 young people who find their first stage, mentor or audience here each season, turning the foreshore precinct into a true night-time destination. Council foot-traffic counts and a 2025 Culture Counts survey back that up. To lock in and grow that value, we're seeking your support for a \$750 000 lighting upgrade in the upcoming budget.**

## Case: Sydney Fringe Festival



### Proof:

Sydney Fringe converted warehouses into pop-up stages, drew 100k patrons and injected **\$8.4 million** into local businesses in four weeks.

Footnote: Footnote copy goes here and here and here and here and here.

## Outcome

That \$8.4m stat punched above any star-rating or Instagram reel when City of Sydney debated extending the festival's outdoor trading hours.

### Outcome?

Funding approved in 23 minutes. Numbers opened the door; the artistic story sealed the deal.

# KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE – FUNDING PERSONAS



Council Staff



State Gov.

Funding



Federal

Funding



Councillor

# KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE – FUNDING PERSONAS



## Task

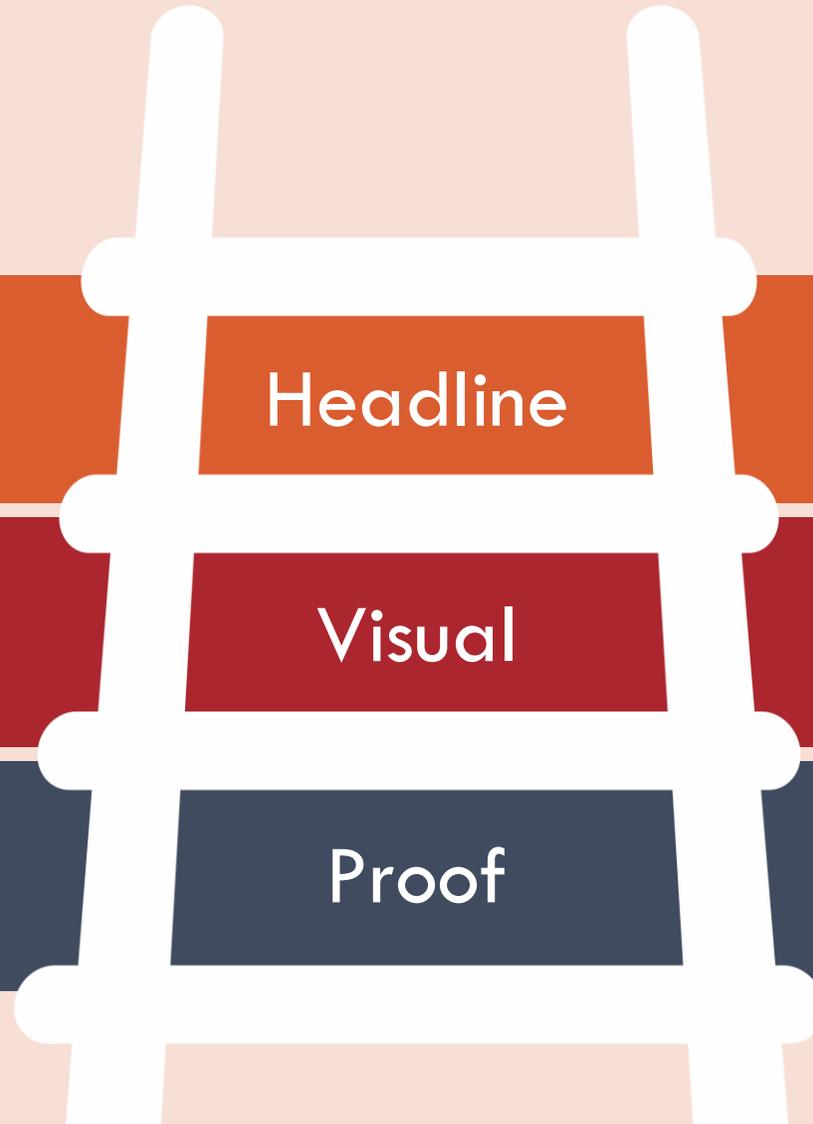
In groups of two to three, discuss the following:

- What success looks like to them
- Hot economic metrics
- Typical decision drivers (WA context)
- How to frame your ask

# THE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

| Persona   | What success looks like to them  | Hot economic metrics   | Typical decision drivers (WA context)  | How to frame your ask   |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| <b>Local-government staff member</b>  | Programs that tick the Community Strategic Plan KPIs: local participation, wellbeing, activation of civic spaces | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local attendance numbers &amp; postcode reach</li> <li>Volunteer hours valued in \$</li> <li>Supplier spend inside LGA</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tight annual budget cycle, must show cost recovery or co-funding</li> <li>Equity &amp; inclusion optics</li> <li>“No surprises” procurement rules</li> </ul>  | Lead with community-use stats and how the event alleviates pressure on other departments (youth, tourism). Provide a one-page budget with clear in-kind asks. |
| <b>Local-government councillor</b>  | Visible projects that make ratepayers proud and help re-election   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jobs supported in electorate</li> <li>Media reach / positive press</li> <li>Rates growth from increased visitation</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Political capital &amp; voter feedback</li> <li>Cost/benefit headline they can quote in chamber</li> <li>Photos, ribbon-cuts, legacy</li> </ul>   | Open with headline dollar impact per \$1 of rates. Supply a photo-ready visual (pyramid or ladder) they can post on Facebook. Keep brief, avoid jargon.       |
| <b>State-government funder (Culture and the Arts WA – DLGSC; Lotterywest)</b> | Alignment to WA Creative Industries Strategy & regional development goals  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gross Value Added to WA economy</li> <li>Regional tourism nights</li> <li>Jobs (incl. First Nations participation)</li> <li>Social Return on Investment</li> </ul>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic fit (State Priority Outcomes &amp; Diversify WA) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leveraged \$\$ (at least 1:1 match for majors)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Governance risk &amp; track record</li> </ul> | Show WA-wide impact map: metro + regions. Quote ABS TSA multipliers already used in past DLGSC cases. Flag First Nations or regional engagement line items.   |
| <b>Federal-government funder (Creative Australia, Investment grants)</b>      | National significance and jobs pipeline; contributes to “Revive” cultural policy pillars                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FTE jobs (artists + tech) across states <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Export earnings/touring income</li> </ul> </li> <li>Contribution to GDP</li> <li>Audience diversity indices</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alignment to First Nations first &amp; access objectives</li> <li>“Additionality” (wouldn’t happen without funding)</li> <li>Nation-building narrative</li> </ul>   | Lead with national reach (inter-state audience %, touring circuits). Include non-use WTP dollar where available to show broad public value.                   |

# STORY-FIRST FRAMEWORK: THE 3-STEP LADDER

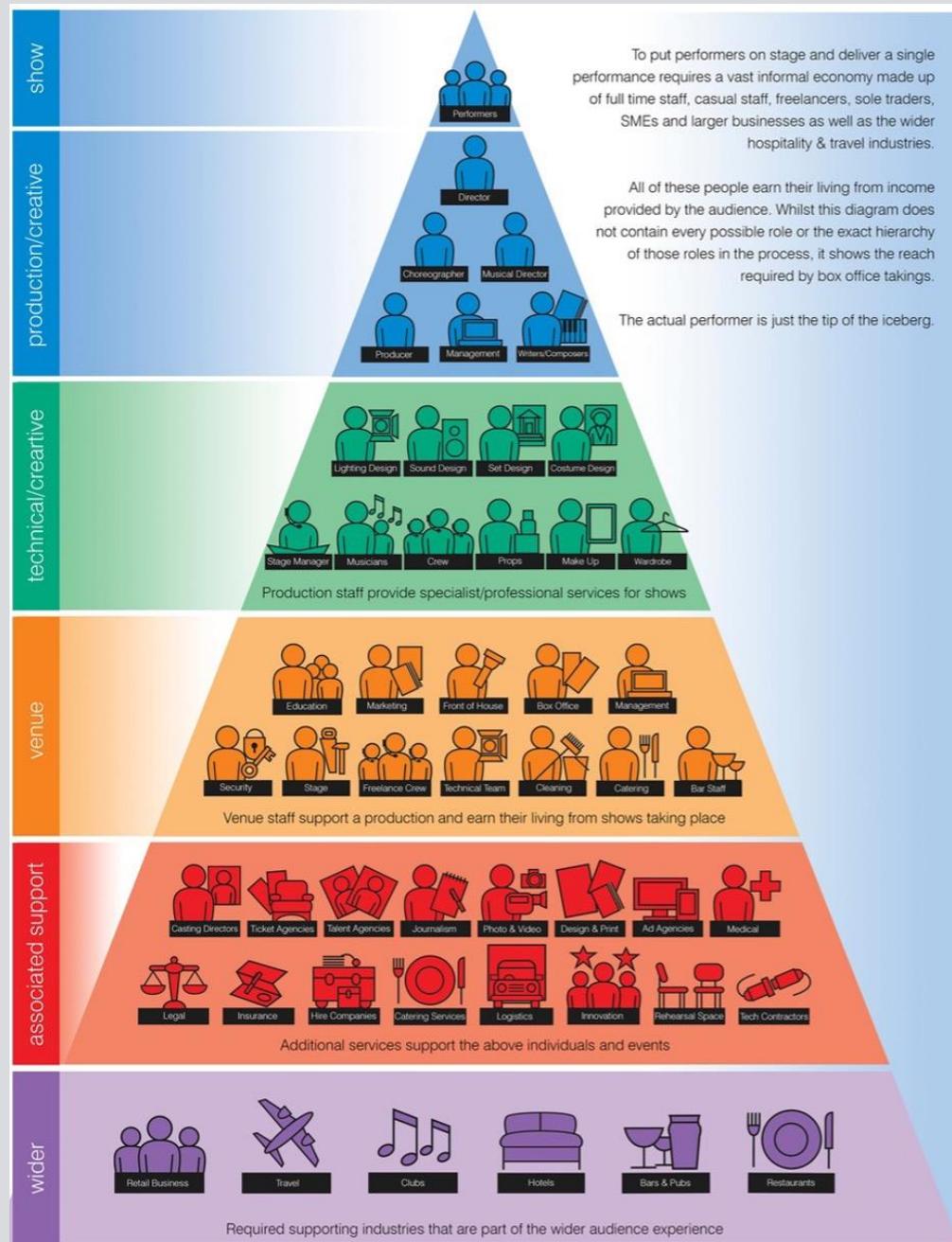


# DESIGN SPRINT– BUILD YOUR VENUE INFOGRAPHIC



15 minutes

# VISUAL TOOLKIT



## Indirect Effects



### Visitor Spending

The influx of audience members attending performances at the venue boosts demand for nearby businesses, including restaurants, hotels, and shops. This local spending circulates within the community, providing economic support to these establishments.



### Tourism

The presence of a vibrant venue can attract cultural tourists. These visitors contribute to the local economy by spending on accommodation, dining, transportation, and other travel-related services.



### Tax Revenues

The indirect impact on government tax revenues generated through increased economic activity, including sales tax, payroll tax, and other applicable taxes.



### Job Creation

Indirect jobs created in other sectors due to increased demand for goods and services linked to the venue's operations.



### Supply Chain

#### Impact

The venue's operations require the purchase of various goods and services, such as beverages and equipment. This generates revenue for local vendors and suppliers, supporting their businesses.

[www.hawkridge.com.au](http://www.hawkridge.com.au)

## MUSICNSW Survey

An online survey of live music venues was conducted by MusicNSW in December 2020 in consultation with Hawkridge Entertainment Services. 24 of the 74 venues responded to provide the following key data:

- Venue location, type of operation and size (capacity);
- Total number of annual live music performances;
- Ticketed and non-ticketed attendance and revenues;
- Amounts spent on accessing artists;
- Number of staff and salary expenditure;
- Other data such as number of nights open, number of nights presenting live music and COVID-19 impacts.

Approximately 3 out of 4 venues (75% of venues) offer live music more than 4 times a week. Some of the other key statistics are listed below.



Total Capacity  
**29,648**

Approximate number of

**Performances per year**  
**11,073**



**Attendance**

(Ticketed and Non-ticketed)

**3,793,631**



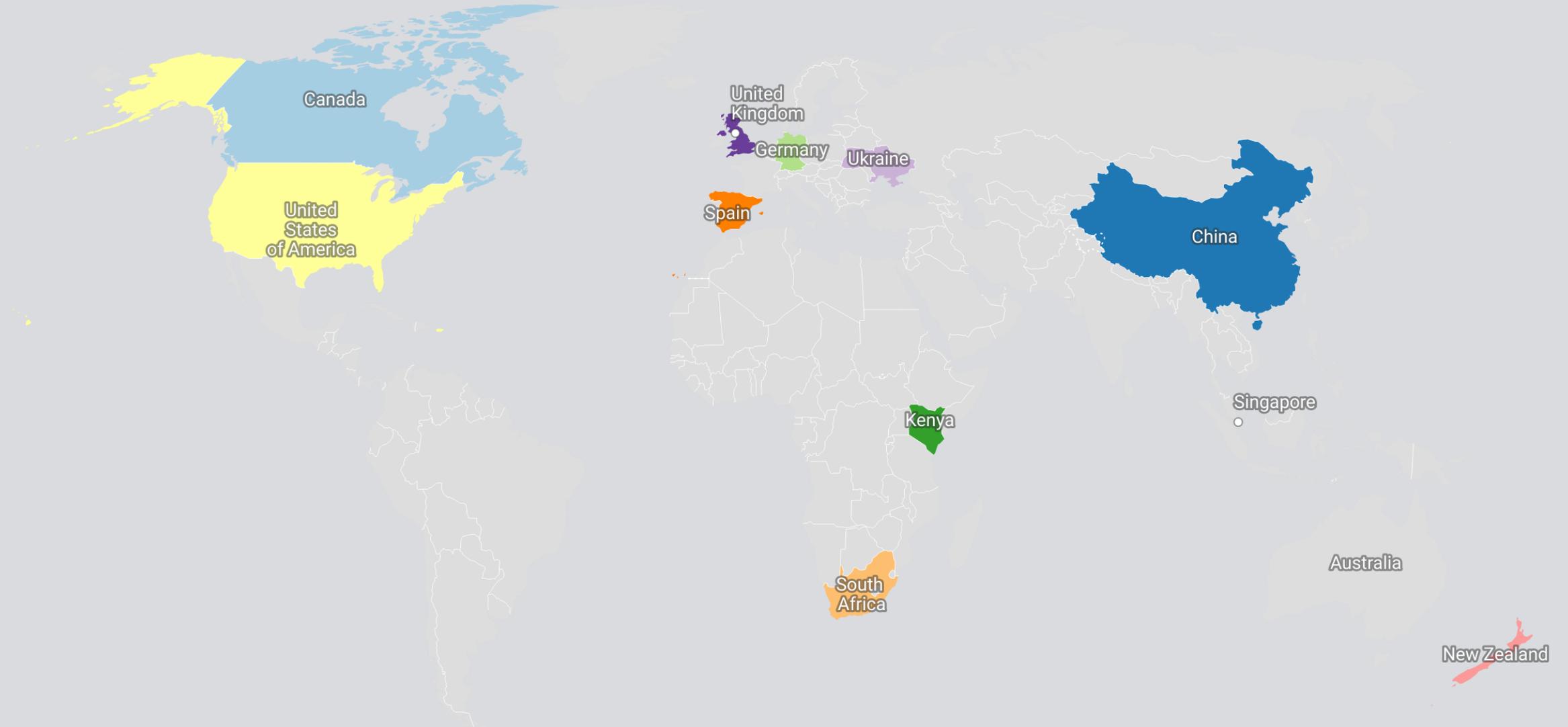
Amount Spent on Artist Fees

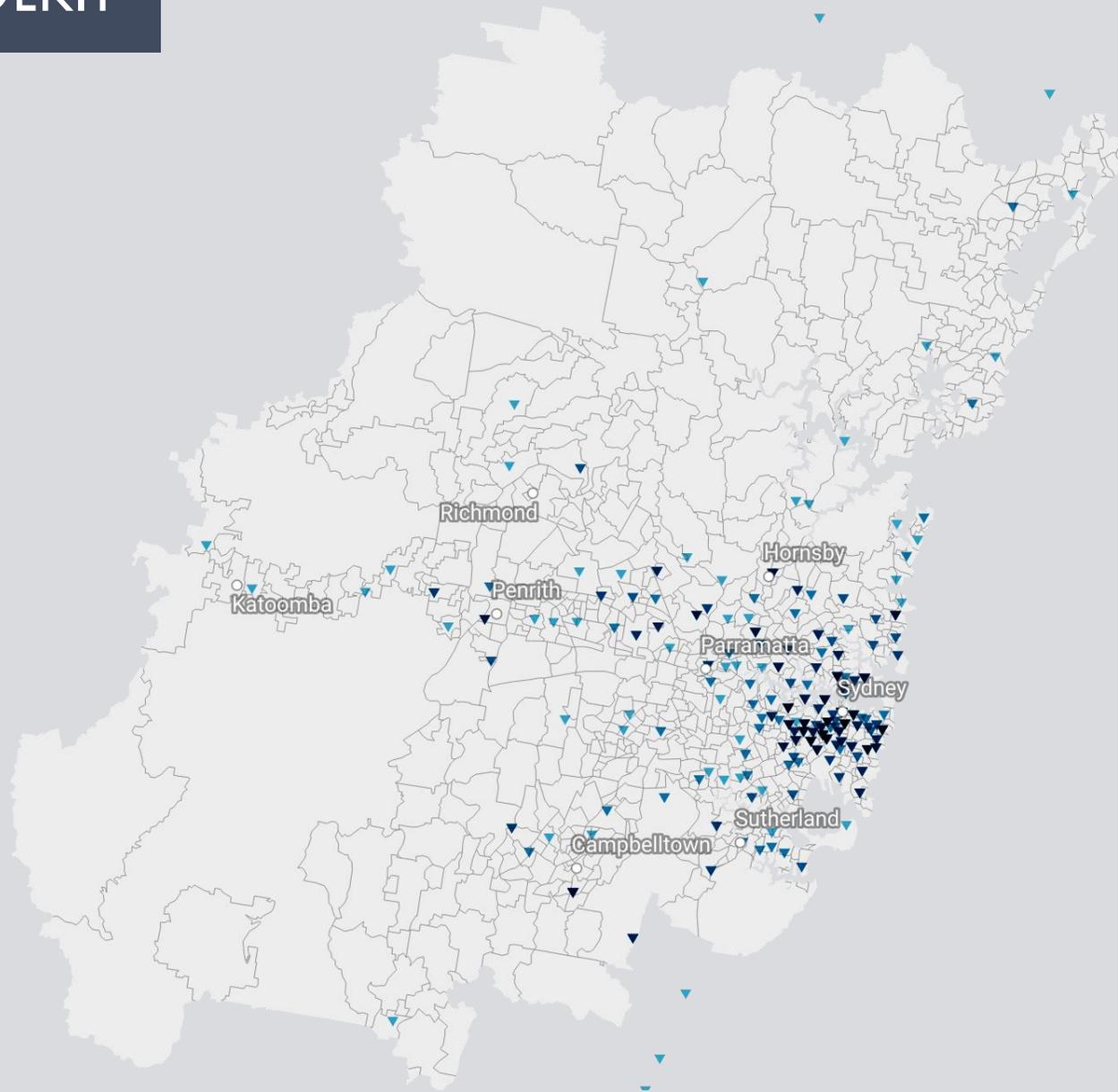
**\$22,871,488**

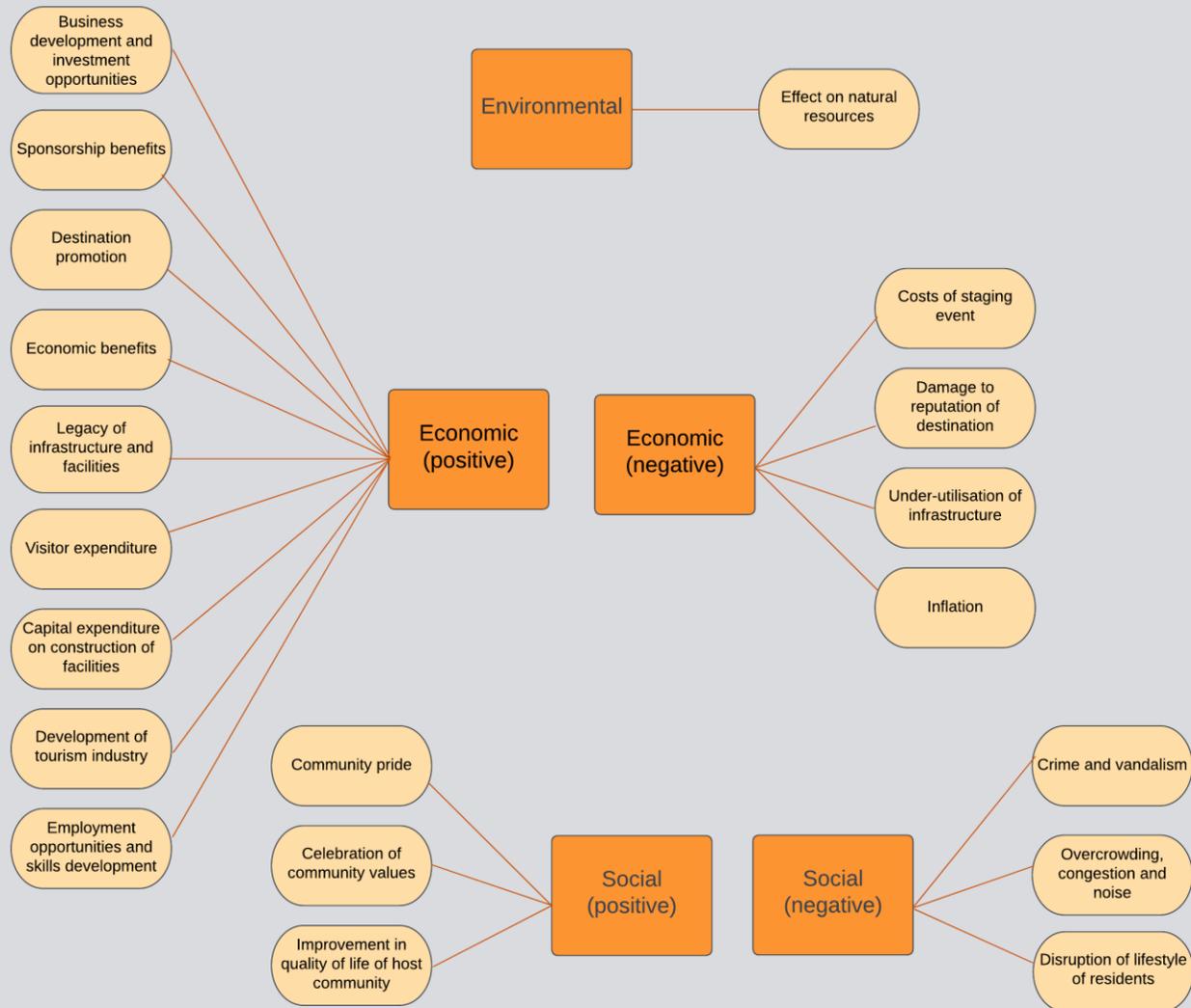


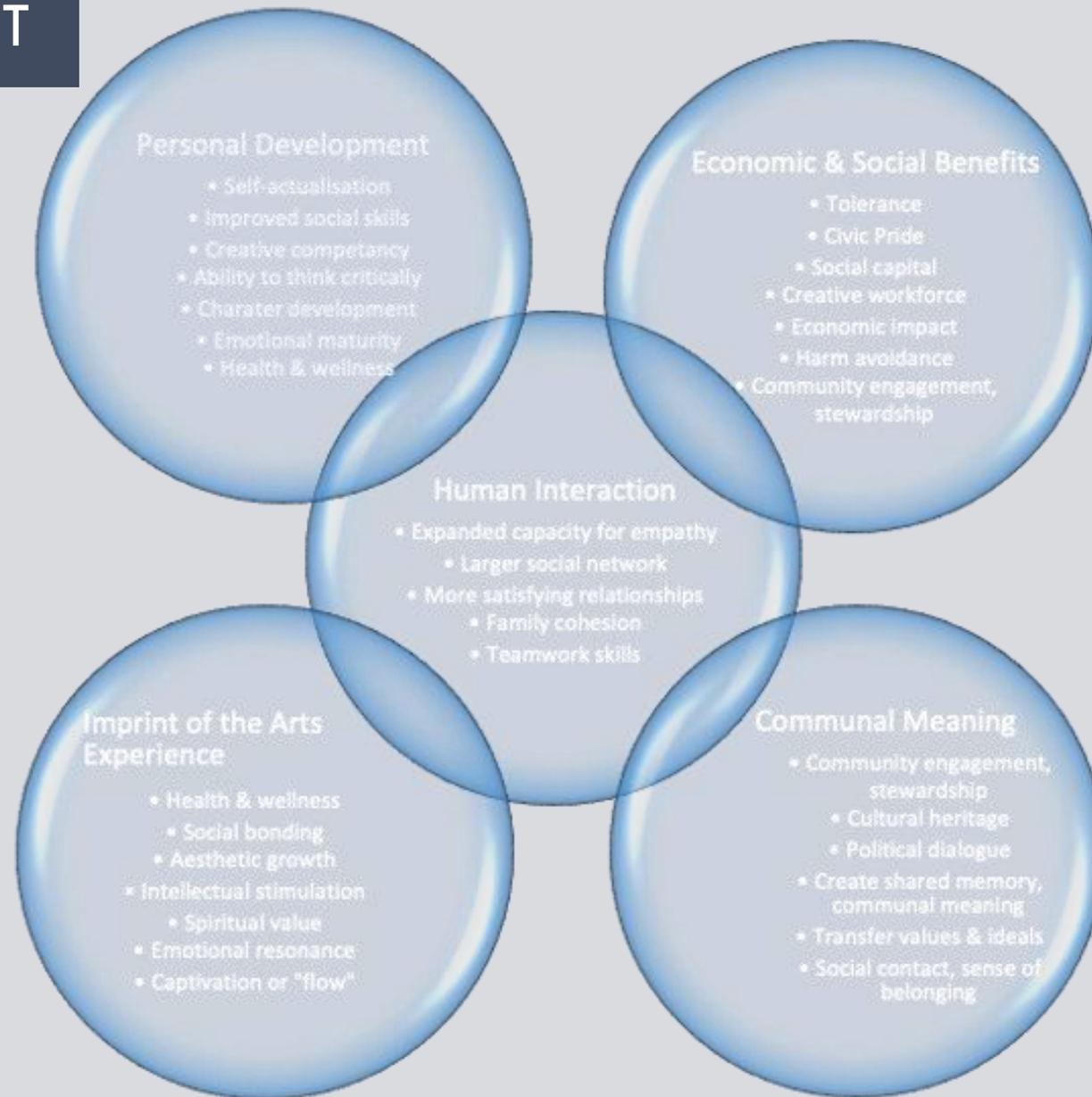
nshot

# VISUAL TOOLKIT









## KEY QUESTIONS

1. *Who is my audience?*
2. *What is the exact economic/financial question my audience needs answered or what is going to help them?*
3. *Which of the four impact buckets speaks to that need?*
4. *How will I pair that answer with a story that reminds them why numbers matter in the first place?"*

# TRANSLATING THE JARGON – YOUR PERSONAL GLOSSARY

## *Buzzwords*

## *Plain-language*

**Output**



**Total sales**

**GVA**



**Local income left after costs**

**Multiplier**



**Ripple factor**

**Deadweight**



**What would happen anyway**

**NPV**



**Today's value of tomorrow's money**

**SROI**



**Social bang for buck**

**Collect at source** – add a spend question to every ticket sale.

**Use accepted models** – input-output multipliers, cost-benefit ratios; quote the ABS Tourism Satellite Account or state treasury multipliers.

**Methodology** – clearly outline the basis for your calculations so your numbers survive Treasury interrogation.

**Peer-review** – partner with a university or credible consultancy.

**Visualise** – heatmaps, infographics, 30-second reels. Ministers skim; pictures stick.

**Humanise** – end every economic slide with a face: the stagehand who kept his job, the café that hired two baristas.

“What’s one change you’ll make to your next Report?”

# PRODUCTIVITY

| Mechanism  | What shifts   | Example in a cultural-venue context  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Labour efficiency</b>                         | Workers generate more value per hour.   | A theatre's technical-skills training program lifts stage-crew productivity, allowing more shows to be mounted with the same staffing budget.        |
| <b>Capital utilisation</b>                       | Physical assets are used more intensively or at higher value.                   | New digital ticketing lets multiple venues share the same box-office platform, reducing idle IT capacity across the precinct.                        |
| <b>Knowledge &amp; innovation spill-overs</b>    | Firms adopt better processes through collaboration and learning.                | Co-location of creative start-ups around an arts hub accelerates product development cycles as designers exchange ideas informally.                  |
| <b>Reduced transaction or coordination costs</b> | Time and money previously spent on administration, travel, or search falls.     | A regional performing-arts centre centralises rehearsal space, cutting travel time for touring companies and freeing hours for productive rehearsal. |
| <b>Agglomeration benefits</b>                    | Dense networks of skills, suppliers, and customers raise baseline productivity. | A cluster of music venues draws specialised sound engineers and equipment suppliers, lowering per-event setup time for each operator.                |



THANK YOU

[HAWKRIDGE.COM.AU](http://HAWKRIDGE.COM.AU)