

Performing Lines WA

Evaluation Report:

Kolyang Creative Hub and Kolyang Artist Lab



The Creative Hub was clearly game-changing! Making space for artists to work without having to produce a particular outcome; making space for artists to connect and build community; making space for important conversations that the sector needs to be having; making space for conversations about things that the artists and makers are passionate about.

Participating artist 2020

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Executive summary

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for all PLWA does to support arts and artists in WA. PLWA are an invaluable organisation who bring a huge amount of care, expertise and vision into everything they do.

Participant, 2020 and 2021

The Kolyang Creative Hub and the Kolyang Artist Lab are initiatives designed and delivered by Performing Lines WA (PLWA), in consultation and partnership with the independent performing arts sector in Western Australia.

In 2020, the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic triggered widespread cancellations of performing arts events around the world. In response, PLWA approached independent artists and producers who were part of its program of activities that year, asking them what they needed most. As the Western Australian border had been closed but the State was not subject to lockdowns at the time, artists and producers asked for the opportunity to come together without the pressure of performance outcomes. This request was taken up by PLWA staff and the concept of the Artist Lab and Creative Hub was born. Within a short timeframe, PLWA secured funding from Lotterywest's COVID Relief Fund, and preparations began for the first Artist Lab and Creative Hub. The Creative Hub was targeted at mid-career and established independent artists and producers, and the Lab focussed on early career, culturally diverse practitioners, most of whom had never worked with or engaged with PLWA before. In the leadup to the 2021 Artist Lab and Creative Hub, and in recognition of the Noongar country on which it is held, the name Kolyang was chosen through a consultative process that engaged Noongar people.

Three years on, and with three Hubs and three Labs delivered, PLWA has reached the end of this inaugural triennial cycle. The organisation is now taking the time to reflect, review and evaluate the outcomes of Kolyang – and its custodianship of the initiatives during this period. Using feedback from participants, partners and staff, this evaluation report highlights the key learnings from Kolyang and explores the impact on the sector from both an individual and organisational perspective. This evaluation report provides PLWA, its partners and supports, and the sector more widely with the opportunity to understand what was working well, what areas need further refinement and how the Kolyang Program could evolve and continue to respond to the needs of the sector.

The Kolyang Artist Lab and the Kolyang Creative Hub have been responsive to changes in the sector, as the industry gradually reactivates and pandemic restrictions ease. PLWA took an iterative approach, learning each year how to better manage the events and, in

consultation with participants and partners, and in response to the changes within the sector, has overseen Kolyang's evolution.

The central finding of this evaluation is that WA's network of independent producers and artists needed Kolyang, and the Creative Hub and Artist Lab were the right projects that happened at the right time, delivered by the right people and with the right management approach. The feedback from independent artists and producers is near unanimous praise and gratitude for Kolyang and PLWA. There is an equally strong call for Kolyang to continue into the future, in some form; however, there is no consensus on what format Kolyang should take in future years other than continuing to respond to the needs of the sector in ways that are tangible, innovative and unconventional.

For organisational participants and partners, Kolyang has also had far reaching benefits and the contributions the Hub and Lab made to sector cohesion and vibrancy are well recognised.

Like all projects, there were aspects that did not work so well; pressure on PLWA staff has at times been enormous, some of the advocacy roles called for by the independent performing arts sector are beyond the scope of PLWA and a small number of representatives from partner organisations have felt there needed to be better facilitation of their engagement.

It is clear from feedback that Performing Lines WA has, through Kolyang, created a highly valued means of supporting, energising and strengthening the sector. Given the extremely unstable time in which Kolyang was designed and delivered, this is a particularly impressive achievement and one that has generated considerable goodwill towards, and acclaim for PLWA. There is now a clear opportunity – and implicit challenges – for PLWA to capitalise on the momentum created and consider how the organisation and the sector can continue to innovate and benefit.

Background

The Kolyang Creative Hub

Kolyang Creative Hub is a three-week responsive program facilitating interdisciplinary artistic practice sharing, creative developments, panels and conversations. Central to the Kolyang methodology is that all participants are paid salaries for their engagement.

The Kolyang Creative Hub is a significant event in the WA arts ecology that brings artists & industry-heads together, providing time and space to experiment, reflect, question, learn and share. It is a future-focused site for breaking down silos and knowledge-sharing within the sector: fostering critical thinking and developing innovative new ways of working.

Performing Lines website

Kolyang Creative Hub is many things.

It is artist led and artist responsive.

It offers space to think and explore.

It is emergent and evolving.

It is a space for experimenting with practice, process and models.

It weaves the collective industry together.

It's about advocacy.

It's about self-determination.

It's about making us stronger for the future.

Humphrey Bower, Maitland Schnaars and Zoe Street, collective poem, 2021

The Kolyang Artist Lab

The Kolyang Artist Lab has been held in conjunction with the Kolyang Creative Hub. The Lab has been a safe, creative environment for WA's emerging and early-career artists to explore ideas, build new relationships and unpack performance-making processes. In the first two years, the Labs focussed on emerging artists from culturally diverse backgrounds. In 2022, ten early career disabled artists, working in any genre or medium, were invited to participate. The 2020 and 2022 editions of the Lab also included First Nation artists. As in other years, Lab participants were supported to also be part of the Kolyang Creative Hub cohort after the one-week Lab.

Kolyang's history

In 2020, when the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic triggered disruptions around the world, PLWA asked a selection of independent artists it was slated to work with during

2020 and 2021 what they needed in the face of mass cancellations and lost work. The unequivocal response was that – given the state’s closed borders and people’s inability to congregate – artists needed flexible, *artist-led* time and space to be together. This feedback laid the blueprint for the Kolyang Creative Hub and Artist Lab.

At a time of extreme stress on the industry, it was vitally important to gather and assess how others are affected and to discuss strategies moving forward.

Participant 2020

During a period of uncertainty and instability, funding agencies responded with increased flexibility in their grant allocations. Initial funding from Lotterywest through its COVID Relief Fund enabled a project design centred on paying artists to meet and collaborate, discuss and create, imagine and identify what the sector could look like after the pandemic, and with artists in greater control.

After the success of the first Hub and Lab, PLWA committed to hosting the programs again. Funding from the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) – Strategic Initiatives programs supported years two and three of Kolyang. A range of partner organisations and supporters were approached by PLWA and asked to contribute both financial and in-kind support, which contributed significantly to the delivery of both initiatives, and allowed the number of artists in the Hub cohort to grow. For Kolyang’s third year additional support was provided by the Australia Council for the Arts and, in particular, to enable sector sharing. This evaluation is one of the deliverables of this sector sharing.

Included in the Australia Council funding agreement was an evaluation of Kolyang. The evaluation was to review outcomes, identify lessons learned and document the processes and structures so that other organisations in WA and nationally could learn from and initiate their own versions of Kolyang.

One of the learnings applied to the second Kolyang in 2021, was the addition of an Artist Advisory Group. The Group was established in 2021 and continued in 2022 with refreshed membership. The Advisory Group was made up of previous participants who assessed the EOIs, guided the programming and provided mentoring and support as needed during the course of the Creative Hub. Membership was selected by the PLWA team.

It was also in this year, realising that the Hub and Lab were not just one-off events, that a name was sought for the Creative Hub that celebrated the diversity of experiences and knowledge brought to the table by participants, the connectedness that was created and

honoured the land on which the events were held. With guidance from Clint and Kylie Bracknell (language revivalists and researchers) of Boomerang and Spear, Kolyang (*pron: Kol-yong*), the Noongar name for the Western Australian Golden Wattle, was selected.

The second year of the newly named Kolyang Creative Hub focused on challenges facing the sector and the need for advocacy; from this, a Kolyang Sector Conversation Report was compiled by Dr Shona Erskine, the Artist Advisory Group and PLWA. At the closing session of the Hub, five areas of importance were identified:

1. The need for an independent artist space or spaces.
2. The need for artists to be central to decision making processes.
3. The need for a diversity of artists to be represented.
4. The need for an examination of the current state of producing.
5. The need for sustainable practice (environmentally, funding etc).

The findings underpinned PLWA's planning (particularly findings 2 and 3) for the next Kolyang iterations and spurred on an attempt by artists to set up an Artist Hub space in the King Street Arts Centre (Finding 1).

.... there was an attempt to activate a King Street Arts Centre co-working space... but it didn't work very well. There wasn't enough critical mass and the building itself has lots of rules/issues that were hard to overcome. This doesn't mean it's not possible. It's just...how to try again and do it better?

Participant 2022

While the report identified some of the principles for future action, it did not identify who would take the lead, an issue that remains unresolved as PLWA returns to core business as a service organisation, not a peak body. The Chamber of Arts and Culture Western Australia was identified as potentially taking carriage of the advocacy priorities identified during Kolyang; however, the Chamber's future is currently uncertain as it reviews its operating model after failing to secure recurrent operational funding.

Summary of Kolyang programming

As the Kolyang program developed further in 2021 and 2022, focus areas were identified. These new focus areas were based on the feedback and requests from artists, but also recognised that the operating environment for independent artists and producers was changing, as restrictions lifted, and the sector reactivated – though often in different ways.

Across its three years, the Creative Hub was based at the Subiaco Arts Centre and the Lab has used a number of different facilities. Public programs were part of the Creative Hub

from the beginning and extended the reach of Kolyang beyond the participants. The table below summarises the locations and participation over the three years.

Year	Activity	Location	Focus	# paid cohort	# independent artists	# public program attendances
2020	Artist Lab	Subiaco Arts Centre 23 > 27 July	Culturally diverse and First Nations artists.	12	3 Mentor Artists	721
	PLWA Creative Hub	Subiaco Arts Centre 13 July > 8 Aug		65	44	
	Producer Lab	Online 22+29 Oct 5, 12 + 19 Nov	Emerging, independent producers, self-producing artists, regional arts workers and venue staff keen to produce local works in-house.	12		
2021	Kolyang Artist Lab	Fremantle Arts Centre 6 > 10 May	Culturally diverse artists.	12	3 Mentor Artists	662
	Kolyang Creative Hub	Subiaco Arts Centre 31 May > 18 June 2021		62	20 (Lab and Hub)	
2022	Kolyang Artist Lab	The Blue Room Theatre 1 > 5 August	Artists with disability in partnership with My Place.	10	1 Lead Mentor 5 Ally Artists	409
	Kolyang Creative Hub	Subiaco Arts Centre 8 > 26 August	Seeding and making of work. Enabling creative connections and exchanges within the cohort and across the sector.	25	79 (Lab and Hub)	

Partnerships

Partnerships with other state-based organisations have been important for the development of both the Kolyang Artist Lab and Creative Hub. Future collaborations are likely to be critical, as funding becomes more restricted and PLWA balances the delivery of Kolyang alongside its regular activities of developing, producing and presenting live performance, post-pandemic.

The table below lists the partner organisation for each year and summarises their contribution to the program.

Year	Organisation	Nature of partnership
2020	CircuitWest	Funded regional presenters to come and connect with cohort of artists and indie producers.
	Subiaco Arts Centre / Perth Theatre Trust	Venue hire costs provided in-kind.
	The Blue Room Theatre	In-kind support for staffing
2021	Subiaco Arts Centre / Perth Theatre Trust	Venue hire costs provided in-kind.
	The Blue Room Theatre	In-kind support for staffing
	Co3 Contemporary Dance	Support one artist (Creative Hub).
	My Place WA	Support two artists (Creative Hub).
	Perth Festival	Support one artist (Creative Hub).
	STRUT Dance	Support one artist (Creative Hub).
	Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company	Support two artists (Creative Hub).
	CircuitWest	Funded six regional artists, including artist fee and travel/accommodation allowance.
	Black Swan State Theatre Company	Support one artist (Creative Hub).
	Perth Symphony Orchestra	Support one artist (Creative Hub).
	WA Opera	Support two artists (Creative Hub).
	The Last Great Hunt	Support four artists (Creative Hub).
	Barking Gecko	Support two artists (Creative Hub).
	Sensorium	Support two artists (Creative Hub).
Spare Parts Puppet Theatre	Support two artists (Creative Hub).	
Perth Institute of Contemporary Art	Support one artist (Creative Hub).	
Tura Music	Support one artist (Creative Hub).	
2022	CircuitWest	Funded four regional artists, including artist fee and travel/accommodation allowance. Artists participated in both the Lab and the Hub – the first time this had happened.
	My Place WA	Funding and in-kind support for Kolyang Artist Lab and Creative Hub.
	Perth Festival	Support one artist (Creative Hub).
	STRUT Dance	Support one artist (Creative Hub).
	Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company	Support three artists (Creative Hub).
	PICA	Support one artists (Creative Hub).
	Black Swan State Theatre Company	Support one artist (Creative Hub).
	DADAA	Support one artist
	Subiaco Arts Centre / Arts and Culture Trust	Venue provided at cost.
The Blue Room Theatre	Venue provided at cost and other in-kind support for Kolyang Artist Lab	

Performing Lines WA

Responding to the lack of any independent producing entity in WA, PLWA was established in 2008 as part of the Management and Producing Service (MAPS) initiative by the Australia Council for the Arts, before transitioning into a project-based model in 2012, funded by the DLGSC.

In recent years PLWA has successfully focussed on its role as a new work producer, facilitating more locally made and presented works by mid-career artists, including four in the 2021 Perth Festival. PLWA now provides critical producing infrastructure for the Festival, allowing their investment to be leveraged and for WA works to be presented in other major festivals. The relationship with Perth Festival continues to grow with works confirmed for 2022 (fee for service) and 2023 and a pipeline in place for 2024.

PLWA's impact on Western Australia's performing arts sector has been significant: producing a diverse range of work from independent artists at all stages of their career; building the capacity and capability of the WA sector by supporting presenters and training producers; presenting new Western Australian work regionally, nationally and internationally and propelling the careers of some to leadership positions.

We champion the unconventional and under-represented, the risky and the new. We aim to be the stable base and launching-pad for fearless artists to respond to a dynamic and changing world - not only to reflect who we are but to imagine who we might become. We aim for audiences to access and experience a repertoire of work that reflects a vibrant facet of our cultural identity.

PLWA Strategic Plan 2024 – 2026

Kolyang's aims and objectives

While broad aims and structures were set in place for the Lab and Hub in 2020, the program was developed rapidly, and the priority was to respond to critical needs in the independent arts sector. As a result, there was little time for detailed planning or scoping. Despite this, there was excitement amongst the staff at the prospect of bringing together so many different artists and producers without the pressure of performance outcomes.

Underpinning all the Kolyang activities was the question: *how might we act to reshape the way we are operating as a sector?* This question ultimately evolved into the following aims and objectives for the 2022 Kolyang Hub and Lab:

Kolyang Creative Hub

Aims and objectives	Participant responses
Bring artists and industry-heads together.	<p><i>I was thinking about us as artists doing our projects, working hard: 'we are all like little cars on the freeway, driving racing along... but what if we had a bus?' We need to be together.</i> Participant 2022</p> <p><i>Connected diverse artists into the industry has created pathways for them and broken down barriers for employment. Conversely Kolyang has made it easier for companies wanting to be more inclusive to connect and locate diverse artists.</i> Michelle Hovane, 2020 and 2021.</p>
Provide time and space to reflect, question, learn and share.	<p><i>...allowed free-flowing structure of artists coming in and out, shared spaces for people to connect...yielded better results than a formal networking session.</i> Participant, 2021.</p> <p><i>The Lab and the Hub, above all, gave me my start in the arts industry where I had been struggling to find that for years.</i> Participant, 2021.</p>
Create a future-focused site for breaking down silos and knowledge-sharing within the sector.	<p><i>(Without Kolyang) I think people would've left. I don't think we'd have nearly as much connectedness to one another. I think we'd still be in kind of silos. So, the theatre community, has no idea what's going on in the dance community ... Whereas this way we can kind of share all that knowledge and just feel so much less alone, and just all the invisible connections.</i> Artist Advisory group member 2022</p> <p><i>Being within a cohort of artists across age, stage, artform and style, has affirmed my identity in regional arts practice.</i> Participant, 2021.</p>

	<p><i>Ongoing work with connecting artists in and across both urban and regional communities.</i></p> <p>Participant, 2021.</p>
<p>Foster critical thinking and developing innovative new ways of working.</p>	<p><i>Personally, in the first year, I used the Hub to develop my own creative works really effectively, really productively. [The Lab] ...inspired the confidence to try new things just around artistic practice and expression and lose a few inhibitions.</i></p> <p>Participant 2022</p> <p><i>The way it could include everyone from those wishing to work alone but in a shared environment, to those seeking to collaborate, to those wanting feedback, to those with something to offer, and those just hungry to soak it all up.</i></p> <p>Bec Bradley, 2020.</p>

Kolyang Artist Lab

The Kolyang Artist Lab was in some ways more closely aligned to PLWA’s core business than the Creative Hub. Performing Lines, including PLWA already had an extensive record of supporting residencies modelled on the Tarraleah Residency, led by Performing Lines Tasmania’s Senior Producer, Annette Downs.

Performing Lines WA’s adaption of this model was initially built on Producer Zainab Syed’s networks and experience of creating works with culturally diverse artists, building on PLWA’s long-standing commitment to supporting the development of new voices and stories in a safe environment. The Kolyang Artist Labs provided participants with the chance to work with experienced mentors (ally artists and/or mentors) and explore new ideas.

The aim of the Labs was to equip participants with the tools and confidence to pursue their careers in the arts. Intrinsic to the Lab were cultural safety protocols and unpacking the practical aspects of the creative and collaborative process to birth intercultural and self-determined works.

The Kolyang Artist Lab’s aims and objectives crossed over with those of the Hub but were more targeted in their development approach.

Aims and objectives	Participant responses
<p>Bring a cohort of emerging and early-career artists together and connect them with artform allies and mentors.</p>	<p><i>Some of the best things I have been able to do are ...big conversations with people who know a lot about a subject I am interested in... who are really generous.</i></p> <p>Participant 2022</p>

Provide time and space to explore ideas, build new relationships and unpack performance-making processes.	<i>Kolyang has allowed me to be confident to ask questions...if I can ask questions, I can find the best way for me to participate ... and do the best work I possibly can.</i> Participant 2022
Support innovative new ways of working.	<i>[The Lab] ...inspired the confidence to try new things just around artistic practice and expression and lose a few inhibitions.</i> Participant 2022

For information about the Lab cohorts and mentors across the three years:

2020	https://www.performinglines.org.au/2020/07/22/culturally-diverse-artist-residency/
2021	https://www.performinglines.org.au/2021/05/05/2021-plwa-kolyang-artist-lab-meet-the-participants-and-mentors/
2022	https://www.performinglines.org.au/2022/07/13/announcing-the-2022-kolyang-artist-lab/?fbclid=IwARoX9_5rsTsa664EL4q5gtlvJm7g7XOgM3t2ftsHk9bpgzSZvz4KxaYp6_c

Kolyang's outstanding achievements

Kolyang Creative Hubs and Artist Labs' greatest impacts were on how the sector interacts as a whole and on a more personal level, how artists connect with each other:

Sector transformation

The impact of the Kolyang Creative Hubs and the Artist Lab were widely felt across the sector.

Kolyang has radically transformed the ecology of the sector, accelerating the pace of changes that are needed.

We really think so many artists leave Kolyang better equipped to move forward with their careers, or kick start flagging creative practice and get to feel part of something bigger that they have more control of. Whilst this has existed in some ways in a piecemeal fashion in the past, Kolyang has been ground-breaking in many ways.

After having gone through the Lab, specifically, myself and my cohort have had so many conversations (with other emerging CaLD artists) about how transformative the experience was.

Connections, conversations and collaborations

I think Kolyang has connected artists across forms and sectors in a way that's never happened before.

The connections are exactly what I needed at this time, and I look forward to seeing them ripple beyond this space.

We really believe Kolyang is causing more creativity and connection to the industry, which has a knock-on effect of more touring.

Being within a cohort of artists across age, stage, artform and style, has affirmed my identity in regional arts practice. I've shared living story and innate understandings of the nature of my arts practice through connection with artists who know and understand regional contexts and whose work draws from experience in engaging communities. It's been a joy to connect with established and emerging artists from across the state.

I can see the weaving of connections, conversation and belonging we aimed for.

The friends I made during the Lab and the Hub, I have already worked with on multiple projects and continue to connect with to collaborate further.

What worked?

Respondents were asked 'what was done well?' at Kolyang; the following text analysis summarises the feedback.



Both the Kolyang Artist Lab and Creative Hub were managed by PLWA staff and project staff. This section looks at the project design features PLWA used to program and curate each year. Central to PLWA's management approach was a light touch and a commitment to collaborate with the sector.

Fantastic. This has been such a strong event and we are connected to many artists who also cannot speak highly enough of how this is delivered.

Whatever your need and capacity, there was a place for you.

Open EOI process

Each iteration of Kolyang commenced with an expression of interest (EOI) call out to the sector, circulated by PLWA.

...the series of [EOI] questions were deliberately quite simple; we didn't want people to go into massive time commitments to apply. So, it was focused on the kind of creative impulse.

I always admired Performing Lines as an organization. So, I felt I trusted that what they would build would be worthwhile.

Artist Advisory Group

To ensure the Creative Hub and Artist Lab were artist-led, an Artist Advisory Group was appointed in 2021 and 2022. The selection and invitation of group members was managed by PLWA staff on a direct approach basis. The selection of the Hub cohort in years two and three were led by the Artist Advisory Group. The selection process helped clarify the focus on mid-career artists and contributed to the design and delivery of the programming, ensuring activities and discussions were focussed on what participants wanted.

I think from the beginning there was a really clear focus on mid-career artists and certainly in the round that I was on the selection panel, we had to eliminate a lot of applicants who really were still in an emerging space.

In 2022, the participating cohort was split into four groups. Advisory Group members were introduced and encouraged to be used as a resource during the Hub and were available to mentor, provide support and guidance during the Creative Hub.

.... during the Hub, we (the Advisory Group) act as mentors in a way, a support for people.

As stated by an Advisory Group member, it “was also for us a really nice way to get to know different people ... we might otherwise gravitate to our own artform.”

The increased focus on artistic methodology has been beautiful. Thanks to the Artist Advisory [Group] - it's been a rewarding experience to contribute to that process over two years.

Selection process

The Artist Advisory group and PLWA staff selected the candidates from the EOIs. The Artist Advisory Group were asked “...Where's the frisson, who's talking about things that we maybe haven't heard before ...”

The selection criteria changed and adapted over Kolyang’s three years, in response to lessons learned and ongoing changes within the sector:

...last year (2021) we were, I think, more focused on sector advocacy and this year we quite deliberately wanted to put an emphasis on creativity and development potential ... this year we asked people to bring a project or a skill or a methodology that they wanted to focus on.

Despite the changes to the scope and scale of Kolyang, respondents reported that:

I remember when we were given the final list to have a look at thinking ‘how great’. So many forms represented, so many disciplines.

Respondents identified a wide range of factors that contributed to the success of Kolyang. In the survey, respondents were asked which session had the biggest impact; text analysis summarises the feedback:



Conceptualisation and structure

Respondents prized the key principles that underpinned Kolyang’s approach:

- ▶ No pressure to create fixed outcomes or hard pitch work.
- ▶ Artists were paid to participate – see below for details.
- ▶ Giving voice to cultural diversity, inclusion, disability and equity.
- ▶ Breaking down silos.

We created Kolyang because of a set of values that have only been re-affirmed for me: emphasis on process and the financial security to enable a process instead of a

focus on outcomes; cross artform collaboration and conversations between artists; pathways for CaLD artists through the Lab that not only creates a safe space but enables skills development and opens up new pathways and opportunities.

Allowing a free-flowing structure of artists coming in and out, shared spaces for people to connect; it was a very low pressure and low stakes form of networking that often-yielded better results than a formal networking session.

The structure, length of time and intentions, I feel have always had artists livelihoods at heart - and this is extremely rare in our ecosystem.

Mentors and mentoring for the Artist Lab

Making mentors available for participants was crucial to creating both a high-quality experience during Kolyang, and in building networks and nurturing continuity and connections in the sector.

Inviting amazing mentors in really broke down the barriers for us - I don't believe we ever would have connected with the mentors so closely had we not had that opportunity during the Lab.

It has introduced me to mentors I really valued and then to be able to work with them and create work.

I was looking for a place to learn and grow and be mentored.

Payment for participants and supporting attendance

All Kolyang participants were paid to attend – details below. This innovation was highly valued by all, contributing to the accessibility and opportunity of Kolyang.

The daily stipend was universally described as a game changer.

The significance of Performing Lines WA paying artists to be in the space ...

Paying artists was revolutionary.

All artists paid to attend. This was BIG.

Being paid has been essential.

Creative Hub participants were paid a stipend, which varied in each year in accordance with the shape and duration of both the Hub:

- ▶ 2020: \$2,000 + super, and a \$100 travel allowance for a minimum of eight days across the four weeks.
- ▶ 2021: \$1,500 + super, and a \$100 travel allowance for a minimum of six days across the three weeks.
- ▶ 2022: \$1,500 + super, and a \$100 travel allowance for a minimum of six days across the three weeks.

Artist Lab participants were paid a stipend, which varied in each year in accordance with the shape and duration of the Lab:

- ▶ 2020: \$1,000 + super, and a \$100 travel allowance for the four-day Artist Lab.
- ▶ 2021: \$1,000 + super, and a \$100 travel allowance for the four-day Artist Lab.
- ▶ 2022: \$1,250 + super, and a \$100 travel allowance for the five-day Artist Lab.

In 2021 and 2022, the cohort of Lab artists also received fees to be part of the Creative Hub.

- ▶ 2021: \$1,500 + super, and a \$100 travel allowance for a minimum of six days across the three weeks.
- ▶ 2022: \$1,000 + super, and a \$100 travel allowance for a minimum of four days attendance (which included the Ally Artists and support workers to ensure attendance was accessible and inclusive).

Several days of the Creative Hubs were nominated as full cohort days (or 'all-in days'), where attendance by all participants was expected. The days were significant in 2021 and 2022 and designed around a welcome, a wrap and a set of all-in sessions to build cohort cohesion and connection.

Travel allowances and accommodation subsidies were paid to regionally based artists, thanks to support from CircuitWest. The 2021 Artists Lab also included accommodation for all participants, making the experience completely immersive from start to end.

The Airbnb's were actually so helpful in strengthening relationships and switching off to the rest of the world for a few days.

The role of PLWA staff

A key success factor highlighted by many participants was the role of PLWA staff. They:

...worked really hard to keep the program responsive and artist led.

...were really available for informal chats and advice throughout the process.

...allowed free-flowing structure of artists coming in and out, shared spaces for people to connect...yielded better results than a formal networking session.

Flexible / responsive programming

A feature of Kolyang's programming was simply making space for artists and being responsive, rather than setting a fixed schedule with defined pathways:

Performing Lines WA lead the way in artist-led programming... by really asking artists what they want then facilitating and supporting.

[The programming was] ...incredibly well curated, organised, delivered.

[This year] people wanted to talk about sustainability, they wanted to talk about equity and equality and process.

In 2021...identifying new panel discussions that ...arose out of previous discussions made for a responsive program.

The selection process and the role of Artist Advisory in selecting participants and guiding the programming was important:

...the EOI really spurred on the programming process because one of the questions was, what kind of workshop or skills development could an individual artist bring to the lab? So that enabled us to kind of program quite quickly and clearly a whole lot of workshops run by the hub participants themselves.

...another question in the EOI was around what people want to talk about. And so, we were able to put those ideas into categories. And then we were able to each suggest talkers that we thought could be really interesting or provocateurs ... And then Performing Lines pulled all those ideas together and made that brilliant.
[The programming was] ... flexible on the ground, responsive to the organic nature of the collective, warm, personable and real.

Artist-led

The perception of organisers and participants was that the Creative Hubs and the Artist Labs were collaborations and:

Participants were asked what they could bring to the Creative Hub and Artist Lab. As a result, artists led workshops and discussions.

I think putting some of the responsibility back on applicants to contribute to the Hub was important.

Focus areas – cultural diversity, equity and inclusion

Within the broader development principles driving the Creative Hub and the Artist Lab was a recognised need to focus on and support cultural diversity, equity and inclusion. Reaching out to culturally diverse artists was a priority:

When I started at PLWA in 2017, there were 3-4 artists of colour who were career artists; in my four years at PLWA and through our work there and the Labs, by the time I left there were at least 30 who had either graduated from the Labs or worked with me on a project. Now that's something.

Giving people with a lived experience of disability, a chance to be heard was also a priority:

Watching people's microphone techniques (during the Lab) and how much they loved having the microphone has reminded me how little they feel that they have a voice.... And how important it is for people to feel heard.

I hope... (that through their involvement in the 2022 Kolyang Lab and Creative Hub) ...they find a place, find a space, find an opportunity to blaze a trail for other generations.

Focus and structure

After the intensive discussions around what was needed to support sector development and advocacy in 2021, PLWA staff, the Artist Advisory Group and artists reflected on the priorities for Kolyang in 2022.

I think the sessions during the 2021 Hub that focused on addressing industry issues were at times too intense for how short they were. It felt unrealistic to have artists collaborate on solutions to major industry issues and then come up with outcomes/action items on the spot. While it is definitely needed and important to consult artists on these things and create space for discussion/problem solving, I don't think that the Hub is the space for it. The Hub serves a lot better as a space for artists to work, meet each other, learn and talk; these sessions felt jarring and like they didn't fit in the structure of everything else the Hub was.

Applying lessons learned from 2020 and 2021, the 2022 Kolyang Creative Hub was more focussed.

It feels gentle this year, but there is a lot going on in the studios, I have a sense that artists are really focusing on their practice and projects.

The narrower focus in 2022 was the right focus.

Less talking, more working.

This year [2022], there seems to have been more seeds planted for work than in the other two years. This has been caused by more diverse artists in this group, more practice sharing and more focus on creative projects.

Outcomes

Respondents often reported that while there was no pressure to deliver measurable outcomes, both the Kolyang Creative Hub and the Artist Lab provided a wide range of less tangible, but highly valued outcomes.

Mentally taking the pressure off, or the urgency to produce anything... being an artist is not a performance, it's a lifestyle; that really resonated with me. It means I can first and foremost do it for joy, for a project. Then people who want to be involved will become part of my process. Then if it feels right to share, I can go and find the avenues to do so. The Hub has helped me to recalibrate this focus and have the connections I need. It is so validating to just be here, to share.

There is time and permission for artists fail here, to work things out, to be imperfect, to get it right - to create, not just take bookings for gigs.

...how to support something so essential, open-ended and responsive like this ... it has 'no outcomes'...but yet SO many outcomes!

What didn't work?

For Performing Lines WA

When the Creative Hub and Artist Lab were first conceptualised, there were no plans for it to be ongoing. The first iteration occurred at a time when PLWA, like many other organisations, was cancelling and postponing its program because of the pandemic.

Kolyang's second year, as restrictions gradually lifted and due to the large number of partner organisations supporting participants, saw the largest cohort of Creative Hub participants. The pressure of responding to such a large group, and the associated management responsibilities, led to overstretched resources and conflicts with core programs / activities that were being reinstated.

Managing Kolyang, especially in year two put "a lot of pressure on staff" and "we didn't get the required support until the Hub finished, which was stressful."

Some of the issues or suggestions raised by responders included:

Timing of the EOI process

Every year, the call out for artists and public program have been announced with a really short turnaround. I would love this to be done months earlier.

Quality facilitation

Facilitation and moderation need to be serious and high level. At least one facilitator started their session saying "I'm not really sure what I'm here to do – ha-ha'. Though most were great.

The relationship between the Lab and the Creative Hub

A number of responders remarked that there was a disconnect between the Lab and the Hub. This was partly attributed to timing as the events are held separately but participants sensed that there was a missed opportunity to connect them more fully.

I feel that the Lab and cohort have never fully entwined.

Impact of lifted pandemic restrictions

As independent artists and producers returned to work, many of the cohort reported juggling their personal commitments with attendance at Kolyang, including "a split focus (was) obvious this year [2022]."

This is reflected in the significant drop off in the number of EOIs submitted in 2022, as compared with 2021. This is also likely to have caused "low attendance at some sessions because people have other things on." In the case of one session "there were only seven people attending the panel... talk about unsustainable."

We've had less org representation this year than last. And that I think is purely based on just the movements in the sector and where people happen to be at the moment. So, I don't think it's a lack of willingness. I think there's just so much kind of change going on locally.

There was a "lot less take-up of the shared workspace this year [2022]. Everyone comes to work in the venues and closes their doors, so it doesn't really feel like a hub."

Technology

For some technology was an issue:

Internet is shady here at Subiaco, it keeps dropping out. It doesn't make it the best place to come and do admin work. So, I love being here for connection to other artists, but the co-working desk space is not as strong this year.

The tech was a little scratchy at times and only two mics for a [bigger group] session on democratic participation, for example.

Partner organisations

At times, organisational participants felt there was an 'us against them' force at play in discussions with artists and that the pressures organisations work under were not fully acknowledged. Some respondents requested more structured sessions and clearer direction of expectations so that their time at the Hub could be maximised. Organisational feedback included:

Reframing the question. There needs to be a focus on what we can all do together rather than talking about how disconnected we are as a sector – as independent organisations, what do we have in common, what do we share?

Paying attention to the mindset. Many discussions were producers versus artists and differences were highlighted. Mindsets were split into two camps of people, and it felt like there were entrenched divisions. Should be we are all on the same team.

If PLWA is going to include organisations in Kolyang, Kolyang needs to be relevant to organisations.

person and artist. That's very valuable for up-and-coming artist. To have carved out time and space to be and learn and grow.

The main gain from the Hub has been space and time to prioritise working on the creation and development of my show. I have regrets that obligations of life meant I engaged less than I wanted to with others. There are amazing artists and art here. Our show has grown, and I have felt others support it. I have felt the feeling of YES. We get so many NOs in the arts. I haven't felt YES for 10 to 15 years.

[Identified] common ground [that could be] built on at the CircuitWest conference.

[Provided opportunities for] one-on-one conversations with artistic directors and heads of companies and organisations.

Whatever your need and capacity, there was a place for you.

...my own perception and creativity were reinvigorated and encouraged.

As someone who is often working alone it was energising to be in the same space as other makers.

I embraced a new arts discipline that is not my training or experience. I was able to discuss it with other artists and producers and was able to develop that work and eventually find a forum to stage it.

I worked on an idea I had almost three years ago and made time to work on it. Without Kolyang it might have been left another 2-3 years. I have been part of the Hub for three years and this version has been less dense - more focused on method, seeding projects and a smaller cohort. So, it has been different energy and experience to come into. There has been less and so I have got more out of it.

The Kolyang Artist Lab

For artists the following were identified as success factors:

The Lab in 2021...pairing us up to be housemates, this really elevated the experience and made it completely immersive.

Inviting amazing mentors really broke down the barriers for us.

Participation in the Lab ... led to regional tour, outer-metro tour and inclusion in the 2021 Perth Festival.

I'm happy. I feel like a sponge soaking everything up. I want to continue - I'm sad it's over...but I'm ready to move forward. I did so many different things I haven't done before. I'm grateful.

I am grateful for meeting people and new friends. I'm grateful for people seeing me and describing me as I am - beautiful, warm, bubbly but also dark and mysterious, I am popular! (Named 2 ally artists) are my best friends I've had in my life. I love working, drawing outback bush buddies. I love singing and drawing so much. I love this job. I have an Instagram account now. You can follow me.

It was a gentle and generous space. Very rare to get a whole lot of artists with disability in the same room.

Lab artists participating in Hub also commented on the positive aspects of attending both:

During the Hub I have faced my own grief and perfectionism, in a good way. As a Lab artist we can just be in this Hub space. Outside it's very combative, we have to fight and advocate for ourselves, but here we get to just be.

Artist mentors were invited to participate in the Kolyang Labs as ally artists. In 2021 there were three mentors, and in 2022 there were five ally artists, plus a lead facilitator. They played an important support role for Lab participants:

The Hub being open to wider arts sector through public events is essential. In the first year I was at an event where we were asked to identify if we wanted to partner with artists with disability - I said yes, and now I'm here as an ally artist. This has brought my life experiences of disability and arts together, thank you. I celebrate the Lab artists incredible achievements - stepping out of your comfort zones and growing.

Sometimes being in leadership positions is stressful...so it's great to be in a role of pure support. It's been challenging but always satisfying. It's amazing to see the Lab artists working, to see how they have flourished, been challenged at times and grown. It's great to be part of the ongoing sector conversations.

What was the experience like for Performing Lines WA?

Performing Lines WA has used different combinations of staff in delivering Kolyang's three year, drawing on a small team of mostly part time staff.

In 2020 and 2021, the Artist Lab was led by PLWA Producer Zainab Syed and, in 2022 by PLWA's Senior Producer Jeremy Smith. Melanie Julien-Martial – current Associate Producer at PLWA and previously at The Blue Room Theatre – has supported delivery of all three editions of the Artist Lab.

Jenna Robyn, a Performing Lines Producer working across both the Perth and Sydney offices led the Creative Hub in 2022. Rachael Whitworth (Senior Producer) and Jen Leys (Producer) spear-headed the 2020 and 2021 Creative Hubs. The Creative Hub had Associate Producers Alex Desebrock in 2021 and Ella Hetherington in 2022 – supported as part of the grant monies received from DLGSC.

The scale of Kolyang was a test for the PLWA team, "last year [2021] was so massive for the team at all levels." Staff reported that after the 2021 iteration of Kolyang, "there was a pressure cooker of expectations" on PLWA. The pressure of delivering the Kolyang Creative Hub and Artist Lab in 2021 had an impact on staff.

Some staff involved last year have not engaged this year. We should talk to them about why this is.

In 2022, dedicated staff worked on Kolyang:

This delineation seems much more sustainable.

The [previous] program was reactive and so it was an ever-evolving beast. We didn't do that this year. It was more about giving artists space.

This year (2022) is much less stressful. Smaller cohort.

Big issue this year was timelines. Funding wasn't confirmed until January...and business as usual took over. Would have been much better if we had had an extra couple of weeks in the timeline [to prepare]. The programming was a mad rush.

*The size seems right or maybe just another 10 or so participants.
The Kolyang Artist Lab and the Kolyang Creative Hub were too close together.*

*Some people want Kolyang advocacy and change while others just want space.
I think advocacy is mission drift for Performing Lines.*

What do partners think?

Feedback from partners highlighted that Kolyang brought a sense of cohesion between artist-producers and opened up relationship between independent artists and arts companies.

Some companies sponsored attendees:

We supported a musician from the orchestra to be part of Kolyang, and they grew immeasurably from the opportunity to step up and be more than one of a large number - to try new things and use their experience to create more opportunities for more musicians in WA.

Some company / organisational representatives attended the Creative Hub space:

....it has been wonderful to work closely with the team at Performing Lines WA and engage with the independent arts sector in general. During the Hub our producing team regularly worked in the space and our Core Artists have fed back a lot of information from their experience too.

One of the gaps I see for this company is accessing the diverse pool of mid-career artists outside of our normal pathways. Opera has traditionally relied on a relatively narrow pathway for finding singers, directors, designers, producers etc - a consequence of large budgets dictating a natural conservatism. WAO needs to broaden this reach and Kolyang was great opportunity to do this.

First Nations artists were encouraged to participate:

We have participated in Kolyang since its inception by supporting First Nations artists to attend this important event for independent artists. We also see this gathering as an opportunity to reinforce the importance of First Nations performing arts & artists as an essential part of any sector conversations.

The relationship between artists and organisations was highlighted and explored:

I do know that Arts Organisations have, at times, felt "left out" and the connections/learnings have perhaps not been shared effectively throughout the sector. But I also think artists feel on the outer of organisations recurringly - so I think it's good to flip the table!

Kolyang connected companies with the independent sector:

Kolyang strengthened the relationship our organisation has with PLWA, and also helped our relationship with the rest of the sector. As a big, once-a-year event, we often have very transactional relationships with the sector...Kolyang allowed that to open up: more dreaming than selling. Time to listen and learn, talking and hearing what the industry is thinking about, outside the cycle of delivery. Kolyang made us more accessible.

Where to now?

While participants, and the sector more widely, have been unequivocal in their enthusiasm and support for Kolyang, the program's success raises complex organisational and resourcing questions for PLWA.

I think it's really Performing Lines ...that have.... been the driver of it and there needs to be that kind of will and capacity to go on into the future, whether the sector and past participants themselves have the drive and energy to push something forward in a new model remains to be seen.

It's a massive undertaking, I think, for a small organisation.

The PLWA team seemed very stretched at various times over the course of the Kolyang programs – maybe more project staff for them could be warranted.

At various points PLWA has asked participants and partner organisations to share their ideas and vision for the future. These are key ideas they have presented:

Programming possibilities

Some respondents made suggestions about how the programming could be developed and improved.

There are other models - a shorter and sharper lab, more intensive. Something professional skills based, or artistic development based with mentorship.

The smaller group might be a better idea.

...this is slightly less intimidating for people to come into just in terms of numbers. And so, the opportunities to connect are a little more kind of thorough and embedded.

I'd like to see more regional artists engaged and supported to be there. perhaps see some shows together as part of the experience or travel regionally for an excursion.

In short, collate and disseminate the findings of Kolyang to those whose decisions affect us and whose decisions might be influenced by us.

*How do we share the conversations beyond the Kolyang hub? How do we bring organisations and cultural leaders into the 3 weeks? How do we hold those threads of connection beyond those 3 weeks and make it always?
... what about heading out to suburban and regional arts centres? Kwinana? Midland Junction? Armadale? Further afield? What does that look like and who drives it?*

Focused immersion of 2-5 consecutive programmed days, so that artists can carve out the time. This would be for the facilitated sessions and culture building, and for sharing practice. Meeting each other in the doing of our art is the most valuable space.

Could there be a pool of producers who take turns leading the Hub (e.g., pass it around year to year between PLWA, Blue Room, Perth Festival etc.)?

Could it be a group of independent producers and artists who are paid to lead and orchestrate as a team?

Selection process

...a really multidisciplinary kind of focus could be interesting...

We've touched in each hub around experimental practice so it'd be interesting to see who's really working in those spaces a little bit more, who may not know yet how to connect or get in, so that sort of grass roots making could be really interesting.

Staff

For PLWA staff extending timelines and limiting numbers are key changes they would like to see in the delivery of Kolyang.

For artists planning, two to three months is ideal....so that they can go into funding rounds and plan things together.

The size of the programming has been good, but ten more artists would be good because it has felt very quiet here at times.

Partner Organisations

Overall partner organisations felt it was important that there is a:

Continuation of the Lab. The Lab is a mode of coming together and gathering and that is important for the sector.

There was a degree of dissatisfaction from partner organisations, largely focused on what they perceived to be a poorly conceptualised understanding of their role in Kolyang.

Suggestions from partners included:

The formation of an Organisation Advisory that is parallel to the Artist Advisory to assure relevance for organisations.

A clear invitation. Be very specific on the invitation to organisations, including the focus and structure of Kolyang. Organisations want specificity about what the event is trying to achieve, their access point, and the benefit of being involved.

High quality facilitation. Organisations want sessions to be well facilitated to ensure rigour of conversation, not expression of unbridled opinion.

An organisation could facilitate a day.

- 1. More structure, more notice, and not in office hours.*
- 2. Specific sessions for organisations that are at the same time.*

Clear expectations about ask. An understanding that the invitation was going to be x and it turned out to be y. Half-day of preparatory work was lost. Thought our invitation was to be on a panel as a major organisation but it turned out to be a participatory workshop. I went with different expectation and felt led under false pretences.

Facilitating conversations. It is good for artists to be opinionated and radical, and this can be a valuable part of a program, but ...it would be beneficial for independent artists to understand the reality of how companies and ADs are addressing and working on challenges that are in the sector. A Q&A may help with this rather than simply people from organisations talking to independent artists.

Kolyang should have an artist focus with an organisation input. It should be a forum for artists to speak clearly. Organisations should have a presence but not be the focus.

Location

Each year, Creative Hub activities have been hosted by the Subiaco Arts Centre. The Arts Centre is an ideal location for Kolyang, with a variety of different sized spaces able to host the different activities, including extensive outdoor space in the surrounding gardens. While in previous years, the facilities were provided as an in-kind contribution, in 2022 a venue hire fee was charged late in the process (whilst some in-kind support was maintained). This has put additional pressure on PLWA financially as these costs were not included in the original project budgets. In future, alternative locations may need to be explored.

Currently Kolyang is situated at SAC but could be an alignment with our venue and operational resources. Is there an option for a venue-based approach to the Hub?

Funding

PLWA has rolled a portion of costs for the Kolyang Program into its Arts Organisation Investment Program (AOIP) application to DLGSC – the outcome should be known by May 2023 (for 2024 onwards). The organisation acknowledges that funding is limited and that Kolyang may not be funded at the level it currently is, or at all. Some hard decisions will need to be made over the next few months about PLWA's capacity to manage Kolyang into the future and how a significant decrease in funding might determine the scope and reach of the Kolyang Program over the next few years.

The numbers

Participation

Metric	2020	2021	2022
# of paid independent artists and art-workers in the Kolyang cohort	65 (inc. 12 emerging culturally diverse artists, 15 online producer lab participants)	62 (including 12 emerging culturally diverse artists)	36 (inc. 10 early career artists with disability)
# of independent artists supported to work and participate in the Hub	44	20	79
# of people engaged across our public program	721	662	299
# of new creative developments of Western Australian works	20	15	30
# of small-group discussions	12	15	9
# of panel conversations with national Arts leaders	7	3	4
# of practice sharing sessions	10	8	8
# of showings and feedback sessions	8	15	0
# of plates of food served	80	110	95

Program details

Kolyang 2020

Session Name	Type of session	Attendance
How to get great documentation on a low budget?	Workshop	9
With the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries	Public session	20
Body Rhythmelodics (1 of 3)	Practice sharing	2
With Performing Arts Connections National presenters' snapshot	Small group discussion	14
Why do we make art and who do we make it for?	Public session	10
Decolonising arts spaces	Panel conversation	31
Methodology on how to give critical feedback	How-to series	6
Directors and Choreographers Cut	Practice sharing	9
How to support indie artists and producers?	Public session	18
WA CONNECT	Special event	12
Body Rhythmelodics (2 of 3)	Practice sharing	2
International collaborations	Public session	15

Eva Grace Mullaley, Yirra Yaakin Theatre Co AD	Q+A	12
Working with designers	Practice sharing	6
The TaKeTiNa Rhythm Process	Practice sharing	2
Ethics of Storytelling	Public session	10
Body Rhythmelodics (3 of 3)	Practice sharing	2
For Mid-Career Dancers	Small group discussion	5
How to pitch With Wendy Martin	How-to series	6
WA arts organisations	Public session	9
Awakening the Senses With Sensorium Theatre	Practice sharing	3
Feminism and Theatre	Small group discussion	10
Disability and inclusion	Public session	9
Major Festivals Programming for 2021	Public session	15
Perth Festival Programming	Public session	15
	Total attendance	252

Kolyang 2021

Session Name	Type of session	Attendance
All Sounds: improvised music for everyone	Workshop	11
Artists and Finance with Tax Agent Kylie Thompson	Small-group discussion	16
Artists within Orgs: who's doing it?	Small-group discussion	15
Audience & Accessibility	Small-group discussion	18
Change in the arts: real or perceived?	Panel conversation	63
Collective Initiatives for Environmental Sustainability	Small-group discussion	17
Creating Art That's Not Tokenistic	Small-group discussion	29
Devising Solo Work from Objects and Images	Workshop	16
Ensemble-based Companies	Small-group discussion	20
Equity & Inclusion in our Performing Arts spaces	Panel conversation	43
Experimental Arts Platforms	Small-group discussion	22
FLOCK Creative Workshop + Discussion Part 1	Workshop	27
FLOCK Creative Workshop + Discussion Part 2	Workshop	20
King St Artist Hub - what next?	Small-group discussion	21
Look After Yourself	Workshop	12
Making Residencies Happen	Small-group discussion	31
Mid-career pathways	Small-group discussion	30
Mid/Post-Covid Arts Practice/Producing	Panel conversation	43
Mother Tongue	Workshop	13
New independent producing models for WA	Small-group discussion	37
Our Place: Understanding Disability Identity & Artistic Practice	Small-group discussion	42
Parents working in the Arts	Small-group discussion	16
Residencies & Community Engaged Practice	Small-group discussion	28
Small changes to make it better, starting today	Workshop	19

The Long Game – Sustainable careers	Small-group discussion	34
Moving curiosity	Workshop	19
	Total attendance	662

Kolyang 2022

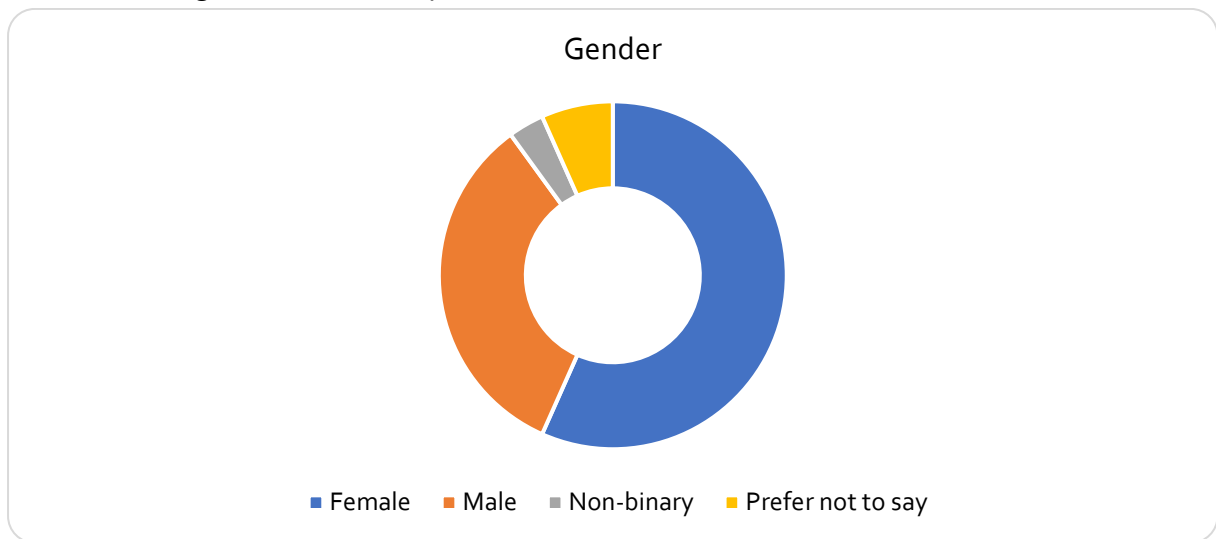
Session Name	Type of session	Attendance
Puppetry - Nigel Luck	Practice sharing	8
National Cultural Policy - Libby Klysz	Small group discussion	10
Dancing with Rest / Resting with Dance - Daisy Sanders	Practice sharing	5
The Sustainability of Making	Panel	15
Grumble Boogie	Practice sharing	15
Equality in Collaboration	Long table	37
Take Your Work Outside - Dawn Pascoe	Practice sharing	7
Perth Festival + Local Work - Where to next?	Cohort conversation + producer forum	25
Queer-ing Theatre	Small group discussion	14
Morning Movement with Janine Oxenham	Practice sharing	4
Playing with Your Voice - Julia Moody	Practice sharing	7
Ritual in Performance - Helah Milroy & Joshua Pether	Small group discussion	13
Vanguards of Exploration	Long table	45
In Conversation with Zohar Spatz	Cohort conversation	20
Slow Talks	Cohort conversation	15
Tracker Evaluation - Where to Next for Kolyang?	Cohort conversation	8
Projection Mapping - Steve Berrick	Practice sharing	8
You Can't Please Everyone All The Time - Bruno Booth	Small group discussion	12
Moving, Partnering, Adapting - Sam Ren & Bernadette Lewis	Practice sharing	12
Get to Know Annette Madden and Nicole Beyer	Cohort conversation	15
You'll Never Work In This Town Again	Panel/presentation	30
Benung ba Benung: a discussion on Indigenous Futurism - Bobbi Henry	Small group discussion	17
	Total attendance	342

Survey results

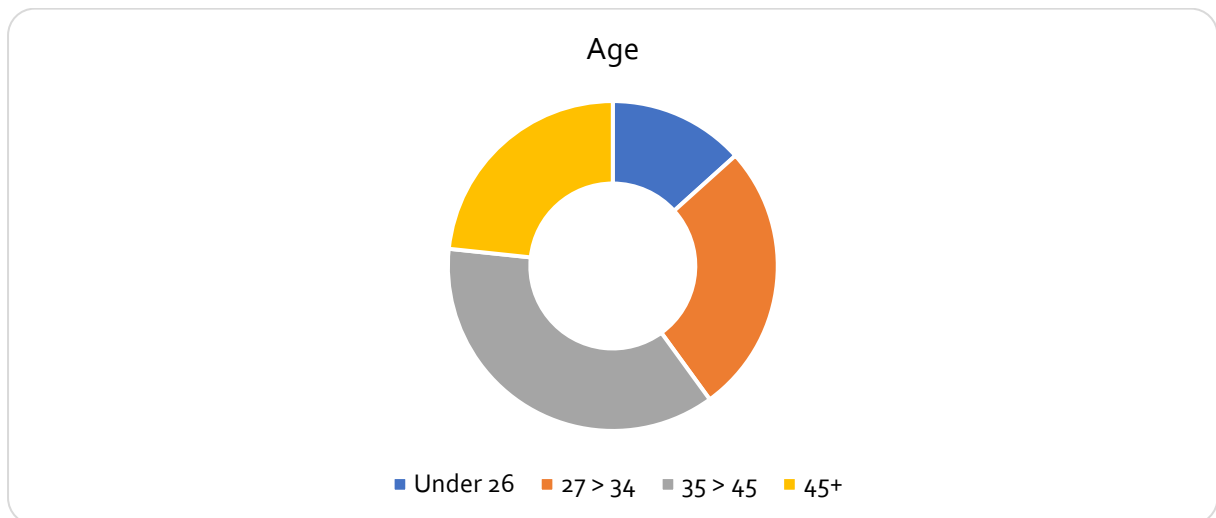
The survey collected both qualitative and quantitative information. While qualitative responses are used throughout this report, this section summarises the quantitative data collected.

The following charts provide a snapshot of participation in the Kolyang Program:

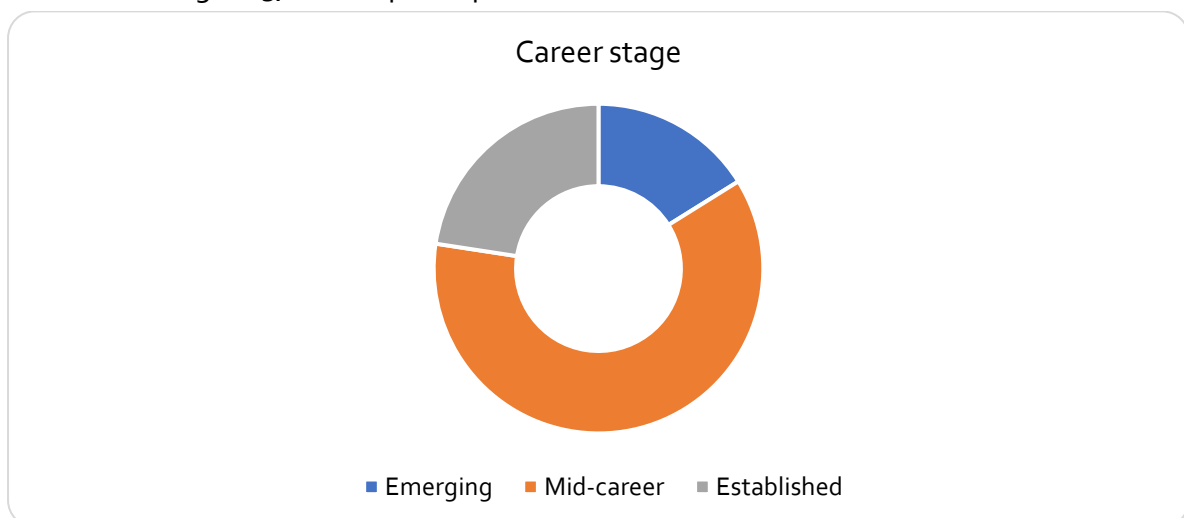
As shown in Figure 1, 56% of respondents were female.



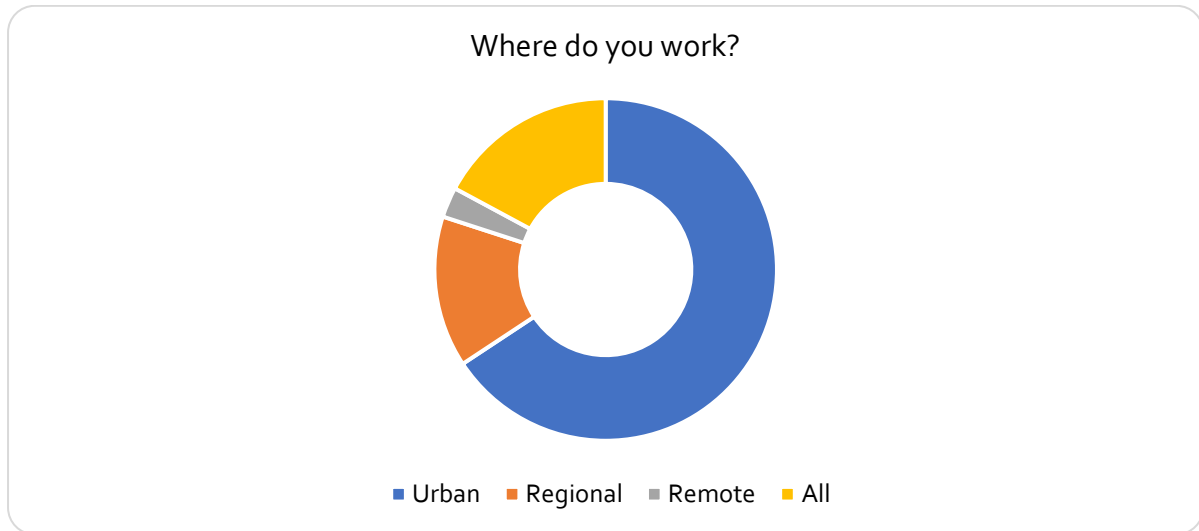
As shown in Figure 2, 37% of respondents were aged 35 > 45 years of age.



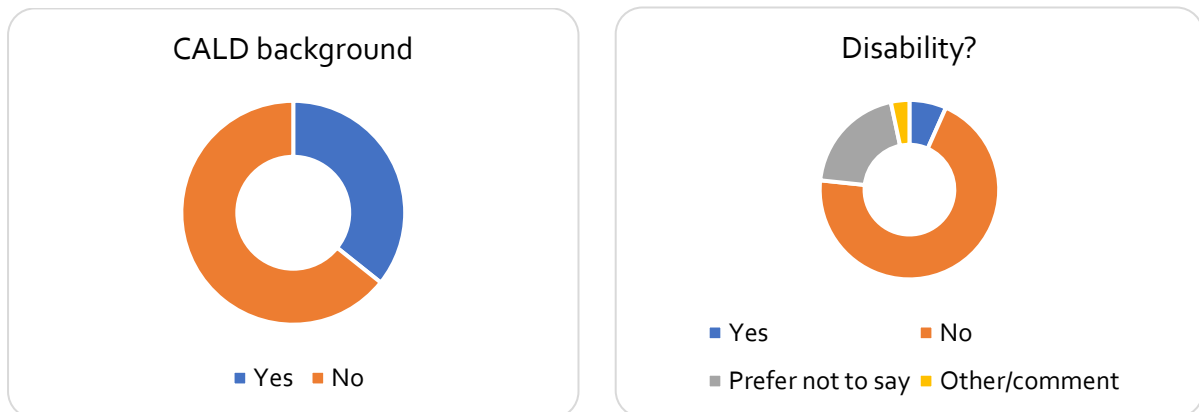
As shown in Figure 3, 61% of participants identified as mid-career artists.



As shown in Figure 4, one-third of respondents lived and/or worked in regional areas.

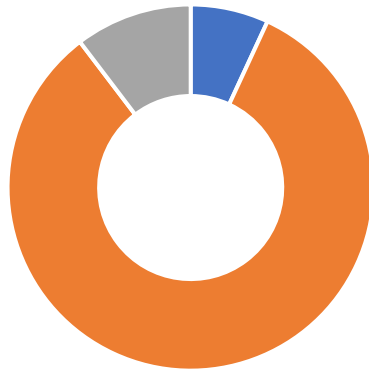


In Figure 5, one-third of participants identify as having a CALD background and Figure 6 shows almost three-quarters of participants did not identify as having a disability.



As shown in Figure 7, 20% of participants identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

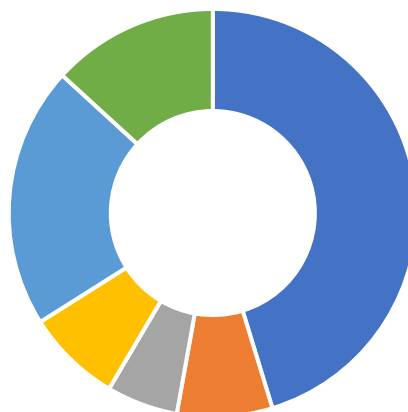
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?



■ Yes ■ No ■ Prefer not to say

As shown in Figure 8, 45% of participants' main form of practice was theatre. Other types of practice were participatory practice, musicals, opera, puppetry, multidisciplinary arts, story audio and multi arts and film/screen.

Artform (select more than 1)



■ Theatre ■ Dance ■ Visual arts ■ Music ■ Community arts ■ Other (please specify)

Methodology

At the centre of this evaluation report are the experiences and views of participants, partners and staff of the Kolyang Creative Hub and Artist Lab. They were invited to respond through structured and semi-structured interviews, surveys and informal feedback.

In response to the wide range of evaluation participants, an array of data collection strategies was used.

Feedback and comments

All Kolyang Creative Hub and Artist Lab participants were invited to contribute to the evaluation, using one or more of the options set out here. The quotes and testimonials in this evaluation are drawn from this participant feedback. While we have not attributed individual quotes in the body of the report (for reasons of brevity and anonymity), the following is a list of participants who provided comments:

- ▶ Rachel Arianne Ogle
- ▶ Steve Berrick
- ▶ Bruno Booth
- ▶ Bec Bradley
- ▶ Melissa Cantwell
- ▶ Patrick Carter
- ▶ Susie Conte
- ▶ Jamie David
- ▶ Alex Desebrock
- ▶ Simone Detourbet
- ▶ Margot Edwards
- ▶ Jay Emmanuel
- ▶ Elham Eshraghian-Haakansson
- ▶ Hugo Flavelle
- ▶ Nathan Gardiner
- ▶ Tarryn Gill
- ▶ Arielle Gray
- ▶ Mitch Harvey
- ▶ Bobbi-Jean Henry
- ▶ Ella Hetherington
- ▶ Michelle Hovane
- ▶ Francis Italiano
- ▶ Adam Kelly
- ▶ Sam Kerr
- ▶ Grace King
- ▶ Georgia King
- ▶ Libby Klysz
- ▶ Bernadette Lewis
- ▶ Laura Liu
- ▶ Nigel Luck
- ▶ Talitha Maslin
- ▶ Amy Mathews
- ▶ Scott McArdle
- ▶ Helah Milroy
- ▶ Julia Moody
- ▶ Jo Morris
- ▶ Tegan Mulvany
- ▶ Josten Myburgh
- ▶ Kuda Ndlovu
- ▶ Sam Nerida
- ▶ Crystal Nguyen
- ▶ Stephanie Nicholls
- ▶ Poppy van Oorde-Grainger
- ▶ Janine Oxenham
- ▶ Dawn Pascoe
- ▶ Ellis Pearson
- ▶ Ella Peeters
- ▶ Sarah Pollard
- ▶ Sam Ren
- ▶ Rebecca Riggs-Bennett
- ▶ Sky River
- ▶ Talya Rubin
- ▶ Bobby Russell
- ▶ Daisy Sanders
- ▶ Joe Paradise Lui
- ▶ Nel Simpson
- ▶ Alexa Taylor
- ▶ Kiara Thomson
- ▶ Russell Thorpe
- ▶ Mararo Wangai

Online survey

An invitation to participate in an online survey was sent to all Kolyang Creative Hub participants. Eleven questions were asked collecting quantitative information (age, location, work situation etc.). A further 12 open-ended questions were asked and based on the evaluation framework outlined below:

	Participants	Performing Lines	Sector
Process	How are participants engaged?	How is Kolyang managed?	How is the sector involved in Kolyang?
Impact	What happens to participants during Kolyang?	What happens because of Kolyang?	What happens to the sector during Kolyang?
Outcome	What happens to participants after Kolyang?	What are the long-term results of the project?	What happens to or for the sector in the long term?

- ▶ Why did you attend the Kolyang Creative Hub or Artist Lab?
- ▶ Has the Kolyang Creative Hub or Artist Lab made a difference to you?
- ▶ Have you got any good stories about how the Kolyang experience helped you?
- ▶ What was done well?
- ▶ Which sessions had the biggest impact on you?
- ▶ Could anything have been done better / differently? If so, what?
- ▶ How do you rate Performing Line WA's development and delivery of the program?
- ▶ What else would you like to see if this type of event happened again?
- ▶ What, if any, impact has Kolyang Creative Hub and/or Kolyang Artist Lab had on the sector?
- ▶ How can the benefits of Kolyang Creative Hub and/or Kolyang Artist Lab be maximised in the future?
- ▶ With the Kolyang Creative Hub and/or Kolyang Artist Lab in its final year, what do you think still needs to be done to strengthen the sector?
- ▶ Any other comments or feedback?

The survey was sent to 73 people, with multiple invitations to participated. Thirty responses were received, a response rate of 42%.

A range of semi-structured Interviews were held with a range of Kolyang stakeholders:

- ▶ Thirteen participants and staff at the 2022 Kolyang Creative Hub and Artist Lab were interviewed and filmed by a film crew, using the following questions as a guide:
 - Who are you? Tell us a little about yourself?
 - Why are you here?

- What are the best things you have done at the Kolyang Creative Hub?
 - Has the Kolyang Creative Hub made a difference to you? If so, how?
 - Is there anything you'd change about Kolyang?
 - Any other comments?
- ▶ The footage was edited into a series of short productions as part of this evaluation and to assist with sector sharing. These videos can be viewed at:
 - 2022 Kolyang Creative Hub (extended version): <https://vimeo.com/768812591>
 - 2022 Kolyang Creative Hub (short version): <https://vimeo.com/768814733/d5f56dc5co>
 - 2022 Kolyang Artist Lab: <https://vimeo.com/768811331>
- ▶ More general information about Kolyang can be found at:
 - <https://www.performinglines.org.au/projects/kolyang-program/>
- ▶ 2021 and 2022 Kolyang Creative Hub podcasts can be found at:
 - <https://anchor.fm/kolyang>
- ▶ The Tracker team, during on-site consultations, interviewed staff (current and former) and participants, as well as a number of partner interviews following the site visit.
- ▶ Over the three weeks of the Creative Hub, and 'Ideas Depot' was set up, and facilitated by a Hub participant. The Ideas Depot asked participants at regular intervals to quickly note responses to the Hub program. The facilitator encouraged participants to fill them in and collated the results. The initial questions were:
 - What was the best thing about today/this week?
 - What would you change about today/this week?
 - I'm feeling...
- ▶ An additional facilitator, also assisting the evaluation, documented comments and reflections from participants over the three weeks of the Hub.

In addition to the data collection during and after the Creative Hub, a range of documents provided by PLWA including feedback from previous years, were reviewed and included where relevant in this report.