



# Next Wave, Annual Report

*2025*

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*From the unceded lands of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people of the Eastern Kulin Nations, Next Wave is privileged to traverse the land and waterways of this continent of many nations – to share in the act of art making and culture building – grounded in values of justice, friendship, and care. This always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land.*

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Cover image: Georgia Lucy, *Gough & Margaret’s Bull Clip*, Kickstart, 2025, Next Wave, Narrm/Melbourne.  
Courtesy the artist. Photo: Mae Hartrick

# Chair's Introduction

We are proud to present Next Wave's 2025 Annual Report, reflecting a year of significant transformation, resilience, and renewal.

As we look back on the past year, Next Wave continued to adapt to the evolving needs of the creative sector, fostering innovation and providing vital support for early-career artists across disciplines. We are equally pleased to see Next Wave's home at Brunswick Mechanics Institute further consolidate its place as a vibrant and welcoming cultural hub for local creative communities.

## **Celebrating the Next Generation**

Next Wave welcomed Elyse Goldfinch as CEO in April 2025, marking a new chapter of artistic leadership and a future-focused vision committed to amplifying multi-arts, experimental, and community-driven practices embedded in our local community and cultural context.

With the support of Merri-bek City Council, Next Wave renewed its focus on local engagement, activating Brunswick Mechanics Institute as an accessible creative hub for both Next Wave's programs and those of our growing cohort of cultural, community, and education partners. To further support this vision, a new venue hire policy was introduced, prioritising affordable access for independent artists, small arts organisations, community groups, and those facing structural barriers to participation.



**Max Delany**  
Chair, Next Wave Board

In 2025, Next Wave delivered a dynamic program of creative development, artistic programming, and community engagement initiatives across Narrm/Melbourne and beyond. We were delighted to present the culmination of the 2024–25 cycle of Next Wave's Kickstart program, featuring work-in-progress showings at Brunswick Mechanics Institute alongside installations, performances, workshops, and gatherings in public, private, and community spaces. These projects demonstrated both the ambition and growth of participating artists over the course of an 18-month journey, and the value of the mentorship model that underpins this flagship initiative.

Equally, throughout the year, Next Wave delivered a dynamic range of performances, screenings, public forums, installations, community engagement initiatives, artists

and ARIs in residence, collaborative projects, workshops and mentorship programs. These include new programming initiatives which have significantly enhanced Next Wave's audiences – both in house, off-site and online – and exemplify the organisation's ongoing commitment to collaboration, experimentation, and community engagement, and to nurturing the next generation of artists and cultural leaders.

## **Financial Overview**

In a challenging arts funding environment, amid broader cost-of-living pressures, Next Wave demonstrated careful financial stewardship and enterprise. We are pleased to report a modest surplus for the year ending 31 December 2025, alongside growth in self-generated income through venue hire, consultancy, and other revenue streams. This reflects a disciplined approach to resource management while maintaining investment in artistic and community outcomes.

The Board acknowledges that the pending conclusion of Creative Enterprise Program funding from Creative Victoria, due to end in mid-2026, will have a significant impact on Next Wave's operational sustainability in the immediate future. Next Wave's Board and Executive, together with our wider cultural, community and philanthropic partners, are working diligently and imaginatively to navigate this transition, and to ensure the organisation remains sustainable and responsive within a rapidly shifting cultural and funding landscape.

## **Looking Ahead**

Next Wave's strength lies in its agility and its long history of evolution, shapeshifting, and transformation in response to the needs of artists and the creative sector. Our recently released 2026–29 Strategic Plan reaffirms the organisation's commitment to artist development while sharpening its focus on audience and community engagement. We are excited by the prospect of further strategic renewal as we seek to meet the aspirations of emerging artists and the demands of a sector undergoing significant financial and cultural transition.

## **With Appreciation**

We extend our sincere thanks and appreciation participating artists and collaborators, and to Next Wave's team for their significant commitment and creative contributions throughout 2025. With the appointment of Elyse Goldfinch, alongside our dedicated team, Next Wave is well positioned to deepen its impact and continue supporting the next generation of artists and future leaders.

On behalf of the Board, I also extend my sincere thanks to my fellow Directors for their strategic insight, generosity and commitment throughout the year; and to Interim Director Jacina Long and former Chair Amrit Gill, who oversaw a period of significant transition and consolidation over the past three years – including the establishment of Next Wave's new lease agreement at Brunswick Mechanics Institute and the recruitment of new executive leadership in 2025.

Having joined as Chair in May 2025, I am convinced of Next Wave's enduring relevance and necessity and remain inspired by its longstanding contribution to Australia's cultural landscape. To this end, we extend our sincere thanks to each and every participating artist, team and Board member, as well as our cultural and community partners and supporters, and we look forward to welcoming you and sharing our programs and new initiatives in the year ahead.

# Executive Report

2025 marked a pivotal year for Next Wave, defined not only by leadership transition, but also a renewed sense of purpose, ambition, and public presence. It was a year of opening up: our building, our programs, and our role within a rapidly shifting cultural landscape.

Across the year, we delivered 71 public events, supported more than 400 artists through creative development opportunities, 49 new works by early-career artists, collaborated with 13 First Nations artists and organisations, welcomed nearly 10,000 attendees to programs held at and beyond Brunswick Mechanics Institute—an energising reflection of the appetite for bold, artist-led work.

Joining Next Wave in April 2025, it has been a privilege to step into an organisation with such a profound and enduring legacy. I extend my deep thanks to our committed team and Board and acknowledge former Interim Director Jacina Long and former Chair Amrit Gill for the care and clarity of the foundation they have laid. We were also delighted to welcome Max Delany as Chair and Patrice Sharkey to the Board, strengthening our governance with significant sector expertise.



**Elyse Goldfinch**  
CEO, Next Wave

A defining focus for 2025 was reactivating Brunswick Mechanics Institute as an inclusive, welcoming, and vibrant cultural space. Through expanded programming and deepened partnerships across Merri-bek and Victoria, we increased access to the building and invited new audiences into dialogue with contemporary artistic practice.

This year also saw the development of our 2026–29 Strategic Plan, an ambitious and necessary framework shaped during a period of renewal. It sharpens our commitment to early-career artists through structured development pathways, mentorship, and presentation opportunities, while also strengthening the systems, governance, and infrastructure required to sustain this work with integrity and care.

Our 2025 program reflected this commitment in action. The 2024–25 Kickstart program supported seven artists and one collective nationally, culminating

in a public and industry showcase that highlighted the depth, experimentation, and criticality of new work in development.

Major projects embodied the urgency and scope of our artistic program. *Sparks in the Dark* by Mursal Azizi and Kat Rae created a powerful platform for women impacted by the ongoing effects of the Afghanistan war, holding space for storytelling, solidarity, and international exchange. *Tidelines* by Zela Papageorgiou, developed with Speak Percussion, transformed the performance space into an immersive and visceral sonic environment.

We also expanded our presence in the public realm through *Winter Windows*, activating Sydney Road and the surrounding arts precinct with an outdoor, nighttime program of moving image works and public programs. These programs invited people to experience contemporary art in unexpected places and new ways, making it more visible, accessible and open to experimentation.

Equally central to our work this year was the creation of spaces for dialogue, reflection, and collective learning. Through programs such as *THINKING GROUND* and a series of public forums addressing climate activism, archival methodologies, and censorship and institutional power, we supported artists and audiences to engage with the urgent social and political questions shaping contemporary practice.

Our partnerships continued to be critical to this work. Collaborations with organisations including Composite Moving Image Agency & Media Bank, RMIT's Contemporary Art and Social Transformation research group (CAST), Speak Percussion, UNDERARTS, Voice in My Hands (VIMH), Blak Dot Gallery, and Counihan Gallery enabled us to deepen cross-disciplinary exchange and expand our reach across the sector.

Alongside our public program, we remained committed to sector development. Initiatives such as the *Blindside x Next Wave Emerging Curator Program* work to support the next generation of arts leaders to build sustainable practices, networks, and critical voices.

Looking ahead, we closed the year by announcing our 2026 artistic program and establishing Next Wave's inaugural Arts Advisory; a paid body that embeds artist perspectives directly into our programming decision-making. This marks a significant step toward shared leadership and accountability, ensuring Next Wave remains responsive to the communities it serves.

While 2025 has been a year of growth and renewed momentum, it has also brought structural challenges. The loss of Creative Victoria CEP funding will have a significant impact on our operations. However, we are approaching this moment with clarity and resolve, actively exploring new models of sustainability, including diversified income streams, partnerships, and expanded earned revenue.

Next Wave exists to take risks, to back artists at the critical early career stage, and to create the conditions for ambitious, socially engaged work to thrive. As we move forward, we remain committed to artistic courage, critical dialogue, and collective care. Supporting artists not only to make work, but to shape the cultural and political conversations of our time.

# Artistic Program



Kat Rae and Mursal Azizi, *Sparks in the Dark*, Narrm/Melbourne, 2025. Courtesy the artist. Photo: Steve Cotterill

# 9,000+

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audiences at Next Wave

# 260+

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artists platformed through Next Wave programs and partnerships

# 71

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public events/programs presented by Next Wave and our partners

# 12

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unique programming partnerships

# 74%

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of Next Wave events are free to attend

# 3,641

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views of ALL School digital content (see page 32)

# 49

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new works by early-career artists

# Kickstart

Kickstart is Next Wave’s flagship artist development program. Since 2001, Kickstart is the only dedicated platform in Victoria providing early-career artists, across disciplines, with financial, curatorial, and production support to create new work at scale.

The 2024–25 Kickstart cohort were:

- **An.Other collective**, mentored by **Marian Abboud** in NSW
- **Ellamay Khongroj Fitzgerald**, mentored by **Libby Harward** (Quandamooka/Ngugi) in QLD
- **Georgia Lucy**, mentored by **Lucy Bleach** from TAS
- **Jayda Wilson (Gugada and Wirangu)**, mentored by **Yusuf Ali Hayat** in SA
- **Jen Datu**, mentored by **Bruno Booth** WA
- **Rachel Morley**, mentored by **Yuhui Ng-Rodriguez** in VIC
- **Rariwuy Hick (Yolngu)**, mentored by **Rosealee Pearson (Yolngu)** in the NT
- **Sophie Dumaresq**, mentored by **Sally Golding** in the ACT



Kickstart artists (and family) with Lead Program Producer Frances Robinson and Kickstart facilitator Lana Nguyen, 2025. Photo: Mae Hartrick



*Clockwise from top left:* Kickstart artists at Balam Balam place during their February gathering, photo: Next Wave staff • Arts workers from Platform Arts, West Space and Arts House at *Industry Discovery Day* • Kickstart artists connect with local artists and arts organisations at *Industry Discovery Day* • Sarah Greentree and Amrit Gill talk about arts and government *Industry Discovery Day* • Kickstart artist eat local in Bullekebek/Brunswick during the February gathering • Kickstart artists and mentors participate in a workshop led by Lynda Roberts at the February gathering • All other photos: Mae Hartrick.



In 2025, Next Wave's Lead Program Producer Frances Robinson and Kickstart Facilitator Lana Nguyen organised a series of workshops, mentoring sessions, and work-in-progress showings to support the Kickstart artists in their final year of the program. This included the following activities:

## **Kickstart Workshops**

Next Wave hosted an in-person Kickstart Gathering from 20 – 23 February at Brunswick Mechanics Institute. The artists travelled from across the country for a four-day intensive program of workshops, industry engagement, and site visits across Narrm/Melbourne.

Structured across themes of connection, industry, practicalities, and future thinking, the program supported artists to deepen their practices while building relationships within the local arts ecology. Activities included a bio writing workshop facilitated by artist and researcher Jenna Lee (Larrakia), a maintaining and tending to creative practice with artist Lucy Bleach, and ecology mapping sessions facilitated by Lana Nguyen and Lynda Roberts.

A further workshop was held online on Monday 28 April, on how to create a pitch pack, with Next Wave alumni Nisha Madhan.

## ***Industry Discovery Day***

*Friday 21 February | Free | Brunswick Mechanics Institute*

Delivered as part of the Kickstart Gathering, *Industry Discovery Day* created opportunities for both Kickstart artists and the broader creative community to connect directly with curators, producers, and sector leaders through panels, conversations, and informal networking. Contributors included representatives from organisations such as Yirramboi, Platform Arts, West Space, Arts House, and Creative Australia, offering insight into different pathways and contexts for artistic work.

## **Kickstart Showcase**

*5 – 6 September | Free | Brunswick Mechanics Institute and Dukkana (Coburg)*

Over two full days, the *Kickstart Showcase* shared works developed by the 2024–25 cohort, offering audiences insight into a diverse range of practices across performance, installation, moving image and interdisciplinary forms.

Works shared were:

- An.Other Collective: *Fieldnotes on Being, Together*
- Ellamay Khongroj Fitzgerald: *Outdoor Kitchen* and *A Seat At The* โต๊ะ
- Georgia Lucy: *Gough and Margaret's Bull Clip*
- Jayda Wilson (Gugada and Wirangu): *(Un)Silenced*
- Jen Datu: *THE MACHINE NEEDS A HEART*
- Rachel Morley: *Art Isn't Going to Help This Town*
- Rarriwuy Hick (Yolgnu): *The Banyan Woman*
- Sophie Dumaresq: *Beached as Bro... (I Love You)*

Learn more at [nextwave.org.au/programs/kickstart](https://nextwave.org.au/programs/kickstart)



Left to right: Rariwuy Hick, *The Banyan Woman* • Georgia Lucy, *Gough & Margaret's Bull Clip* • Sophie Dumaresq, *Beached as Bro...(I Love You)* • Jen Datu, *THE MACHINE NEEDS A HEART* • Ellamay Khongroj Fitzgerald, *Outdoor Kitchen / A Seat at the โต๊ะ* • Rachel Morley, *Art Isn't Going to Help This Town* • All photos: Kickstart, 2025, Next Wave, Narrm/Melbourne. Courtesy the artists. Photos: Mae Hartrick. • An.Other Collective, *Fieldnotes on Being, Together*, Kickstart, 2025, Dukkana, Narrm/Melbourne. Courtesy the artists. Photo: Nur Aishah Kenton



# Impact

The 2024–25 Kickstart program delivered significant artistic, organisational, and sector-wide outcomes, reinforcing its value as a national platform for early-career artists. For participating artists, the program provided paid time, space, and structured support to deepen their practices and develop new work. Artists reported increased confidence in navigating the practical realities of making and presenting work, including budgeting, scheduling, fundraising, negotiating with presenters and building collaborative teams. The combination of mentoring, peer exchange and public outcomes created an environment where creative risk-taking was possible within a supportive and well-held framework.

For Next Wave, the 2024–25 Kickstart program sharpened how support is delivered in practice. Close engagement with artists across the country strengthened organisational capacity around fair and transparent remuneration, clear communication of expectations, and the provision of flexible timelines responsive to precarious work conditions and care responsibilities. The program also advanced internal systems relating to access, cultural safety, and risk management, ensuring these principles are actively integrated into program delivery.

The 2024–25 Kickstart program also expanded Next Wave’s national network of partnerships, deepening relationships with like-minded organisations through labs, showings, and collaborative activity. These partnerships extend beyond the life of the program and provide a strong foundation for future iterations of Kickstart and other Next Wave initiatives. Public-facing moments such as *Industry Discovery Day* (Friday 21 February, Brunswick Mechanics Institute) and the two-day *Kickstart Showcase* (5–6 September, Brunswick Mechanics Institute and Dukkana, Coburg) created valuable points of connection between artists, audiences, and industry.



Kickstart artists link arms in a circle at the Kickstart Showcase, 2025, Next Wave, Narm/Melbourne.  
Photo: Mae Hartrick

The program resulted in eight new works in development, with several projects already progressing toward future presentations in 2026 and 2027, extending the impact of Kickstart’s investment beyond the funding period. Outcomes include presentations, commissions, and exhibition opportunities across leading national platforms, as well as ongoing development pathways such as residencies, mentorships, and touring potential. Notable examples include:

- Ellamay Khongroj Fitzgerald’s *A Seat At The โต๊ะ*, presented at Outer Space Gallery in Brisbane following its premiere in the Showcase
- Georgia Lucy’s *Gough and Margaret’s Bull Clip*, which progressed to exhibition at Firstdraft, Sydney, and a forthcoming screening at the Sydney Opera House
- Rachel Morley’s *Art Isn’t Going to Help This Town*, which will be developed into a major solo exhibition as part of Next Wave’s 2026 program.

Other works have continued to evolve through expanded research, new commissions, and international exchange, while collectives such as An.Other Collective have grown significantly in scale and reach, continuing to present workshops and build transnational connections.

Perhaps most significantly, the 2024–25 Kickstart program fostered a sustained national community of practice among participating artists. Relationships developed through the program continue beyond its formal timeframe, with artists maintaining peer networks to share opportunities, resources, and feedback. This ongoing exchange strengthens not only individual practices but also contributes to a more connected, collaborative, and resilient emerging arts ecology, ensuring the benefits of the program extend well beyond its immediate delivery.

In partnership with CAST, Next Wave conducted interviews with 20 Kickstart artists, alumni, and former Next Wave leaders to evaluate the program, its historical and recent models, and what early-career experimental artists need right now.

The evaluation reaffirmed Kickstart’s invaluable role as an incubator of bold ideas and sustainable practice. It modelled what’s possible when artists are resourced with time, trust, and care – and when development is understood not as a pipeline to productivity, but as a process of deep listening, critical questioning, and transformative growth. Feedback has shaped Next Wave’s 2026–29 strategic plan, artistic program, and future iterations of Kickstart, leading to a more structured approach and clearer outcomes for early-career artists.



Kickstart Showcase, 2025, Next Wave, Kickstart, Narm/Melbourne. Photo: Mae Hartrick



Kickstart artists and facilitators at the February workshop/gathering, 2025. Photo by Mae Hartrick.

# Creative Development

In 2025, Next Wave continued to strengthen its commitment to creative development as the foundation of its artistic practice and organisational purpose. Our model centres time-rich, durational support that prioritises process over product, enabling early-career and independent artists to experiment, test ideas and evolve their work in responsive and sustained ways.

This approach is underpinned by deep curatorial and production mentorship, alongside a network of programs, partnerships, and in-kind support that create the conditions for ambitious artistic development for the wider sector. Across the year, artists engaged through residencies, workshops, presentations, sector gatherings, and open-access opportunities that spanned the full arc of creative practice from early exploration through to public presentation.

At the heart of this ecosystem is Brunswick Mechanics Institute, which continues to function as a dedicated site for artistic inquiry, collaboration and making. Alongside targeted initiatives and partnerships, it provides the infrastructure and relational support necessary for artists to take risks and develop new work in dialogue with peers, audiences, and sector leaders.

In 2025, this commitment supported hundreds of artists across a wide range of programs and initiatives, reflecting Next Wave's role as a critical incubator within the contemporary arts ecology. This was further strengthened through significant in-kind support, subsidised access to space, and targeted professional development opportunities, ensuring that financial barriers did not limit artistic ambition. Together, these efforts demonstrate Next Wave's sustained investment in the conditions that allow artists to develop, connect, and thrive, and our ongoing commitment to building a generous, responsive, and future-focused creative ecosystem.

## 28

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open invitation artist events creating access points for artists, peers, and audiences to engage with developing work and ideas

### **Including:**

- *Kickstart Showcase* (see [page 10](#))
- *Sparks in the Dark* (see [page 22](#))
- *ACFA Symposium* (see [page 29](#))
- *Archives are Hot! Artists in the Archive* symposium (see [page 30](#))

## Next Wave-led Creative Developments

# 211

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artists supported to develop work

# \$99,317

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invested in professional development support

# 16

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Next Wave-led initiatives designed to support artists to develop, test, and expand work

**Including:**

- Kickstart (see page 8)
- *THINKING GROUND* residency (see page 30)
- Speak Percussion partnership (see pages 17 and 20)

# 47

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days of creative development hosted at Brunswick Mechanics Institute

# 141

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artists from Human Rights Priority Groups\* supported

\* Merri-bek Human Rights Priority Groups: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; Migrant, Refugee and Faith communities; People with Disability; Women, Girls and Gender Diverse Communities; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Gender Diverse Intersex, Queer and Asexual and Aromantic (LGBTIQA+) communities

# Creative Development Case Studies

## Alex Meagher and Jesse Vivante – *Coexistence* development

14 – 18 September | Brunswick Mechanics Institute

This development marked a continuation of Next Wave’s partnership with Speak Percussion, supporting the early stages of a new collaborative work by Alex Meagher and Jesse Vivante. The project reflected Next Wave’s ongoing commitment to fostering meaningful partnerships across the contemporary arts sector, creating space for experimentation, collaboration, and long-term development.

*Coexistence* will premiere at Next Wave in February 2026.

## Emerging Curator Mentorship

1 – 21 December | Blindside and Brunswick Mechanics Institute

Delivered in partnership between Blindside and Next Wave, this program supported an emerging curator to develop their logistical, technical, and conceptual skills while building professional networks across the sector.

The 2025 recipient, Rasha Tayeh, undertook a period of curatorial and artist development supported through mentorship sessions with Elyse Goldfinch. The program focused on process rather than outcome, providing space to test ideas, refine methodologies, and deepen curatorial thinking in relation to land-based practice, community engagement, and interdisciplinary formats.

This development informed the curatorial framework for *compost: compose*, with a public presentation taking place at Brunswick Mechanics Institute in February 2026.



BLINDSIDE x Next Wave Emerging Curator Mentorship. Left to right: Mwaffaq Al-Hajjar, mohamed chamas, Ysk, Sarah Iman, Rasha Tayeh and Allara (Yorta Yorta). 2025, Narrm/Melbourne. Photo: Phuong Nguyen Le.

# External Creative Developments

25

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external creative developments at Brunswick Mechanics Institute

235

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artists engaged in external creative developments at Brunswick Mechanics Institute

135

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days of external creative development hosted at Brunswick Mechanics Institute

70

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days of in-kind venue hire provided for creative developments

106

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artists supported through in-kind venue hire provided for creative developments

\$14,844

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in-kind venue support contributing to artist development

200+

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artists from Human Rights Priority Groups\* supported

\* Merri-bek Human Rights Priority Groups: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; Migrant, Refugee and Faith communities; People with Disability; Women, Girls and Gender Diverse Communities; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Gender Diverse Intersex, Queer and Asexual and Aromantic (LGBTIQA+) communities

# Public Programs

## ***A Rising Tide: Below The Surface Vision Board & Networking Event***

*Saturday 18 January | Tickets: \$30 – \$40 | Brunswick Mechanics Institute*

Lydia Tesema produced a vision board and networking event for her community as part of *A Rising Tide* – a leadership and curatorial development program initiated in partnership by Next Wave and VicHealth that ran from 2023 to early 2025.

Lydia's event was designed to empower attendees to visualise their dreams, set meaningful goals and take actionable steps toward their future. By combining creativity, reflection, and networking, this event aimed to provide a transformative experience for all participants in a vibrant, supportive atmosphere. Funds raised from ticket sales were put back into the growth of Lydia's business, *Below The Surface*.

## **MESS Presents: *New Waveforms***

*Wednesday 5 March | Tickets: \$25 | Brunswick Mechanics Institute*

Melbourne Electronic Sound Studio's (MESS) took over Brunswick Mechanics Institute to present an evening of experimental electronic performance by emerging artists. Featuring D. Tyrone, Mimmie, Reibang Chakma, Zoltan Fecso, and INHARMONICITY, the showcase brought together artists working across drone, ambient, noise and beat-driven sound. Each artist drew on instruments from the extensive MESS collection, highlighting the possibilities of analogue and electronic experimentation.

Presented by MESS and Brunswick Music Festival, supported by Next Wave.

## **Book Launch – *Art and Memorialisation: Truth-Telling Through Creative Practice in Settler Colonial Australia***

*Thursday 6 March | Free | Brunswick Mechanics Institute*

RMIT University's CAST presented the launch of *Art and Memorialisation: Truth-Telling Through Creative Practice in Settler Colonial Australia* (2024), published by Springer.

Co-edited by Genevieve Grieves (Worimi) and Amy Spiers, the event brought together contributing writers for readings and a panel discussion exploring the themes of the publication, including truth-telling, memory, and creative practice within settler colonial contexts. The launch opened with a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony led by Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung representatives, followed by readings and discussion with contributors.

Presented by CAST, supported by Next Wave.

## ***Neighbourhood Noise: Percussion, Conversation, Degustation***

*Saturday 8 March | Free | Brunswick Mechanics Institute*

Next Wave and Speak Percussion presented an improvisational music and cross-artform workshop and performance, integrating elements of food, participatory discussion, and live music, followed by conversation with food legends Duré Dara and Matisse Laida.

The event was part of the *Neighbourhood Noise* program for Brunswick Music Festival, which featured Radio Composite as well as performances and exhibitions at Counihan Gallery.

Presented by Speak Percussion in partnership with Next Wave for Brunswick Music Festival.

## ***Next Wave Neighbours***

*Wednesday 16 April | Free | Brunswick Mechanics Institute*

*Next Wave Neighbours* was created to bring local artists, arts organisations, businesses, and community members together at Brunswick Mechanics Institute.

In this iteration, we introduced Next Wave's new CEO, Elyse Goldfinch, shared details about our *Winter Windows* program, and gave an overview of our new venue hire platform. It also featured an artist talk with First Nations organisation Common Ground on the creation of *Motherhood in the Colony*, which screened at Brunswick Mechanics Institute in May.

## ***Tidelines by Zela Papageorgiou***

*8 – 9 May | Tickets from \$18 | Brunswick Mechanics Institute*

Zela Papageorgiou's *Tidelines* shared her personal devotion to percussion through an intimate, immersive listening experience.

This debut concert presented a program of original compositions shaped by encounters with nature and moments of solitude, drawing on time spent in regional Australia and rural Japan. Both a personal reflection and a shared ritual, the performance moved through memory, place and attention. Audiences were invited to drift through shifting textures of rhythmic and hypnotic percussion, where layered patterns flowed and converged with ambient sound worlds.

Presented by Speak Percussion in partnership with Next Wave.

## ***Motherhood in the Colony Premiere Screening***

*Sunday 11 May | Pay as you feel | Brunswick Mechanics Institute*

Next Wave hosted artists and community from Common Ground, Bukjeh, and GARUWA to celebrate the premiere of *Motherhood in the Colony* in Narm/Melbourne on Mother's Day 2025. It was an intimate evening shared between First Nations and Palestinian communities and local audiences. The event included community activations and a live panel discussion, coinciding with community-led screenings around the world.

Presented by Bukjeh, Common Ground, and GARUWA, supported by Next Wave.



Left to right: Lydia Tesema, *Below the Surface: Vision Board and Networking Event*, 2025. Photo: Senpai • Matisse Laida and Dura Duré, *Percussion, Conversation, Degustation*, 2025, Brunswick Music Festival. Photo: Simon Fazio • Zela Papageorgiou, *Tidelines*, 2025. Courtesy the artist. Photo: Darren Gill • Bukjeh, *Common Ground*, and GARUWA, premiere of *Motherhood in the Colony*, 2025. Photo: supplied • Oliver O'Brien talks about *Composite Radio* at Next Wave Neighbours, photo: Next Wave staff • MESS, *New Waveforms*, 2025, Brunswick Music Festival. Courtesy the artists. Photo: Simon Fazio • All photos: Next Wave, Narm/Melbourne

## **ACFA Divestment Drop-Ins**

*Thursdays, 12 June – 3 July | Free | Brunswick Mechanics Institute*

ACFA partnered with Next Wave to host a series of *Divestment Drop-ins* at Brunswick Mechanics Institute. These sessions were a casual format for independents and members of organisations to engage in collective and guided divestment.

Presented by ACFA, supported by Next Wave.

## **Winter Windows and Around the Block**

*4 July – 18 August | Free | Brunswick Mechanics Institute*

Next Wave's inaugural Winter Windows program illuminated our Sydney-road facing screens for six weeks in the heart of winter – showcasing digital works from local artists Axel Garay (Meriam / Eastern Torres Strait) and Liwen Lian.

Following an open EOI, Garay and Lian's digital works were selected by a panel including local award-winning curator, writer and art historian Nur Shkempi, former Next Wave Young Artistic Director MaggZ, alongside Next Wave's CEO Elyse Goldfinch and former Lead Program Producer Frances Robinson.

Next Wave partnered with Merri-bek City Council to show additional works at the recently opened Michelle Guglielmo park. Artists Linda Loh and Derrick Duan were selected for this opportunity.

Winter Windows opened with *Around the Block*, a collaboration between Blak Dot Gallery, Counihan Gallery, and Merri-bek City Council, featuring artist talks and a night tour of moving image work across four sites in Bulleke-bek/Brunswick.

## **Sparks in the Dark**

*15 – 24 August 2025 | Free – \$15 | Brunswick Mechanics Institute*

*Sparks in the Dark* was a celebration of the strength and creativity of women impacted by the ongoing effects of the Afghanistan war.

Developed by emerging artists Mursal Azizi and Kat Rae, the exhibition fused traditional and contemporary art practices. *Sparks in the Dark* presented new works by Azizi and Rae alongside 208 embroidered handkerchiefs created by more than 30 women living in Afghanistan. The 208 handkerchiefs marked each week since the Taliban began working to erase women from Afghan society, forming a powerful collective act of resistance and testimony.

Notable attendees included Governor General, Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC; Afghan ambassador to Australia, His Excellency Wahidullah Waissi; and Victorian Greens MP, Tim Read.

The program included an opening night celebration on Friday 15 August, veterans event on Saturday 16 August, *Making Sparks* artist discussion on Thursday 21 August, and an embroidery workshop and closing event on Saturday 23 August.



Top: Liwen Lian, *Nightfall*, 2025, and Axel Garay (Meriam / Eastern Torres Strait), *Sik*, 2025, *Winter Windows*. Courtesy the artists. Photo: Tom Noble • Left to right: Liwen Lian gives an artist talk at the Winter Windows launch, photo: Tom Noble • Kat Rae and Mursal Azizi, *Sparks in the Dark*, 2025. Courtesy the artists. Photo: Steve Cotterill • Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC visits *Sparks in the Dark*, photo: Office of the Governor General • Embroidery workshop at the launch of *Sparks in the Dark*, photo: Steve Cotterill • All photos: Next Wave, Narrm/Melbourne

## **UNDERARTS Term 3 Showcase**

*Friday 12 September | Free | Brunswick Mechanics Institute*

UNDERARTS brought the next generation of performance makers to Next Wave's theatre for their Term 3 Showcase: *Tales of the Morning Show* – an original, laugh-out-loud performance that mashes up fairy tales and breakfast TV – created and performed entirely by the ensemble.

UNDERARTS is a place for young people to create art together in a supportive and encouraging environment. Next Wave has an ongoing partnership with them to present their showcases, with more to come in 2026.

Presented by UNDERARTS, supported by Next Wave.

## ***Poly-rhythmic #6***

*Thursday 16 October | Tickets from \$10 | Brunswick Mechanics Institute*

Liquid Architecture presented *Poly-rhythmic #6* with Next Wave, themed Landing, Crossing, Exiting: Listening to Queer Time/Migrant Time. This was a special collaboration with Aziz Sohail who developed these ideas through the curatorial residency at MADA Gallery.

The evening included a panel discussion with MzRizk (Habibi Hafla), Kerfew Collective and Matisse Laida (We Eatin' Good), exploring how BIPOC/queer spaces and nightlife foster community, solidarity, and creative freedom in Narm/Melbourne.

Presented by Liquid Architecture, supported by Next Wave.

## ***This Mob Community Barbecue***

*Saturday 25 October | Free | Counihan Gallery and Brunswick Mechanics Institute*

Next Wave partnered with Counihan Gallery to host a community barbecue and cook-up presented with This Mob and Saluhan Collective. This event included a yarnning circle led by curator Maya Hodge and exhibiting artists Moorina Bonini and Mia Boe, followed by a shared meal, creating space for participants to gather, exchange stories and celebrate culture and solidarity.

Presented by This Mob, Saluhan Collective, and Counihan Gallery, supported by Next Wave.

## ***Safe in Sound Festival***

*1 – 2 November | Tickets from \$15 | Brunswick Mechanics Institute*

Curated by Robbie Avenaim, *Safe in Sound* was a two-day experimental music festival the bringing together artists across generations and abilities, creating an inclusive space for experimental sound practice and community connection. The festival foregrounded accessibility, collaboration, and participation, aligning with Next Wave's commitment to supporting diverse and risk-taking artists. Across the weekend, audiences experienced performances that blurred the boundaries between music, sound, art, and social gathering.

Presented by Liquid Architecture, supported by Next Wave.



UNDERARTS term 3 showcase, *Tales of the Morning Show*, 2025. Courtesy the artists. Photo: Brigid Reid

# End-of-Year Celebration

Wednesday 3 December | Free | Brunswick Mechanics Institute

Next Wave hosted an end-of-year celebration to announce its 2026 Artistic Program and newly established Arts Advisory, bringing together artists, collaborators, and community to mark the year's close.

The evening featured a multi-part program across Brunswick Mechanics Institute, including a screening program with works by emerging artists MaggZ, Camilla Eustance, and Ponie Curtis, a courtyard DJ set by Nicholas Currie (Mununjali, Kuku Yalanji), and a BBQ by Ronen Jafari. Additional activations included a zine-making workshop led by Ashley Ronning and a mini market showcasing artworks, artist books, and goods by local artists and collectives including Hoori Handmade, Stray Pages, and Beit e'Shai.



*End-of-Year Celebration* • Left to right: Next Wave CEO Elyse Goldfinch introduces the 2026 program • Artist mini-market • Nick Currie ((Mununjali, Kuku Yalanji) DJs • Attendees read Next Wave's 2026 program • Zine making workshop with Ashley Ronning, a local artist based at Schoolhouse Studios in Coburg • All photos: 2025, Next Wave, Narrm/Melbourne. Photos: Mae Hartrick

# Artist-run Initiative in Residence: Composite

Next Wave has an ongoing venue partnership with Composite Moving Image Agency & Media Bank.

Led by Channon Goodwin, Composite hosts a program of screenings and events dedicated to supporting artists' moving image practices through exhibition, research, education, and distribution.

In 2025, this included:

- *Finite Eyes*, Friday 24 January
- *speaking from the I eye: Public Grief, Public Space*, Friday 31 January
- *Recompositions Screenings*, Tuesday 18 February
- *KADIST: Place Made After the Story*, Friday 28 February
- *speaking from the I eye: Claire Lambe x Eleanor Ivory Weber*, Friday 21 March
- *Residue* screening, Saturday 5 April
- *As we looked back, we saw the future*, Friday 9 May
- *Subversive Film x Hasib Hourani*, Friday 23 May
- Book Launch of *Cinemat: The Becoming-Animal of Experimental Film*, Thursday 5 June
- *How to Build the Future*, Saturday 9 August
- *Who Is Afraid of Ideology?*, Saturday 20 September
- *American Woman*, Saturday 18 October
- *Beneath the Visible: Uncovering the Legacies of Colonial Power and Concealed Landscapes* event, Thursday 23 October
- *Through the Square Box* by Aiden Sefo' screening, Friday 24 October
- *Poetic Translation: In-Conversation*, Friday 14 November
- *A Library Portal*, Saturday 29 November

Composite also facilitates Composite Radio – a platform supporting interdisciplinary, critical, and speculative work – broadcast online.

Visit [composite.org.au](https://composite.org.au) to learn more about their work.

980+

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audiences at Composite events  
and screenings

7,000

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listeners reached by  
Composite Radio



Claire Lambe, *Sudden Bursts Of Nasty Laughter*, 2022. Screened by Composite

# ALL School

ALL School is Next Wave's artist-led learning programming stream, designed to facilitate knowledge sharing and idea swapping.

## ACFA Symposium

13 – 14 February | Free | George Paton Gallery

The ACFA Symposium brought together artists, researchers, and cultural workers for a two-day symposium exploring the role of creative practice in responding to the climate crisis.

Presented as a series of interconnected events, the program moved across talks, workshops, discussions, and site-responsive activities, foregrounding collective learning and exchange. The symposium prioritised dialogue over presentation, creating space for artists and participants to share knowledge, test ideas, and build new relationships across disciplines and communities.

ACFA explored how artistic practices can engage with ecological thinking, climate justice, and future imaginaries, while also addressing the practical conditions required to sustain this work. The program emphasised collaboration, local context, and embodied experience as key approaches to climate-responsive practice.

The ACFA Symposium was co-presented by Next Wave in partnership with George Paton Gallery, supported by City of Melbourne and Climate Action Network Australia.



Ronen Jafari and Sebastian Henry-Jones from West Space presenting *Growing Perspectives*, ACFA Symposium, Narm/Melbourne. Photo: Astrid Mulder

## **Panel: *Resisting Censorship and Silencing by Creative and Cultural Institutions***

*Thursday 25 September | Free | Brunswick Mechanics Institute*

The evening opened with a screening of *I Signed the Petition* (2018) by Mahdi Fleifel, followed by a panel discussion examining how language policing, event cancellations and funding withdrawal are used as tools of censorship within the arts. Speakers included Gabrielle de Vietri, Dr James Nguyen, Liang Luscombe and Dr Leslie Eastman, offering perspectives across artistic, academic and institutional contexts.

Presented by CAST, Composite, IDEA RMIT and Next Wave, with support from Palestinian Film Festival Australia.

## **THINKING GROUND Residency**

*Fridays, 12 September – 3 October | Free | Brunswick Mechanics Institute*

*THINKING GROUND* was a series of public sessions facilitated by Voice in My Hands (VIMH), creating space for artists to gather, connect and collectively unpack their role in responding to current and future social, environmental, and political conditions. Grounded in a belief in collective agency, the sessions invited local artists and community members to share knowledge, exchange skills, and develop a shared understanding of civic and creative practice.

Building on a pilot workshop series at Brunswick Mechanics Institute in August 2024 and further development through a residency at Northcote Town Hall Arts Centre, this iteration was delivered across four sessions as part of Next Wave's ALL School program.

Facilitated by VIMH co-artistic directors Liv Satchell and Julian Dibley-Hall. Presented by Next Wave.

## **Archives are Hot! Artists in the Archives**

*17 – 18 October | Free | RMIT Garden Building, MADA Gallery (Caulfield East) and Dukkana (Coburg)*

*Archives Are Hot! Artists in the Archives* was a two-day symposium bringing together artists, researchers, students, and arts workers to explore how archival practices can generate new ways of thinking, making and collectivising.

Developed in collaboration with Saluhan Collective and CAST, the program approached archives as living cultural ecosystems shaped by power, memory and belonging. It created space to consider how artists might activate archival materials as sites of relation and future-making.

Across two days, the program combined tours, discussions, workshops, and collective fieldwork, including a guided tour at State Library of Victoria, an RMIT campus monuments walk, archive presentations from key institutions, artist-led workshops and panels, and *Honk! if You Archive*, a multi-site bus tour connecting participants with archives across Narm/Melbourne.

Co-presented by Next Wave, CAST, and Saluhan, and supported by City of Melbourne.



*Archives are Hot! Artists in the Archive* • Left to right: Cake concluding day one. Photo: Next Wave staff • *Artists in the Archive* panel, RMIT Garden Building. Photo: Next Wave staff • Dr. Sofi Basseghi, *Seven Portraits – Unbound*, 2025, State Library Victoria. Courtesy the artists. Photo: Next Wave staff • Saluhan, *Honk! If you Archive*, photo: Mischa Wang • Saluhan and The Great Book Return, *Fugitive Archives: A Spoken Future*, 2025, Dukkana. Photo: Mischa Wang • Celine Saoud, co-founder of The Great Book Return, speaks at *Fugitive Archives: A Spoken Future*, 2025, MADA gallery, photo: Mischa Wang • All photos: Narrm/Melbourne.

# ALL School Digital and Resources

The ALL School online platform gathers essays, critical responses and commissions that capture, online, the way that artists see the world around them.

This year, our ALL School Digital offering included:

- An artist talk with Winter Windows artists Axel Garay (Meriam / Eastern Torres Strait) and Liwen Lian
- An artist talk with Kickstart artist Rachel Morley on their project *Art Isn't Going to Help This Town*
- A recording of Jenna Lee's opening keynote to the *Archives Are Hot! Artists in the Archives* symposium

In 2025 we also introduced ALL School Resources: a collection of practical advice and shared experiences from our artist community.

We published the following

- *Introspect* a creativity resource by Lydia Tesema
- *Home*, a zine by Matisse Laida
- The *(nexus)* dance database created by MaggZ

You can view ALL School Resources and Digital items at [allschool.nextwave.org.au](https://allschool.nextwave.org.au)

Home, About, Programs

## Practical advice and shared experiences from our artist community.

**(nexus) database**  
Access Donate to Next Wave

**Home - a We Eatin' Good zine**  
FB IG TW We Eatin' Good Subscribe

**Lydia Tesema**

**Banda**

**What even is a pitch pack?**  
Access Donate to Next Wave

**What I need when I make**  
FB IG TW Subscribe

The new Resources section of the ALL School website.

# Arts Advisory

In late 2025 Next Wave established an Arts Advisory to embed diverse lived experiences and artistic and intergenerational perspectives into its creative decision-making.

Comprised of six members, selected through a combination of invitation and open expression of interest, the Arts Advisory provides input into program development, participates in artist selection processes, and offers critical feedback on Next Wave programming and artistic activity. It also strengthens relationships with alumni, supports pathways for new artists and acts as a network of advocates for Next Wave within the local arts ecology.

Meeting quarterly, the Advisory contributes to both strategic planning and ongoing program conversations, with members remunerated for their participation and supported to engage accessibly.

## About the Advisory



Photo: Tessa C. Stevens

**Zoë Bastin** is an Australian choreographer, performer, researcher, and educator whose interdisciplinary practice sits at the intersection of contemporary dance, visual art, and critical theory. Their work examines how bodies are shaped by and resist systems of power through queer and feminist methodologies. Zoë completed a PhD at RMIT University in 2021 on the philosophy of the body and currently lectures and supervises research projects at RMIT, VCA, and Deakin University. They are the artistic director of Zoë Bastin Dance, leading a company dedicated to research-led, collaborative performance-making.



Photo: Abdela Igmirien

**陳雋然 Chun Yin Rainbow Chan** is an award-winning vocalist, producer and multi-disciplinary artist. Her practice bridges popular music and contemporary visual arts, exploring themes of cultural representation, (mis)translation, matrilineal histories and diasporic heritage. Central to her work is the research and reimagining of women's oral traditions, particularly the fading bridal laments of Weitou women, Hong Kong's first settlers, to whom she has deep ancestral ties. She is particularly interested in the power of ritual, song and performance as both a means of reclaiming agency and a living archive.



Photo: Courtesy the artist

**Axel Garay** is a proud Meriam (Eastern Torres Strait), Puerto Rican & Malaysian queer man living and working on the lands of the Kulin Nations in Narm/Melbourne, Australia. Axel is an emerging interdisciplinary artist -using digital video, installation and alternative photographic processes to explore themes of technology ethics, desire, spirituality, history, and human psychology.



Photo: Courtesy the artist.

**Matisse Laida** is a Queer Mauritian/Venezuelan artist and community arts worker whose practice spans film, food, performance, and public programs. Their work centres care, culture, and collaboration through a queer diasporic lens. They are the founder of We Eatin' Good, a QPOC project using food to gather community and explore identity, and have worked across festivals, arts organisations, and youth programs to create spaces for marginalised artists to be seen and supported.



Photo: Wild Hardt

**Varsha Ramesh** is a producer from Chennai, India now based in Narm/Melbourne working across experimental and contemporary practice. She has worked across arts organisations, festivals, and ARIs, shaping projects with an ethic of care, curiosity, and creative rigour. All her work is guided by a deep commitment to equity and justice. Currently, she's a Creative Producer at Arts House and Board Member at Runway Journal.



Photo: Abdul Halik Azeez

**Aziz Sohail** is a Pakistan-passport holding curator and writer whose work builds interdisciplinary connections between art, history, archives, literature, theory, and biography and supports new cultural and pedagogical infrastructures. Their research and resultant projects honour and recognise the power of queer and feminist collectivity, sociability, joy, and wayward encounter and unfold through slowness, collaboration, and tentacularity. They are currently a PhD Candidate in Curatorial Practice at Monash University. As part of their PhD, they founded Queer Unschool South Asia, the inaugural edition of which took place in Nepal in late 2024.

# Our Venue



Winter Windows, 2025. Photo: Tom Noble

# 91

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venue hire bookings

# 49

---

unique hirers

# 98

---

days of community rate hire provided

# 81

---

days of in-kind hire provided

# 22

---

hirer programs and events open to the public

# 500+

---

artists engaged through venue hire

# 167

---

views of our [video venue tour](#)

Located in the heart of Brunswick, home to one of Naarm/Melbourne's largest and most vibrant creative communities, Brunswick Mechanics Institute continues to function as a vital engine room for artistic development and public exchange.

Next Wave recognises the importance of dedicated time and space for artists to make work, and the long-standing role Brunswick Mechanics Institute plays as a meeting point between artists and audiences, where ideas are tested, shared, and brought to life.

This approach is underpinned by a clear set of principles that prioritise access and inclusion, particularly for Merri-bek-based artists and those from Human Rights Priority Groups\*, support for artistic development and experimentation, affordability through transparent and flexible pricing, and accountability through public reporting and ongoing review with Merri-bek City Council.

Together, these principles ensure Brunswick Mechanics Institute remains artist-led, financially sustainable, and committed to delivering meaningful cultural, social, and community benefit.

## Updated Venue Hire Policy

In 2025, Next Wave updated its Venue Hire Policy to align with the commencement of a new tender period with Merri-bek City Council.

The policy articulates how Next Wave operates Brunswick Mechanics Institute as an accessible, equitable, and dynamic cultural venue. It establishes clear and transparent approaches to hire decision-making, pricing structures, and operational priorities, while reinforcing alignment with Merri-bek City Council's objectives for inclusion, creativity, and sustainability.

At its core, Brunswick Mechanics Institute is managed as an inclusive hub for experimental and community-driven practice. The policy affirms Next Wave's commitment to ensuring the venue remains artist-led, accessible, and financially sustainable, while maximising its value to local artists, community groups, and the broader cultural sector.

Rather than limiting detail to procedural rules, the policy foregrounds key principles that guide venue use, including:

- Access and inclusion, with priority access for Merri-bek-based artists and those from Human Rights Priority Groups\*
- Support for artistic development, particularly experimentation, rehearsal, and work-in-progress presentation
- Affordability and transparency, through clear pricing structures and flexible hire options where possible
- Community benefit, ensuring venue use contributes meaningfully to local cultural life and engagement
- Accountability, through publicly available policy settings and ongoing review in partnership with Merri-bek City Council

\* Merri-bek Human Rights Priority Groups: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; Migrant, Refugee and Faith communities; People with Disability; Women, Girls and Gender Diverse Communities; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Gender Diverse Intersex, Queer and Asexual and Aromantic (LGBTIQ+) communities

## In-Kind and Subsidised Venue Hire

In 2025, Next Wave provided 81 days of in-kind venue hire to external hirers, supporting independent artists and organisations who may otherwise face financial barriers to accessing space.

Next Wave facilitated 98 days of venue hire at community rates – which are reserved for artists/creative practitioners, not-for-profits and small to medium arts organisations.

Supported artists and organisations include:

- ILBIJERRI
- Australian Art Orchestra
- Dramawerkz Theatre Inc
- Bukjeh
- Motherless Collective (for Yirramboi)
- Polyglot Theatre
- Born in a Taxi
- Chamber Made
- Yellow Wheel Dance Theatre
- Joel Bray Dance
- Melbourne Playback Theatre
- Oozing Future

## New Booking Platform

In April 2025, Next Wave transitioned its venue hire system to SpacetoCo, an online booking platform designed for community-managed venues.

This change significantly streamlined the booking process for both hirers and Next Wave staff. The platform provides real-time visibility of venue availability, enables direct online booking requests, and supports hirers to manage and update their bookings independently.

You can view our venue hire policy, access our online booking platform and more at [nextwave.org.au/venue-hire](https://nextwave.org.au/venue-hire)

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Next Wave operates Brunswick Mechanics Institute with the support of Merri-bek City Council



# Audiences



The audience for *New Waveforms*, presented by MESS for Brunswick Music Festival, 2025, Next Wave, Narm/Melbourne. Photo: Simon Fazio

In 2025, Next Wave renewed its focus on deepening audience and community engagement, positioning participation, access, and connection at the heart of its program. This shift was reflected in a significant increase in attendance, with over 9,000 visitors across the year, an over 237% increase from the previous report.

Central to this approach was the continued activation of Brunswick Mechanics Institute as a welcoming and dynamic hub for creative experimentation, gathering, and exchange. Through an expanded and responsive program, Next Wave created multiple entry points for diverse audiences to connect with contemporary practice – from local neighbourhood communities in Merri-bek to audiences across metropolitan, regional, and rural Victoria.

Next Wave cultivates new audiences through an expanded focus on learning, creative development, and targeted programs for young people, fostering meaningful participation in contemporary art. Through a dynamic schedule of accessible programs and engagement initiatives, both onsite and online, we create pathways for younger generations to connect with, explore, and shape contemporary practice.

Next Wave prioritises meaningful engagement with community and sector needs, supporting a wide spectrum of artistic practices while building greater public understanding of experimental, socially engaged and community-led artforms. This is complemented by a strong commitment to access, equity and inclusion, with deliberate efforts to reduce barriers to participation and ensure that more people can take part in cultural life, achieved through diversity of programming and providing free and low-cost tickets for all events.

9000+

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audiences at Next Wave

237%

---

increase on previous year's attendance

30%

---

based in Merri-bek

156

---

different postcodes, meaning our audiences come from near and far

## Identities

61%

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identify as female

15%

---

identify as male

35%

---

identify as gender diverse

20%

---

identify as LGBTQIA+

50%

---

identify as culturally and linguistically diverse

74%

---

identify as people of colour

4%

---

identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

13%

---

identify as neurodivergent, Deaf and/or as a person with disability

## Age groups

16%

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are aged 18–25

37%

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are aged 26–35

# Community Engagement

Next Wave staff (majority of whom are Merri-bek locals themselves) attend and participate, where appropriate, in initiatives that integrate and promote the activities of organisations in the Brunswick Civic and Cultural Precinct. This includes participation in local activations, events and engagement with local organisations. Examples of engagement for 2025 included: Brunswick Music Festival Launch (Wednesday 29 January), Balam Balam Place Official Opening (Wed 2 Apr), Sandwich Series at Balam Balam (on some Thursdays), Merri-bek Bold Business Gathering (Wednesday 4 June), Merri-bek Tourism Round Table (Thursday 26 June), Merri-bek Summer Tourism Exchange (Monday 17 November), Sydney Road Brunswick Precinct AGM and Business Awards (Wednesday 12 November), Meeting with Schoolhouse Studios, alongside other activities.



The audience at *Around the Block (Winter Windows)*, 2025, Narrm/Melbourne. Photo: Tom Noble.

# 2025 Audience Survey

Next Wave sought feedback from its extended community through an in-depth, insight-based audience survey in 2025. The survey gathered insights on how people have connected with Next Wave in the past and to consider its priorities into the future.

The responses we received highlight the importance of creative development and space for early-career and local artists, and stresses the desire for more public-facing engagement with Next Wave’s artists.

This solidifies Next Wave’s vision for Brunswick Mechanics Institute and its role as a critical facilitator for incubating early-career artists, and as a hub for public-facing programs, redefining how art can be produced and experienced. As we move into 2026 and beyond, Next Wave will continue to build on this feedback by deepening pathways for young and emerging artists, while creating more opportunities for audiences to engage directly with the ideas, processes, and people shaping new work – strengthening our position as a dynamic, community-driven platform for experimentation, exchange and knowledge sharing.

## Who responded?

**69%**

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are practicing artists

**48%**

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are arts workers

**28%**

---

are enthusiasts

**61%**

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engaged with Next Wave through in-person events

**42%**

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engaged with Next Wave through online content

**10%**

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follow our activities, but haven’t attended an event yet

## **We asked, *What kind of role does Next Wave play in the arts ecosystem?***

### **We heard:**

“I feel like it is a very important first big step for many artists – helping them find funding and support for ambitious projects and assisting them to present to the public, often for the first time at scale. I think it also plays an important role in the Naarm arts ecosystem, as it has always championed some pretty radical, risky and outside of the mainstream projects, which helps Melbourne stay weird and cool and the best art city in Australia.”

“I think the role Next Wave plays is very important, especially through their incubator projects, and support for diverse practices. I think this can be expanded more into a space of helping emerging artists in the development of their works.”

“Programs that support artistic development, opening up space for residencies, workshops and events produced with community, supporting experimental and critical practice with emerging to early career artists, leading by example in practices in climate responsiveness, labour relations and social justice in day-to-day arts work and ways of producing.”

“As a testing ground for new styles, ideas, technologies and collaborations. Place for new/emerging artists to develop and create connections with the broader industry/community. I feel like Next Wave has a great opportunity to bring together new and established creatives in a way that other festivals/organisations don't really facilitate.”

## What respondents would like to see from Next Wave in the future

80%

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creative development programs

75%

---

artist residencies

70%

---

collaborative or community-led projects

67%

---

experimental performances

58%

---

talks, critical discourse and skills workshops

51%

---

work-in-progress showings and crits

33%

---

screenings and films

# Our Values and Commitments



*Motherhood in the Colony* premiere at Next Wave, presented by Bukjeh, Common Ground and GARUWA, 2025, Next Wave, Narrm/Melbourne. Photo supplied by GARUWA.

# Our Values

## Justice

- Supporting First Nations cultural protocols, self-determination, and cultural safety, across all aspects of our operations and programming, knowing that truly experimental work is only possible when artists are supported to create from a place of dignity, power, and care
- Minimising barriers to access and participation for artists and audiences, to reflect diverse stories, cultures, and experiences
- Ensuring equitable, ethical, and inclusive work conditions for artists and arts workers

## Friendship

- Fostering reciprocal relationships based on generosity, learning, respect, and exchange — not just as a way of working, but as catalysts for bold ideas and unexpected collaborations to ignite, and flourish
- Sharing our skills and resources with an expanding network of artists, communities, organisations, and audiences
- Cultivating friendship is how we build artist-led communities that shape culture across the sector

## Care

- Creating a culturally safe organisation and valuing care as creative practice — creating safe spaces for early-career artists to take big risks
- Designing programs that prioritise sustainability, reflection, and long-term development
- Centring care at the core of everything we do — care for artists, for each other, and for the world around us

These values are outlined in [Next Wave's 2026–29 Strategic Plan](#).

# Our Commitment to First Peoples

Next Wave is committed to creating platforms that uphold First Peoples voices, knowledge, and self-determination, and to embedding this commitment across every part of our organisation and program.

**In 2025, we embodied this by:**

**Supporting First Nations artists, organisations and their work, including:**

- Jayda Wilson (Gugada and Wirangu), who developed her work *(Un)Silenced* through the 2024–25 Kickstart program. Wilson also worked with artist Dominic Guerrera (Kurna and Ngarrindjeri) to host a fire talk at the *Kickstart Showcase* held in September
- Rarriwuy Hick (Yolngu), who developed her work *The Banyan Woman* through the 2024–25 Kickstart Program, mentored by Rosealee Pearson (Yolngu).
- Libby Harward (Quandamooka / Ngugi), a member of our 2024–25 Artistic Directorate and mentor to 2024–25 Kickstart artist Ellamay Fitzgerald
- Jenna Lee (Larrakia), an artist and researcher who facilitated a bio writing workshop for our Kickstart Gathering in February
- First Nations arts organisation Yirramboi, who were invited to present at our Industry Discovery Day Industry Day
- Genevieve Grieves (Worimi), co-editor of *Art and Memorialisation: Truth-Telling Through Creative Practice in Settler Colonial Australia* – launched at Next Wave in March
- GARUWA and Common Ground, as well as Palestinian storytellers Bukjeh, for the premiere screening their film *Motherhood in the Colony* – held at Next Wave in May
- Axel Garay (Meriam / Eastern Torres Strait), who presented *Sik* for Next Wave’s Winter Windows program in July–August
- Domenic White (Trawlwoolway), who hosted a monuments tour for *Archives are Hot! Artists in the Archives* held in October
- This Mob, who hosted a community barbecue at Next Wave in partnership with Saluhan and Counihan Gallery
- Allara (Yorta Yorta) and DT (Djab Wurrung) were selected to participate in Rasha Tayeh’s *compost : compose* project as part of the Blindside x Next Wave Emerging Curator Program. The selection panel included comedian, writer, director and cultural education practitioner, Shiralee Hood (Noongar, Kurnai, Gunditjmarra)
- Nicholas Currie (Mununjali, Kuku Yalanji) who DJd at our *End-of-Year Celebration*

## Ensuring First Peoples are represented on our board and in our Arts Advisory, working to grow participation in a considered and staged approach

We are proud to currently have the support of:

- Board member, Bec Cole (palawa)
- Arts Advisory member, Axel Garay (Meriam / Eastern Torres Strait)
- Continuing to work with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation to deliver Welcome to Country at key events
- Supporting access and participation by maintaining free ticket allocations for First Peoples across all paid events
- Developing a new Venue Hire Policy that provides in-kind venue support for all First Peoples-led companies and independent artists
- Providing staff training and consultation with First Peoples owned and led organisations

Together, these actions reflect an ongoing commitment to cultural leadership, accountability, and respect, ensuring First Peoples voices and knowledge systems are not only platformed, but embedded at the core of Next Wave's work.



Axel Garay (Meriam / Eastern Torres Strait), *Sik*, Winter Windows, 2025, Next Wave. Courtesy the artist. Photo: Tom Nobel • Domenic White (Trawlwoolway), *Archives are Hot! Artists in the Archive – Monuments Tour*, 2025. Photo: Next Wave staff • Libby Harward (Quandamooka / Ngugi) send a message to the 2024–25 Kickstart artists at the Kickstart Showcase, 2025. Photo: Mae Hartrick

# Our Commitment to Equity, Access and Inclusion

Next Wave is committed to providing equitable access to all participants and visitors, and to embedding equity, access, and inclusion across every aspect of our organisation and program. Next Wave holds an organisation-wide commitment to turning values into sustained, structural action.

**In 2025, we demonstrated this by:**

## **Maintaining a strong commitment to affordability**

- 74% of Next Wave events were free to attend in 2025
- We offer free “no one turned away” tickets across and free Companion Card access across all paid events
- Up to 55% of venue hires in-kind. We provide in-kind venue support to artists facing structural barriers, prioritising those who are Merri-bek based, unfunded, early-career, or part of Human Rights Priority Groups (including First Nations; Migrant, Refugee and Faith Communities; People with Disability; Women, Girls and Gender Diverse people; and LGBTIQ+ communities)

## **Expanding access to digital resources and content on the ALL (Artist-led Learning) School website, ensuring that these are free and accessible**

2025 contributions included:

- *Introspect*, a wellbeing and aspiration resource by Lydia Tesema
- *Home*, a zine by Matisse Laida
- The (*nexus*) dance database created by MaggZ
- *What even is a pitch pack...?* by Nisha Madhan
- A podcast with Winter Windows artists Axel Garay and Liwen Lian
- A recording of the *Archives are Hot! Artists in the Archives* opening keynote with Jenna Lee

## **Embedding access into our programs and processes**

- Access costs are factored into all program budgets to ensure access is planned for from the outset
- Diverse lived experiences are represented within our Arts Advisory, strengthening accountability and inclusive decision-making



Next Wave CEO Elyse Goldfinch recording an artist talk with *Winter Windows* artists Liwen Lian and Axel Garay, currently available on the ALL School website.

# Our Commitment to Sustainability

Next Wave is committed to operating as a responsible institution that works sustainably, shares resources, and actively reduces waste and emissions.

**In 2025, we embodied this by:**

## **Prioritising environmental justice, recognising the interconnectedness of climate action and social equity**

This commitment is informed by First Nations knowledge systems and understandings of ecological stewardship and recognises that environmental justice cannot be separated from the sovereignty and self-determination of marginalised communities.

## **Supporting A Climate for Art (ACFA) a sector-wide initiative that unifies climate response in the arts through divestment, collaboration and community building**

Next Wave is a founding member of ACFA, In 2025, we extended our partnership to include:

- Supporting the *ACFA Symposium*: a two-day public program held at George Paton Gallery, which brought together artists and practitioners to build shared language and understanding of the climate crisis in relation to culture. This event was supported by the City of Melbourne
- Hosting *ACFA Divestment Drop-In* sessions at Next Wave, creating space for sector engagement and collective action across June and July

## **Partnering with organisations, sponsors and funders whose values align with our own, which included**

- Transitioning to the Humanitix ticketing platform, aligning our operations with a social enterprise model that reinvests into global education initiatives
- Strengthening sustainable hospitality practices through partnerships with local providers, including Hawkers Beer (Reservoir-based, with a strong sustainability focus) and continuing our collaboration with Noisy Ritual, who supply wine in kegs to reduce packaging waste
- Prioritising local procurement, small business partnerships, and low-waste operational practices across programs and events
- Encouraging artists, staff and partners to adopt more sustainable approaches to production and delivery wherever possible
- Divesting from organisations and suppliers that are misaligned with our climate and ethical commitments and actively reviewing our partnerships to ensure ongoing accountability

Climate for Art Symposium

13.02.25–14.02.25

Community and knowledge building around the climate crisis

Paton Gallery  
climateforart.com

ACFA

Nex

CITY OF  
MELBOURNE



ACFA founders Eiki Reade and Lana Nguyen speak to audience members at the ACFA Symposium.  
Photo: Astrid Mulder.

# Marketing and Communications



*End-of-Year Celebration artist mini-market, 2025, Next Wave, Narm/Melbourne. Photo: Mae Hartrick*

# 12,658

---

followers on Instagram

# 15,410

---

followers on Facebook

# 1,428

---

followers on LinkedIn

# 900+

---

posts and stories shared

# 4,652

---

monthly page views on  
[nextwave.org.au](http://nextwave.org.au)

# 136

---

monthly visitors to  
[allschool.nextwave.org.au](http://allschool.nextwave.org.au)

# 3,974

---

subscribers to our  
monthly newsletter

# 30

---

items of media coverage

# In 2025, Next Wave continued to expand its digital presence and strengthen audience engagement across platforms, building visibility for artists, programs, and the Brunswick Mechanics Institute.

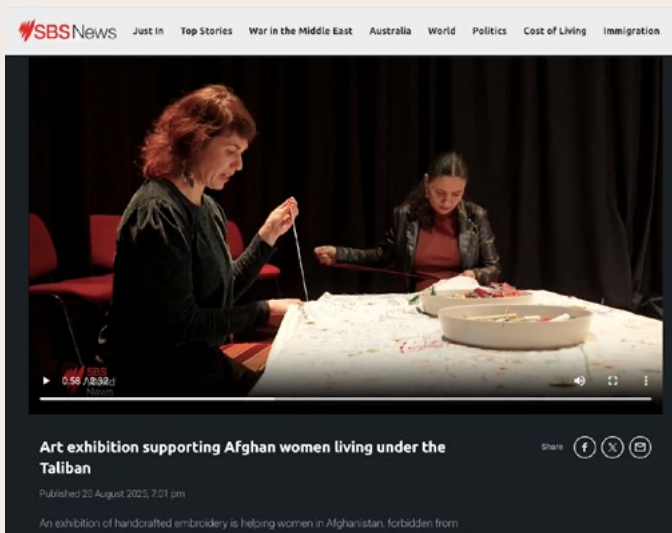
Next Wave's social media channels remained a vital point of connection, supporting a broad and growing community of followers. Through a consistent and active publishing approach, we amplified artist-led activity, promoted events and opportunities, and fostered ongoing dialogue with audiences and peers.

Our websites served as central hubs for program information, learning resources, and venue access. These platforms played an important role in supporting both public engagement and artist participation, while also improving accessibility for prospective hirers through clear and navigable content. Direct communications remained an effective channel for reaching audiences. Regular e-newsletters demonstrated strong engagement, providing a reliable touchpoint for sharing program updates, opportunities, and organisational news.

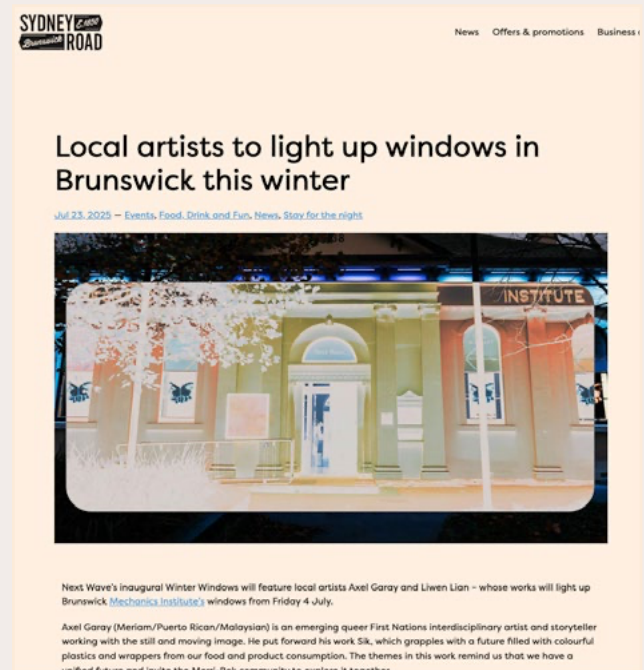
Significant coverage included:

- SBS News, featuring Sparks in the Dark, which spotlighted artist-led work supporting Afghan women living under Taliban rule
- ArtsHub, announcing the appointment of CEO Elyse Goldfinch and new Board Members Max Delany and Patrice Sharkey
- Sydney Road, profiling Winter Windows and its activation of local shopfronts through artist commissions

These results reflect a steady and strategic approach to communications in 2025 that prioritised clarity, consistency, and the amplification of artist voices, while continuing to grow Next Wave's reach and relevance across digital and media platforms.



Right: SBS News, *Art exhibition supporting Afghan women living under the Taliban, Thursday 20 August, 2025, sbs.com.au* • Left: Sydney Road Brunswick Association (SRBA), *Local Artists to Light Up Windows in Brunswick this Winter, Tuesday 23 June, 2025, sydneyroad.com.au*



# Appendices

## 1. Programs/Projects

1. Kickstart (ongoing)
2. Artistic Directorate (2024–25)
3. Below the Surface: Vision Board and Networking event (18 Jan)<sup>#</sup>
4. Composite: *Finite Eyes* screening (24 Jan)<sup>#</sup>
5. Composite: *speaking from the I eye* screening (31 Jan)<sup>#</sup>
6. ACFA Symposium (13–14 Feb)<sup>#</sup>
7. Composite: *Recompositions* screening (18 Feb)<sup>#</sup>
8. Industry Discovery Day (21 Feb)<sup>#</sup>
9. Composite: Place Made After the Story x KADIST Foundation screening (28 Feb)<sup>#</sup>
10. MESS x Brunswick Music Festival: *New Waveforms* (5 Mar)<sup>#</sup>
11. CAST x Composite: *Art and Memorialisation: Truth-Telling Through Creative Practice in Settler Colonial Australia* book launch (6 Mar)<sup>#</sup>
12. Speak Percussion x Brunswick Music Festival: Neighbourhood Noise (8 Mar)<sup>#</sup>
13. Composite: Claire Lambe x Eleanor Ivory Weber screening (21 Mar)<sup>#</sup>
14. Composite: *Residue* screening (5 Apr)<sup>#</sup>
15. Next Wave Neighbours (16 Apr)<sup>#</sup>
16. Winter Windows online info session (6 May)<sup>#</sup>
17. Winter Windows Drop-in Information Session (8 May)<sup>#</sup>
18. Composite: *As we looked back, we saw the future* screening (9 May)<sup>#</sup>
19. GARUWA x Bukjeh x Common Ground: *Motherhood in the Colony* Screening (11 May)<sup>#</sup>
20. Winter Windows Drop-in Information Session (15 May)<sup>#</sup>
21. Speak Percussion: *Tidelines* development (May)
22. Composite: Subversive Film x Hasib Hourani' screening (23 May)<sup>#</sup>
23. Composite: Book Launch of *Cinemat: The Becoming-Animal of Experimental Film* by Tessa Laird (5 Jun)<sup>#</sup>
24. ACFA: Divestment drop-in session (12 Jun)<sup>#</sup>
25. ACFA: Divestment drop-in session (12 Jun)<sup>#</sup>
26. ACFA: Divestment drop-in session (19 Jun)<sup>#</sup>
27. Speak Percussion: *Tidelines* showing (21 Jun)<sup>#</sup>
28. ACFA: Divestment drop-in session (26 Jun)<sup>#</sup>
29. Speak Percussion: *Tidelines* showing (20 Jun)<sup>#</sup>
30. ACFA: Divestment drop-in session (3 Jul)<sup>#</sup>
31. Winter Windows launch (4 Jul)<sup>#</sup>
32. Composite: *How to Build the Future* screening (9 Aug)<sup>#</sup>
33. *Sparks in the Dark* Opening Night (15 Aug)<sup>#</sup>
34. *Sparks in the Dark* veterans gathering (16 Aug)<sup>#</sup>
35. *Sparks in the Dark* Artist Talk (21 Aug)<sup>#</sup>
36. *Sparks in the Dark* Workshop (23 Aug)<sup>#</sup>
37. Kickstart Showcase – Ellamay Khongroj Fitzgerald (5 Sep)<sup>#</sup>
38. Kickstart Showcase – Ellamay Khongroj Fitzgerald 2 (6 Sep)<sup>#</sup>
39. Kickstart Showcase – Jen Datu (5 Sep)<sup>#</sup>
40. Kickstart Showcase – Georgia Lucy (5 Sep)<sup>#</sup>
41. Kickstart Showcase – Jayda Wilson (5 Sep)<sup>#</sup>
42. Kickstart Showcase – Rachel Morley (6 Sep)<sup>#</sup>
43. UNDERARTS Term 3 Showcase (12 Sep)<sup>#</sup>
44. THINKING GROUND session (12 Sep)<sup>#</sup>

## *Programs/Projects continued*

45. Speak Percussion: Alex Meagher and Jesse Vivante creative development (14 – 18 Sep)
46. THINKING GROUND session (19 Sep)<sup>#</sup>
47. Composite: *Who Is Afraid of Ideology?* screening (20 Sep)<sup>#</sup>
48. Panel: Resisting Censorship and Silencing by Creative and Cultural Institutions (25 Sep)<sup>#</sup>
49. THINKING GROUND session (26 Sep)<sup>#</sup>
50. THINKING GROUND session (3 Oct)<sup>#</sup>
51. Arts Advisory info session (15 Oct)<sup>#</sup>
52. *Archives are Hot!* – Keynote (16 Oct)<sup>#</sup>
53. Liquid Architecture: Poly-rhythmic #6 (16 Oct)<sup>#</sup>
54. *Archives are Hot!* – Exhibition Tour (17 Oct)<sup>#</sup>
55. *Archives are Hot!* – Monuments Tour (17 Oct)<sup>#</sup>
56. *Archives are Hot!* – Panel 1 (17 Oct)<sup>#</sup>
57. *Archives are Hot!* – Panel 2 (17 Oct)<sup>#</sup>
58. *Archives are Hot!* – Workshop (17 Oct)<sup>#</sup>
59. *Archives are Hot!* – Fieldnotes on Being, Together (18 Oct)<sup>#</sup>
60. *Archives are Hot!* – Bus tour (18 Oct)<sup>#</sup>
61. Composite: *American Woman* by Laxlan Petras screening (18 Oct)<sup>#</sup>
62. Composite: *Beneath the Visible: Uncovering the Legacies of Colonial Power and Concealed Landscapes* event (23 Oct)<sup>#</sup>
63. Composite: *Through the Square Box* by Aiden Sefo' screening (24 Oct)<sup>#</sup>
64. This Mob Community Barbecue (25 Oct)<sup>#</sup>
65. Liquid Architecture: Safe in Sound Festival (1 – 2 Nov)<sup>#</sup>
66. Composite: *Poetic Translation: In-Conversation* screening and artist talk (14 Nov)<sup>#</sup>
67. Composite: *A Library Portal* screening (29 Nov)<sup>#</sup>
68. End-of-Year Celebration (3 Dec)<sup>#</sup>
69. ALL School Rachel Morley artist talk<sup>#</sup>
70. ALL School *Archives are Hot!* keynote recording<sup>#</sup>
71. ALL School (nexus) database<sup>#</sup>
72. ALL School *Home* zine<sup>#</sup>
73. ALL School Axel and Liwen podcast<sup>#</sup>
74. ALL School *Introspect* resource<sup>#</sup>
75. BLINDSIDE: Emerging Curator Mentorship (ongoing)

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**Total programs/projects: 75**

**# Programs open to public: 71**

## 2. Artists Supported

### **Kickstart**

1. An.Other Collective: Vina Aurellia Purwantoro
2. An.Other Collective: Jasmine Alifia Hakim
3. An.Other Collective: Farhana Ismail
4. An.Other Collective: Kezia Devita Aria
5. An.Other Collective: Fatimah Zahratul Jannah
6. An.Other Collective: Wasielah Noorsjamsi
7. An.Other Collective: Della Indradi
8. An.Other Collective: Lima Maula
9. Ellamay Khongroj Fitzgerald
10. Georgia Lucy
11. Jayda Wilson (Gugada and Wirangu)
12. Jen Datu (+ Colin Smith)
13. Rachel Morley
14. Rarriwuy Hick (Yolngu)
15. Sophie Dumaresq
16. Lana Nguyen, facilitator
17. Jenna Lee (Larrakia), facilitator
18. Lynda Roberts, facilitator
19. Priya Namana, facilitator
20. Dominic Guerrera (Kurna and Ngarrindjeri), facilitator

### **Artistic Directorate**

21. Marian Abboud
22. Libby Harward (Quandamooka / Ngugi)
23. Lucy Bleach
24. Yusuf Hayat
25. Bruno Booth
26. Yuhui Ng-Rodriguez
27. Sally Golding
28. Rosealee Pearson (Yolngu)

### **A Rising Tide**

29. Banda
30. Lydia Tesema
31. Matisse Laida
32. MaggZ

### **ACFA Symposium**

33. Eiki Reid
34. Erica McCalman
35. Zena Cumpston
36. Jacina Leong
37. Kate Sulan
38. Angharad Wynne-Jones
39. Ronen Jafari
40. Sebastian Henry-Jones

### ***Sparks in the Dark***

41. Kat Rae
42. Mursal Azizi
43. Tracey Avery

### **Speak Percussion**

44. Zela Papageorgiou
45. Zela's partner
46. Jesse Vivante
47. Alexander Meagher
48. Duré Dura OAM
49. Kaylee Melville
50. Jack Palmer

### ***Winter Windows***

51. Liwen Lian
52. Axel Garay (Meriam / Eastern Torres Strait)
53. Derrick Duan
54. Linda Loh

### **Panel: Resisting Censorship**

55. Dr James Nguyễn
56. Liang Luscombe
57. Dr Leslie Eastman

## *Artists Supported continued*

### **Archives Are Hot! Artists in the Archive**

58. Jenna Lee
59. Sofi Basseghi
60. Dominic White (Trawlwoolway)
61. Amy Spiers
62. Thao Nguyen
63. Savannah Smith
64. Nick Devlin
65. Nick Henderson
66. Ana Tiquia
67. Jacina Leong
68. Alexander Williams
69. Nataša Čordašić
70. Fayen d'Evie
71. Jasmin (An.Other Collective)
72. MJ Flamiano
73. Catherine Ortega Sandow
74. The Great Book Return

### **THINKING GROUND**

75. Liv Satchell
76. Julian Dibley-Hall

### **End-of-Year Celebration**

77. Nicholas Currie (Mununjali, Kuku Yalanji)
78. Ponie Curtis
79. Camilla Eustance
80. MaggZ
81. Ashley Ronning and Schoolhouse Studios

### **BLINDSIDE x Next Wave Emerging Curator Program**

82. Rasha Tayeh
83. Allara (Yorta Yorta)
84. Yusuke Akai
85. Mohamed Chamas
86. Mwaffaq Alhajjar
87. Sarah Iman
88. DT (Djab Wurrung)

*Performance and public program to be presented at Next Wave in February 2026*

### **Photographers/Videographers**

89. Mae Hartrick
90. Astrid Mulder
91. Abdalla Omar
92. Tom Nobel

+ 31 women artists based in Afghanistan who provided embroideries for *Sparks in the Dark*

+ more than 140 artists supported through supported events from Brunswick Music Festival, Bukjeh/Common Ground/GARUWA, Composite, CAST, Liquid Architecture, AND UNDERARTS,

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**Total artists supported: 180+**

### 3. Creative Development

#	Development	Artists	Days
1	Kickstart Artist Workshops (20 – 24 Feb) <sup>^</sup>	20	4
2	<i>Industry Discovery Day</i> (21 Feb) <sup>^</sup>	100	1
3	Speak Percussion: <i>Tidelines</i> Creative Development and presentation (May – June) <sup>^</sup>	2	14
4	ACFA Divestment Drop-ins (Jun – July) <sup>^</sup>	12	4
5	Kickstart Showcase (1 – 10 Sep) <sup>^</sup>	NA*	10
6	<i>THINKING GROUND</i> (Sep – Oct) <sup>^</sup>	41	4
7	UNDERARTS Term 3 Showcase (12 Sep) <sup>^</sup>	17	3
8	Speak Percussion: Alex Meagher and Jesse Vivante creative development (14 – 18 Sep) <sup>^</sup>	2	5
9	<i>Panel: Resisting Censorship and Silencing by Creative and Cultural Institutions</i> event (25 Sep) <sup>^</sup>	5	1
10	ALL School Rachel Morley artist talk <sup>^</sup>	NA*	NA
11	ALL School <i>Archives are Hot!</i> keynote recording <sup>^</sup>	1	NA
12	ALL School (nexus) database <sup>^</sup>	1	NA
13	ALL School <i>Home</i> zine <sup>^</sup>	1	NA
14	ALL School Axel and Liwen podcast <sup>^</sup>	1	NA
15	ALL School <i>Introspect</i> resource <sup>^</sup>	1	NA
16	Blindside Emerging Curator Mentorship (Dec) <sup>^</sup>	7	1
17	MaggZ dance rehearsals, workshops and filming (Jan – Nov) <sup># !</sup>	17	18
18	Jodee Mundy rehearsals (1 – 13 Feb) <sup># !</sup>	5	13
19	Zari Moss short film (24 – 25 Feb) <sup>#</sup>	8	2
20	Matisse Laida workshops (13 Mar, 3 April) <sup># !</sup>	5	2
21	Leisa Shelton workshop (14 Mar) <sup># !</sup>	25	1
22	Annie Venables shadow puppet testing (14 Mar) <sup>#</sup>	6	1
23	Cornershop Comedy workshop (5 Apr) <sup>#</sup>	30	1
24	Motherless Collective rehearsals (9 – 24 Apr) <sup>#</sup>	6	12
25	Nickila De Silva & Tom Goodman film (12 – 19 Apr) <sup># !</sup>	2	8
26	Bronwyn Pringle workshops (27 Apr) <sup># !</sup>	8	1

#	Development	Artists	Days
27	Saluhan LAB creative development & filming (7 Jun – 8 Jul) <sup># !</sup>	6	2
28	Bukjeh/Aseel Tayeh rehearsals (6 – 10 Jul) <sup>!</sup>	5	5
29	Polyglot Theatre children's theatre (21 – 26 Jul) <sup>#</sup>	5	6
30	Dr Kathleen Fallon rehearsals (7 – 27 Jul) <sup>#</sup>	10	21
31	Born in a Taxi creative development (28 – 29 Jul) <sup>#</sup>	10	2
32	Chamber Made (27 Jul – 8 Aug) <sup>#</sup>	10	10
33	Lemony S Puppet Theatre (30 Jul – 1 Aug) <sup>#</sup>	4	3
34	Natalia Sledz Fringe show (Jul – Oct) <sup># !</sup>	8	14
35	Australian Art Orchestra <i>First Rhythms</i> by 2025 First Nations Artist in Residence Adam Manning (28 – 29 Sep) <sup>#</sup>	10	2
36	Lucy Eidelson dance rehearsals (Sep – Oct) <sup>#</sup>	10	5
37	Rachel Button development (23 – 24 Sep) <sup># !</sup>	1	2
38	Elena Zalez dance show filming (20 Oct) <sup>#</sup>	7	1
39	Joel Bray dance rehearsals (14 Oct) <sup># !</sup>	20	1
40	Kalliope Rice filming (25 Oct) <sup>#</sup>	4	1
41	Laura Miller dance rehearsal (4 Nov) <sup>#</sup>	13	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>446</b>	<b>184</b>

\* Already counted under Kickstart

^ Next Wave initiatives that supported artists to develop their work

# Hirer creative development

! Space provided in-kind

**Next Wave initiatives that supported artists to develop their work: 16**

**Total creative developments: 41**

**Days of creative development at Next Wave: 184**

**Days of space provided in-kind: 70**

**Artists supported: 439**

# *Creative Development Continued*

## **Open Invitation Artist Events**

1. ACFA Symposium (13–14 Feb)
2. Industry Discovery Day (21 Feb)
3. Winter Windows online info session (6 May)
4. Winter Windows drop in info session (8 May)
5. Winter Windows drop in info session (15 May)
6. ACFA: Divestment drop-in session (12 Jun)
7. ACFA: Divestment drop-in session (19 Jun)
8. ACFA: Divestment drop-in session (26 Jun)
9. ACFA: Divestment drop-in session (3 Jul)
10. Speak Percussion: *Tidelines* showing (21 Jun)
11. Speak Percussion: *Tidelines* showing (20 Jun)
12. Sparks in the Dark artist talk (21 Aug)
13. Sparks in the Dark workshop (23 Aug)
14. Kickstart Showcase – Ellamay Khongroj Fitzgerald (5 Sep)
15. Kickstart Showcase – Ellamay Khongroj Fitzgerald 2 (6 Sep)
16. Kickstart Showcase – Jen Datu (5 Sep)
17. Kickstart Showcase – Georgia Lucy (5 Sep)
18. Kickstart Showcase – Jayda Wilson (5 Sep)
19. Kickstart Showcase – Rachel Morley (6 Sep)
20. *Panel: Resisting Censorship and Silencing by Creative and Cultural Institutions* (25 Sep)
21. *Archives are Hot!* – Keynote (16 Oct)
22. *Archives are Hot!* – Exhibition Tour (17 Oct)<sup>#</sup>
23. *Archives are Hot!* – Monuments Tour (17 Oct)
24. *Archives are Hot!* – Panel 1 (17 Oct)
25. *Archives are Hot!* – Panel 2 (17 Oct)
26. *Archives are Hot!* – Workshop (17 Oct)
27. *Archives are Hot!* – Fieldnotes on Being, Together (18 Oct)
28. *Archives are Hot!* – Bus tour (18 Oct)<sup>#</sup>

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**Open invitation artist events creating access points for artists, peers, and audiences to engage with developing work and ideas: 28**

## 4. Local Initiatives

1. Composite partnership (ongoing)
2. CAST partnership (ongoing)
3. UNDERARTS partnership (ongoing)
4. Subsidised and in-kind venue hire (ongoing)
5. Below the Surface: Vision Board and Networking event (18 Jan)
6. Industry Discovery Day (21 Feb)
7. Next Wave Neighbours (16 Apr)
8. *Art and Memorialisation: Truth-Telling Through Creative Practice in Settler Colonial Australia* book launch (6 Mar)
9. Neighbourhood Noise for BMF (8 Mar)
10. Winter Windows
  - Winter Windows online info session (6 May)
  - Winter Windows drop in info session (8 May)
  - Winter Windows drop in info session (15 May)
  - Winter Windows launch (4 Jul)
11. *Motherhood in the Colony* screening (11 May)
12. ACFA Divestment Drop-In Sessions
  - Session 1 (12 Jun)
  - Session 2 (19 Jun)
  - Session 3 (26 Jun)
  - Session 4 (3 Jul)
13. *Sparks in the Dark*
  - Sparks opening night (15 Aug)
  - Sparks veterans gathering (16 Aug)
  - Sparks artist talk (21 Aug)
  - Sparks workshop (23 Aug)
14. Arts Advisory
  - Info session (15 Oct)
15. *Archives are Hot!*
  - Archives are Hot!* – Fieldnotes on Being, Together (18 Oct)
  - Archives are Hot!* – Bus tour (18 Oct)
16. End-of-Year Celebration (3 Dec)
17. ALL School
  - Panel: Resisting Censorship and Silencing by Creative and Cultural Institutions (25 Sep)
  - Rachel Morley artist talk
  - Archives are Hot!* keynote recording (*nexus*) database
  - Home* zine
  - Axel and Liwen podcast
  - Introspect* resource

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**Initiatives designed to support local artists and/or artists from Merri-bek's Human Rights priority groups and/or local community: 17**

## 5. Media Mentions

#	Date	Publisher	Format	Headline/Topic
1	6 Feb	UMSU	Listing	ACFA Symposium
2	25-Feb	ArtsHub	Digital Article	Appointment of Elyse Goldfinch
3	11-Mar	Mixdown	Digital article	Appointment of Elyse Goldfinch
4	21-May	Speak Percussion	Listing	<i>Tidelines</i>
5	21-May	Beat	Listing	<i>Tidelines</i>
6	23-Jun	Sydney Road	Digital Article	<i>Local Artists to Light Up Windows In Brunswick This Winter</i>
7	10-Jul	Beat	Listing	<i>Opening night: Sparks in the Dark</i>
8	15-Aug	James St	Listing	<i>A Seat At The ໂຕ້ໄຮ (by Ellamay Khongroj Fitzgerald, Kickstart Artist)</i>
9	18-Aug	Brunswick Voice	Digital article	<i>Exhibition brings 208 weeks of resilience to Brunswick</i>
10	19-Aug	Toorak Times	Digital article	<i>Sparks in The Dark – Afghan Women embroidery Exhibition and events</i>
11	20-Aug	SBS	Newsreel	<i>Art exhibition supporting Afghan women living under the Taliban</i>
12	25-Aug	Govenor General	Facebook post*	<i>Sparks in the Dark</i>
13	24-Aug	Govenor General	Instagram post*	<i>Sparks in the Dark</i>
14	16-Sep	ArtsHub	Digital Article	Recruitment of Next Wave board members, Max Delany and Patrice Sharkey
15	8-Dec	8am Media	Digital Article	<i>Flames of Hope and Art: The Third 8AM Annual Awards in Melbourne</i>
16	2-Sep	Outer Space	Listing	<i>A Seat At The ໂຕ້ໄຮ (by Ellamay Khongroj Fitzgerald, Kickstart Artist)</i>
17	10-Sep	Beat	Digital Article	Kickstart Showcase
18	15-Sep	Beat	Listing	<i>Honk! If you archive... [Archives are Hot!]</i>
19	15-Sep	What's On Melbourne	Listing	<i>Fieldnotes on Being, Together [Archives are Hot!]</i>
20	15-Sep	What's On Melbourne	Listing	<i>Archives are Hot! Monuments Tour</i>
21	16-Sep	What's On Melbourne	Listing	<i>Archives workshop with Salote Tawale and Torika Bolatagici [Archives are Hot!]</i>

#	Date	Publisher	Format	Headline/Topic
22	17-Sep	What's On Melbourne	Listing	<i>Exhibition Tour: Seven Portraits – Unbound [Archives are Hot!]</i>
23	18-Sep	What's On Melbourne	Listing	<i>Artists in the Archive: Panel Discussion [Archives are Hot!]</i>
24	19-Sep	What's On Melbourne	Listing	<i>Archives are Hot: Panel Discussion [Archives are Hot!]</i>
25	20-Sep	ArtsHub	Listing	<i>Symposium: Archives are Hot! Artists in the Archive</i>
26	15-Oct	Her Canberra	Digital Article	How I Got Here: Artist Sophie Dumaresq (Kickstart artist)
27	20-Oct	Art Smitten	Radio interview	Archives are Hot! with Amy Spiers + 'Love Serenade' (1996) film analysis by Tyra + 'Love Serenade' (1996) film analysis by Tyra
28	17-May	boorda yeyi	Listing	boorda yeyi – Colin Smith and Jen Datu (Kickstart artists)
29	2-Mar	Canberra Contemporary	Listing	BLAZE 2025 (features Sophie Dumaresq, Kickstart artist)
30	9-Dec	FirstDraft	Listing	<i>Gough and Margaret's Bullclip FM</i> (by Georgia Lucy, Kickstart artist)

\* Social media posts not ordinarily counted as media mentions, exception made for unique circumstances. Next Wave was mentioned in 46 non-collaborative social media posts in 2025

# Partners

## Funding Partners

Creative Victoria  
Merri-bek City Council  
Creative Australia  
City of Melbourne  
City of Gold Coast  
City of Wyndham

## Program Partners

ACFA  
Blindside  
Brunswick Music Festival  
Bukjeh / Common Ground / GARUWA  
CAST  
Composite Moving Image Agency  
& Media Bank  
Liquid Architecture  
Speak Percussion  
Saluhan  
This Mob  
UNDERARTS  
VIMH

## Hospitality Partners

Noisy Ritual  
Mountain Goat  
Gospel Whiskey

## Next Wave is a Member of

A Climate for Art  
Theatre Network Australia  
Victorian Association of Performing Arts Centres

## Donors

Adrian Goldfinch  
Annie Robinson  
Bec Cole  
Chelsea Lang  
Dan Koop  
David Ralph  
Dominic Taranto  
Drew Pettifer  
Hannah Grey  
Hannah Jensen  
Jamie Lewis  
Julia Gregg  
Lena Nahlous  
Marita Dyson  
Nicole Smith  
Tom McKinnon  
*Annonymous x 7*



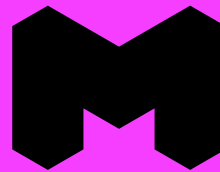
**CREATIVE  
VICTORIA**



**Merri-bek**  
City Council



Australian Government



**CITY OF  
MELBOURNE**



CITY OF  
**GOLDCOAST.**  
GENERATE GC



Victorian  
Association  
of Performing  
Arts Centres



**ADVANCING THE  
PERFORMING ARTS**

# Who We Are

## Staff

**Elyse Goldfinch**  
CEO

**Frances Robinson**  
Lead Program Producer (to September 2025)

**Julia Croft**  
Associate Producer

**Natalia Sledz**  
Venue Producer & Operations Coordinator

**Maddie Lakos**  
Communications & Development Manager

## Casual Staff

Cameron Harris

Chas Maher

Benjamin Richards

Pranati Narayan Visweswaran

Jamie Brown

Libby Lynch

Lucy McCann

Clare Rankine

Shan Dante

Jasmine Babayan

## Board Members

Max Delany, Chair

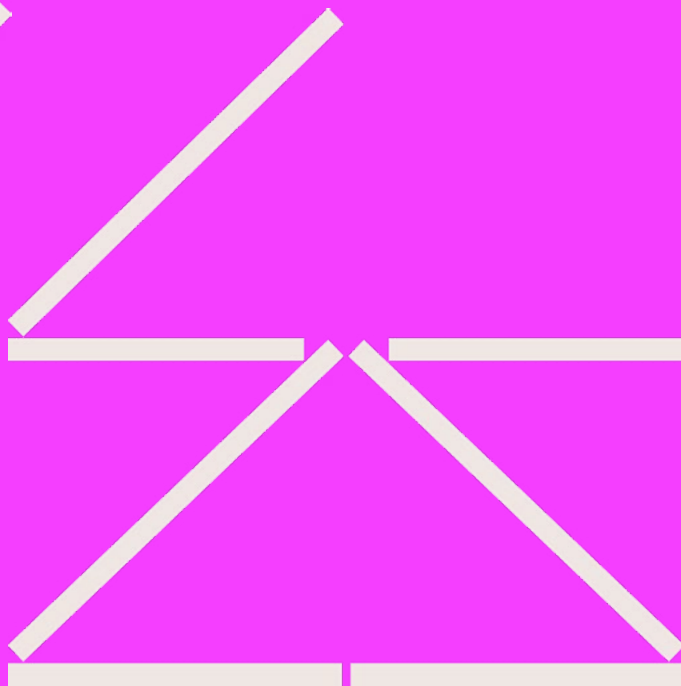
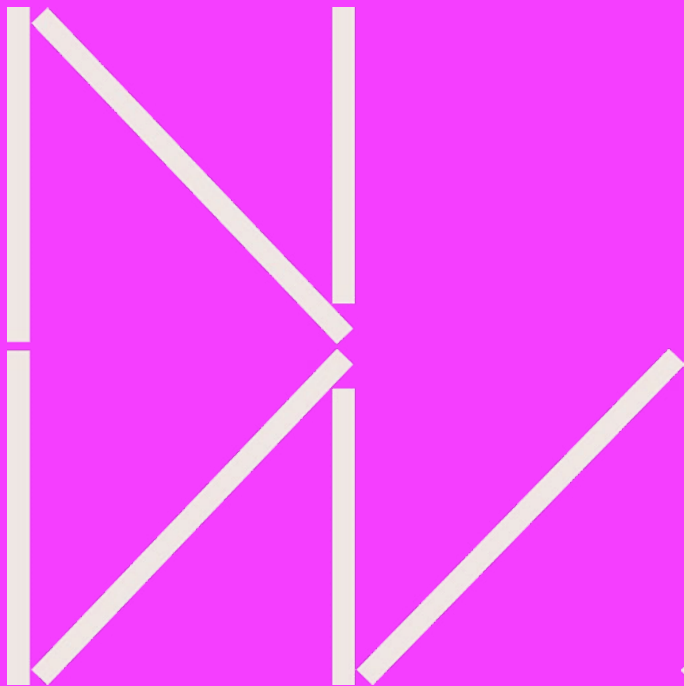
Kate Robinson, Deputy Chair

Hannah Jensen, Treasurer

Bec Cole

Patrice Sharkey

*Next Wave warmly thanks and acknowledges outgoing board members Amrit Gill (former Chair), Jodee Mundy, and Nicole Smith*



# Next Wave,

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## Get in touch

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