

11. COMMUNITY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

It is recommended, that unless the lecturer is proficient in this topic, a guest lecturer be included as part of the teaching of this section.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: Students will:

- identify some defining characteristics of community cultural development practices
- identify the range of skills required to successfully engage in ccd activities
- identify funding and infrastructure organisations within Australia that engage with ccd activities

CCD PRACTICE IN AUSTRALIA

“Community cultural development (ccd) describes a process rather than an artform....ccd encompasses a range of ideas and practices which involve communities with the arts. As well as producing excellent art, ccd activities lead to other outcomes: new community relationships are born; existing relationships and identities are strengthened; community discussion stimulated; ideas exchanged; partnerships created; and social isolation diminished”.¹

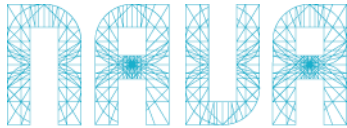
The Australia Council publication *Hands On! Practices and Projects Supported by the Community Cultural Development Board* says that communities “can be any group of people who choose to identify with each other.” It then notes that there can be many different cultures within a community, that communities are “complex and multi-layered”. Ccd activities provide a space in which communities can collaborate with artists in order to express and extend their identity, skills and culture. In return, ccd activities have been a catalyst for practitioners to engage in new artforms which respond to and embody a spirit of collaboration. Through the processes inherent in ccd practices, the practitioner may gain new insights, skills and knowledge that can impact on the shape of his/her practice.

A practitioner involved in ccd activities needs to have a number of specialised skills in addition to artform expertise. These include an awareness of social justice issues, project management, negotiation and communication skills, and the ability to motivate, facilitate and lead communities. Since practitioners may often be working with communities unfamiliar with the legal and ethical structures supporting cultural production in Australia, the practitioner should be able to articulate them to the community so that there is no confusion about the practitioner's rights and professional expectations.

Ccd activities are often initiated by a community, either directly by a community group or through a local Council, who may seek the funds to employ or contract a practitioner to work with them on realising their ideas. In such a case the group seeking to engage the practitioner may provide the practitioner with a developed work brief or they may require the practitioner to work with them to develop a brief from which funding will be sought. Sometimes the group will seek expressions of interest from a number of practitioners that can then be used as support for a funding application.

If a practitioner decides to initiate a project s/he will need to ensure that consultative processes are in place that allow the community to gain a high level of control over the project and will result in an outcome which the community will value.

¹ Hands On! A guide to the grants programs of the community cultural development fund. Australia Council 2000



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Often the financial support required for ccd activities comes from government agencies outside of the arts, such as health or regional development portfolios. This can mean that, to a lesser or greater degree, the outcome will be judged by criteria that are not necessarily art related - they may be more about the long or short term community benefits the project will provide. The issue of how to adequately critique and evaluate the outcomes of ccd projects continues as a debate within the arts community and funding agencies.

Australia has a National Community Cultural Development Network which assists communities and artists to undertake ccd activities. There are also a number of community specific arts related service organisations such as the Regional Arts Australia Network, the multicultural arts organisations, and Disability in the Arts, Disadvantage in the Arts Australia (DADAA).

ASSESSMENT EXERCISES

Tutorial Questions

- There is a continuing debate about the best way to evaluate ccd projects. The debate most often revolves around whether the 'value' of the project is in the process and the community's ability to be enriched or extended by the project, or in the aesthetic merit of the resulting art/craft product. Discuss your views on the most appropriate criteria to evaluate ccd practice, making reference to specific examples of Australian ccd projects.
- Community Cultural Development projects involve collaborative interaction between many different parties. What are some strategies that will assist the practitioner to work towards an outcome that is valued by the community and the funding agency?

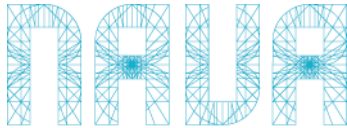
POSSIBLE CLASS ACTIVITY

- Debate the following: "The healthy local communities of the future will be more attuned to the global than the national." Discuss with reference to ccd activities and theory.

Practical Task

Develop a project proposal for an activity that requires collaboration between you as the practitioner and a particular community. Outline the project including who, within the community, you would initially approach with the idea, who you would expect to be involved in realising the project and the sort of outcomes you would expect, both in terms of benefits to the community and an artform outcome.

Submission: Project proposal.



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Readings/Resources

Art Defining Community. An anthology of critical readings and practical case studies. Flying Arts Inc. Gazette No 87. Sept 2002.

Australia Council, 2002 Hands On! Practices and projects supported by the Community Cultural Development Board.

Simpson, S. (1989) *Artists Employed in the Community The Visual Artist and the Law*, 2nd edition, The Law Book Company, Sydney, pp184-187

Williams, D. (1995) *Creating Social Capital. A study of the long term benefits from community based arts funding*

McKinnon, M (1997) *It Looks Good and Feels Good Too. Collaborative, consultative and creative approaches to the design of public places.*

The above 2 publications are available from the CANSA – see website below. There are links to more references via the following websites.

Hawkins, G (1993) *From Nimbin to Mardi Gras: Constructing Community Arts.* Allen and Unwin. Australia

Activate: A Guide to Managing Community-based arts projects. Fairfield City Council

<http://www.fairfieldcity.nsw.gov.au>

CCDNSW's Info Sheet on CCD and Culturally Diverse Communities, CCDNSW <http://www.ccdnsw.org>

Showcasing Diversity: evaluating community cultural development projects. Fact Sheets and Case Studies. CCD NSW <http://www.ccdnsw.org>

Breaking New Ground. Mentoring and leadership program for African Women, CCDNSW

<http://www.ccdnsw.org>

Websites

Australia Council – CCD Board

<http://www.ozco.gov.au/>

National Community Cultural Development website

<http://www.ccd.net/>

Community Arts Network South Australia

<http://www.cansa.on.net/>

Community Arts Network Western Australia

<http://www.canwa.com.au/>

Community Cultural Development NSW

<http://www.ccdnsw.org/>

Queensland Community Arts Network

<http://www.qldcan.org.au/>

Community Arts Resource Collection

<http://www.vca.unimelb.edu.au/library/carc/index.html>

Flying Arts Inc

<http://www.flyingarts.org.au/>

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