



ACT
Government

Tier 1 Project Business Case

Canberra Theatre Redevelopment

Infrastructure Canberra
March 2025

CANBERRA THEATRE CENTRE



ACT
Government

Project Business Case

Project name:	Canberra Theatre Redevelopment
Tier:	Tier One
Risk assessment (high/med/low):	████████
Funding requested for ECI Phase and Enabling capital works (\$m):	\$ 38.385 million.
Total estimated project capital cost for both stages (P90, \$m, nominal):	Stage 1: ██████████ ██████████ ████████████████████ ██ Stage 2: ████████████████████ Total Project: ████████████████████
Whole-of-life cashflow over 35 years (P90, \$m, nominal):	████████████████████
Recommended delivery model:	Stage 1: Early Contractor Involvement (ECI) followed by Design and Construct (D&C)
Sponsoring Agency:	Infrastructure Canberra
Sponsoring Minister:	Chief Minister
Contact officer:	Julia Pucci
Business Case advisors:	Deloitte

This Business Case template should be completed using the [Guidelines](#) on developing each section of the Business Case.

Sign-off:

Sponsoring Agency: Infrastructure Canberra

<i>Print Name</i>
<i>Signature</i>

Basis of authority for consideration in 2025-26 Budget:

This Business Case has agreement from the Chief Minister to be considered by ERC and Cabinet through a Cabinet Submission, with appropriation for the ECI Phase to follow in the 2025-26 Budget and to return to ERC and Cabinet for the release of provision following the Design and Construct offer at the completion of the D&C Phase (expected in Oct/Nov 2025).

Brief Description: The proposal would approve funding for the delivery of Stage One of the Canberra Theatre Redevelopment project, that delivers a new Lyric Theatre (including a new loading dock and interface with existing facilities) and endorse the concept design for the refurbishment of the existing facilities.

Wellbeing domain 1: Identity and belonging

Wellbeing domain 2: Social Connection

Wellbeing Framework priority target group(s): (Multiple categories can be ticked)

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Older Canberrans | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Women and/or gender diverse people | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LGBTIQ+ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carers |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Culturally and linguistically diverse people | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Children and young people | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> People with disability |

Priority alignment: (Multiple categories can be ticked)

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>PAGA Appendix 1 or 2 item</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Election commitment | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>National Agreement on Closing the Gap</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019-2028</u> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health | <input type="checkbox"/> Early years | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Women and/or the ACT Women's Plan 2016-2026</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost of Living | <input type="checkbox"/> Addressing marginalisation and disadvantage | | |

Electorate: All

Existing projects or program(s): Please refer to Section 4

Year to cease funding or ongoing: Funding is sought from FY2025 (2024-25) to FY2029 (2028-29) for stage one.

Link to Budget consultation: N/A

Table 0-1: Budget Implications: (Budget impacts summary (P90, \$'000, nominal)

	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	Total
Capital impacts							
Capital Impacts	-	38.385	-	-	-	-	38.385
Capital injection – Project funding*	-	33.385	-	-	-	-	33.385
Technical Adjustment (MYR Appropriation)	-	5.0	-	-	-	-	5.0
Revised Provision	0.0	0.0					
Reprofiling of Provision	-			-	-	-	0.0
Capital Offset – Existing Provision – Lyric Theatre							
Capital offset – Existing Provision – Compliance	-	-	-	-			
iCBR fee – resources received free of charge (if applicable)	n/a – as project is delivered by iCBR. Agency costs are within Capital Injection – Project Funding						0.0
Expense Impacts							
Expenses	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Operational expenses	Refer to Cultural Facilities Corporation (CFC) Operational Business Case						
Depreciation	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Revenue/Commonwealth contributions/savings impacts							
Revenue	n/a	-	-	-	-	-	0.0
Commonwealth contribution	n/a	-	-	-	-	-	0.0
Savings	n/a	-	-	-	-	-	0.0
Staffing Impact							
Additional FTE (capital)	1	2	-	-	-	-	3.0
Additional FTE (operational)	Refer to CFC Operational Business Case						

* Infrastructure Canberra has separately submitted a Budget Business Case in relation to its financial sustainability seeking funding for its non-appropriated corporate costs. If that Budget Business Case is not approved the funding requested through this Business Case will need to increase by 3% to cover a corporate contribution to cover Infrastructure Canberra's non-appropriated corporate costs.

Business Case Authorisations:

Lead Minister

Ministerial Endorsement	Signature and date or evidence of endorsement
Lead Minister: Barr Portfolio: Chief Minister	

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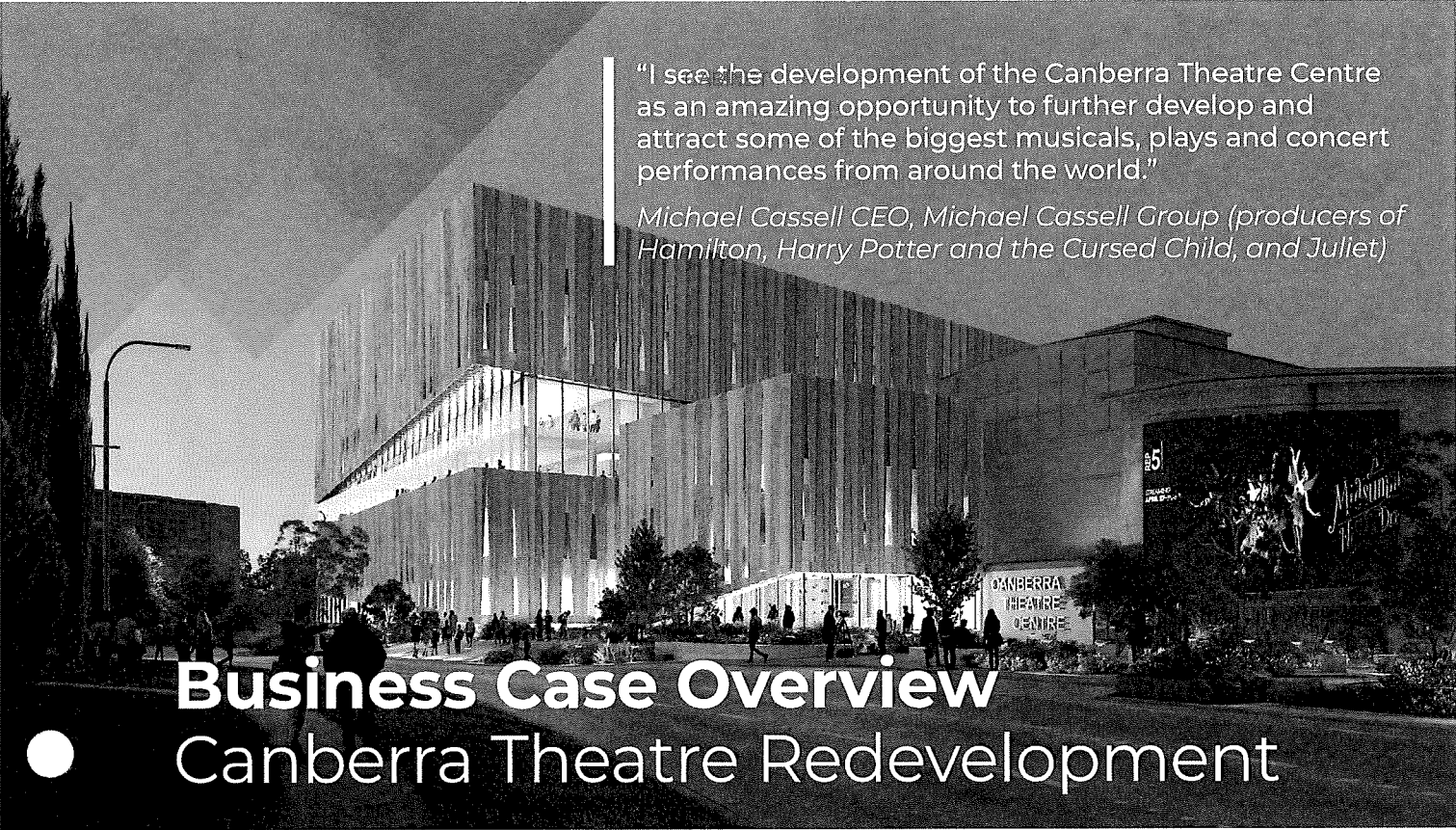
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Glossary

Acronym	Full name
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
BOH	Back of House operations
CCCD	Canberra Civic and Cultural District
CFC	Cultural Facilities Corporation
CMAG	Canberra Museum and Gallery
CMP	Conservation Management Plan
CMTEDD	Chief Minister Treasury and Economic Development Directorate
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CRA	City Renewal Authority
CTC	Canberra Theatre Centre
CTR	Canberra Theatre Redevelopment
ECI	Early Contractor Involvement
EOI	Expression of Interest
FFE	Furniture, Fixtures, and Equipment
FIS	Financial Impact Statement
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
GMP	Guaranteed Maximum Price
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
iCBR	Infrastructure Canberra
ILM	Investment Logic Map
ILW	Investment Logic Workshop
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MCA	Multi-Criteria Analysis
NCA	National Capital Authority
NCP	National Capital Plan
NSW	New South Wales
NPV	Net Present Value
PCG	Project Control Group
RBA	Reserve Bank of Australia
RMC	Risk Management Committee
RFT	Request for Tender
WHS	Work Health and Safety
WIA	Wellbeing Impact Assessment
WPI	Wage Price Index



"I see the development of the Canberra Theatre Centre as an amazing opportunity to further develop and attract some of the biggest musicals, plays and concert performances from around the world."

Michael Cassell CEO, Michael Cassell Group (producers of Hamilton, Harry Potter and the Cursed Child, and Juliet)

Business Case Overview

Canberra Theatre Redevelopment

The Australian Capital Territory (ACT) needs a theatre centre of national and international significance, to support Canberra's strategic ambition to be Australia's arts capital.

The ACT has the highest cultural attendance and participation rates in Australia, with large numbers of Australian and international visitors coming to the capital to visit world-class galleries, museums and cultural facilities.

A lack of appropriate facilities and capacity constraints means the ACT is currently unable to attract and stage some of the most appealing and high-profile shows in Australia today. In the last 18 months, the ACT has been unable to host more than 25 touring theatre productions.

Significant investment is needed to revitalise and expand existing venues within the Canberra Theatre Centre (CTC), and build a new Lyric Theatre to complement these existing facilities.

The Project presents a place-making opportunity to revitalise Canberra Civic and Cultural District (CCCD) and create a vibrant and energised precinct in the heart of the city

The existing facilities do not meet vital modern standards, including accessibility, and lack the 'back of house' functionality required for modern productions. Investing in this precinct now will secure a revitalised creative environment for the future and realise the ACT Government's vision to be the arts' capital of Australia.

This business case seeks endorsement of:

- > The delivery of Stage 1 of the Project at a Total budget of [REDACTED] for Stage 1 of the Project.
- > The concept design for Stage 2 of the Project, for the purposes of Works Approval for the whole project or informing works approval for Stage 1, with an investment decision on Stage 2 to be brought back to government at a future date.

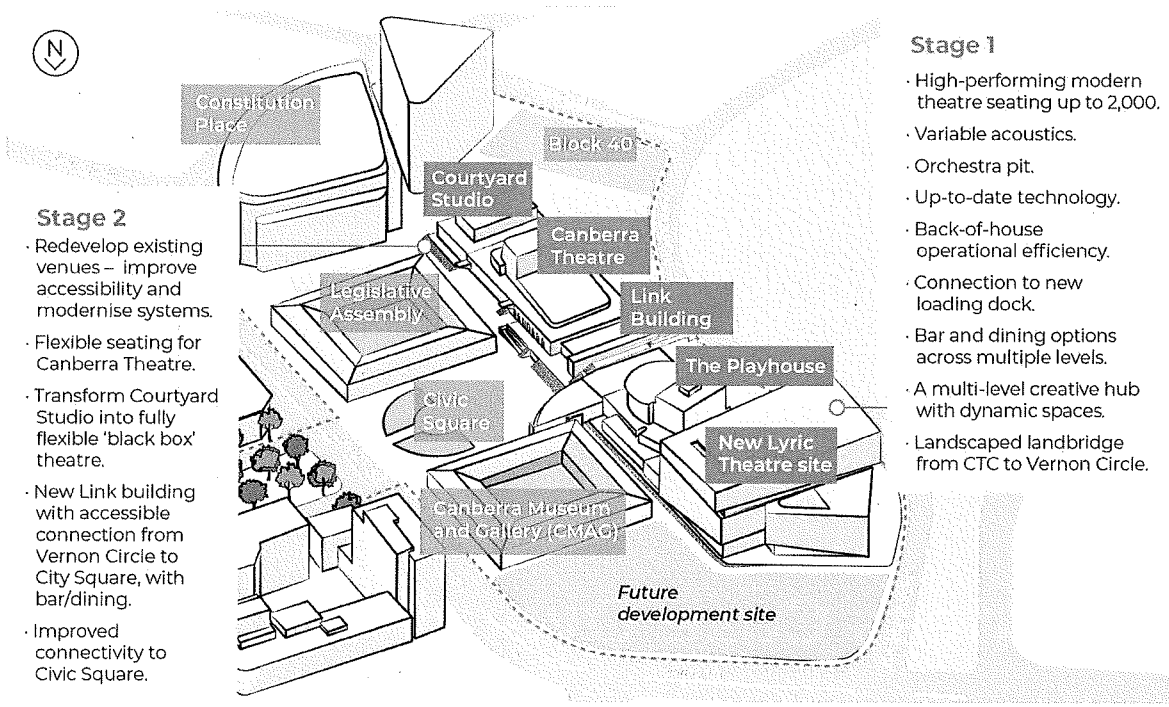
The CTC is operated by the Cultural Facilities Corporation (CFC), which has prepared a separate Operational Business Case based on the analysis in this Capital Business Case, to request funding for the Project's required operational investment.

Without investment now, the ACT will continue to miss out on securing these key experiences, driving Canberrans to offerings and locations interstate. This will continue to negatively impact the wellbeing of many in the community.

The need for this investment has been recognised by government. The Canberra Theatre Redevelopment is a priority project in the ACT Infrastructure Plan, with \$41.5 million funded in FY2022-23 and FY2024-25 Budgets for the development of the design and to procure an industry partner.

Following an international tender process in May 2023, a Design Partner (led by Australian architectural firm, Architectus) was appointed. The design development has built on previous work and the winning tender concept to present design options for this Capital Business Case.

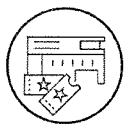
The recommendation and request for investment



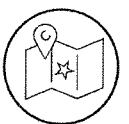
- Stage 2**
- Redevelop existing venues – improve accessibility and modernise systems.
 - Flexible seating for Canberra Theatre.
 - Transform Courtyard Studio into fully flexible 'black box' theatre.
 - New Link building with accessible connection from Vernon Circle to City Square, with bar/dining.
 - Improved connectivity to Civic Square.

- Stage 1**
- High-performing modern theatre seating up to 2,000.
 - Variable acoustics.
 - Orchestra pit.
 - Up-to-date technology.
 - Back-of-house operational efficiency.
 - Connection to new loading dock.
 - Bar and dining options across multiple levels.
 - A multi-level creative hub with dynamic spaces.
 - Landscaped landbridge from CTC to Vernon Circle.

Key ■ Stage 1 ■ Stage 2 ■ Adjacent buildings ■ Canberra Civic and Cultural District



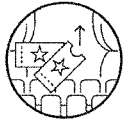
New accessible performing arts centre and theatre of national significance



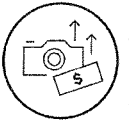
Enhanced arts offering to reinforce the ACT's strategic arts ambition



254 construction FTEs over six years and 67 permanent operational FTEs



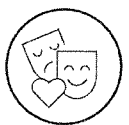
Revitalised theatre district with double the seats, increasing ticket sales and revenue



Increased cultural tourism numbers contributing to economic growth



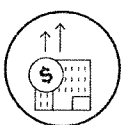
Social, community connection, civic amenity, wellbeing, and cultural reputation benefits



Welcoming, inclusive, activated and vibrant theatre district



Sustainable, green star design



Significant place-making, amenity and land value uplift to adjacent ACT-owned sites

within this Capital Business Case is based on rigorous analysis and a refined concept design solution. This Business Case assesses the extent to which the recommended capital investment provides a value-for-money proposition assessed against meeting the project objectives, the capital costs, and the financial and economic impacts, and benefits of each option.

The recommended project solution stages the build to enable progressive delivery, allowing the CTC to continue to operate.

This Project is an opportunity to deliver critical arts infrastructure for Canberra's future, and to also do something beautiful and thoughtful that contributes to place making for the theatre district.

The Project is strongly supported by the local

performing arts community, producers of major shows, and peers in other major cities, who recognise that a vibrant, contemporary cultural precinct in Canberra will be beneficial to the entire cultural sector and community in Australia.

"I also see the opportunity to position Canberra Theatre Centre as our version of Washington's Kennedy Centre, used not only for local audiences but for national celebrations and moments of international significance."

John Frost AM, CEO, Gordon Frost Organisation (producers of Wicked, The Book of Mormon, Evita and Chicago and more)

1. Executive Summary



1 Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

The ACT Government has a vision to have a performing arts centre of excellence. The Canberra Theatre Redevelopment Project (the Project) will deliver the capital infrastructure for this vision by staging delivery of a new Lyric Theatre, upgrading the existing theatre assets (Canberra Theatre, Playhouse, Link building and Studio) and revitalising the area's public spaces. The organisational capacity to implement the vision is delivered through the Cultural Facilities Corporation (CFC) operational element of the Project. The Project presents a unique place-making opportunity to reinvent the Canberra Civic and Cultural District (CCCD) and create a vibrant and energised precinct in the heart of the city.

The arts help cities attract talent, spur innovation, and grow their economies. Studies have shown that the more types of performing arts that are presented in a city, the greater the flow of benefits. Canberra has always been a place for people who embrace arts, culture and creativity to live and visit. Building on this foundation, this Business Case demonstrates the merits of redeveloping the Canberra Theatre Centre (CTC) and the related CFC Operational Business Case demonstrates the importance of simultaneous organisational and programming development. The Project will deliver a nationally and internationally significant performing arts centre that provides the platform for relentlessly and proudly promoting arts and culture, attracting artists, creators, arts workers, visitors and investors, and raising Canberra to be recognised as Australia's arts capital. It will also deliver place-making outcomes, creating new and vibrant spaces for residents and visitors.

The constraints of the current CTC venues – in terms of seating capacity, performance capability, and supporting infrastructure and facilities – limit the type and volume of performances that can be presented. The CTC's ageing facilities are no longer fit for contemporary performances and require increasing expenditure on annual maintenance to remain safe and useable. The level of defect remediation and asset upgrade required, coupled with growing compliance investment needs, continues to restrict the number, type and quality of performances that can be hosted in Canberra. Rectifying these deficiencies, as well as expanding capabilities and capacities for the CTC, requires investment in new and improved performance venues now. The related CFC Operational Business Case demonstrates the importance of the organisational uplift to maximise the artistic and economic benefits flowing from this capital investment. These new spaces will enable the CTC to create and present nationally significant performing art and host the international and national arts companies and touring performances that are currently bypassing the ACT.

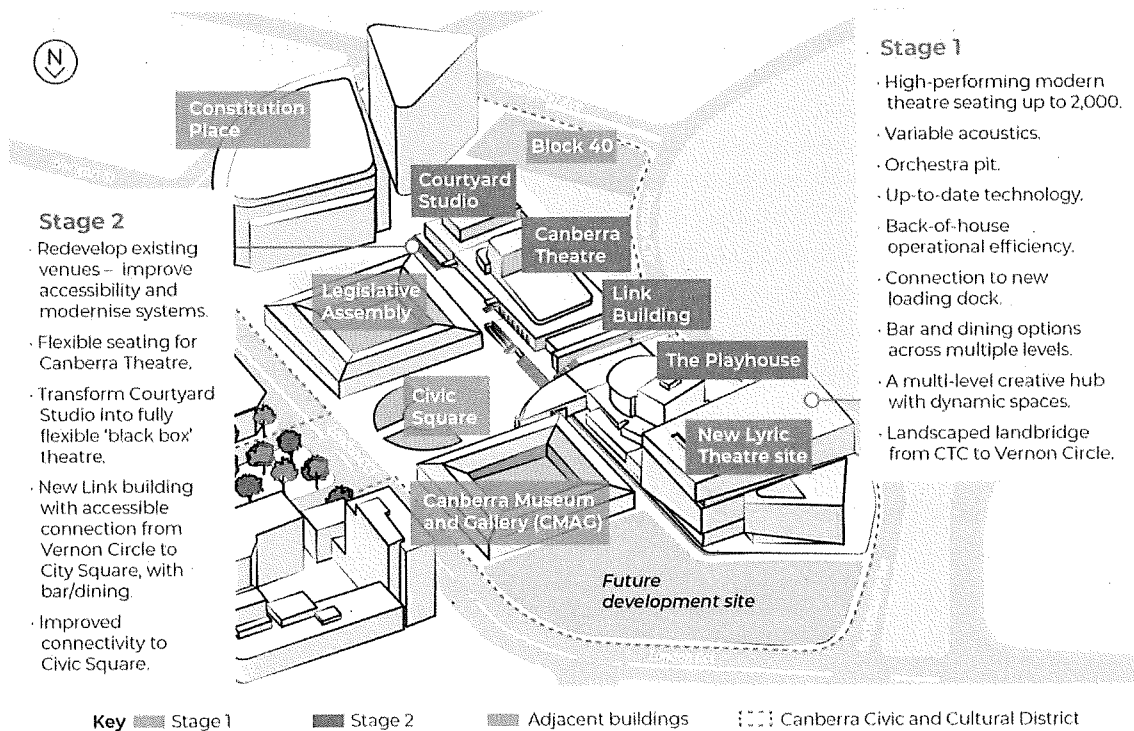
Figure 1.1: New Lyric Theatre concept render



(artist impression as of June 2024)

The transformed CTC will be the cornerstone of the Canberra Civic and Cultural District (CCCD) and will activate this underutilised area of Civic. An artist's impression of the design for the new Lyric Theatre as of June 2024 is shown above in Figure 1.1. The Project will provide night-time economy opportunities and create a destination for Canberra region residents, tourists, local performers, and arts workers. A view of the CTC's prominent position within the CCCD, within Civic and on the main north-south axis of Canberra is provided below in Figure 1.2.

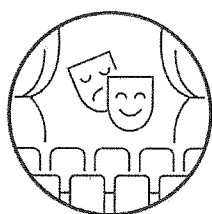
Figure 1.2: Site of the CTC and CCCD



Source: Deloitte (2023)

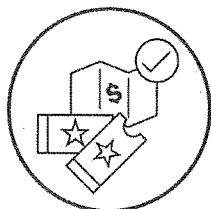
Underpinning the redevelopment of the CTC and delivering on Canberra's ambition to be recognised as Australia's arts capital are four project objectives, as illustrated in Figure 1.3 below.

Figure 1.3: Project objectives



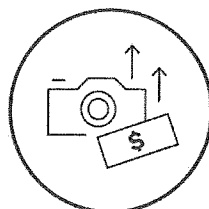
Performance

Provides a high-standard, modern experience for performers and audience alike



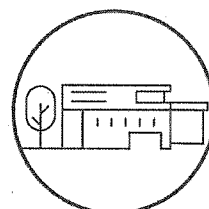
Excellence

Optimises design excellence, functionality, program and budget achievement



Tourism

Draws domestic and international visitors to Canberra to see varied performances of all sizes, including the largest shows of national significance



Urban design

Exhibits architectural and theatre design excellence, underpinning the development of a surrounding Canberra Civic and Cultural District

As well as delivering a new and upgraded theatre district, the Project will deliver a range of qualitative benefits to the ACT community, the CTC and its patrons as well as to broader ACT Government including:

- providing the opportunity for locals to attend more cultural performances in their hometown, rather than travelling interstate for theatregoing experiences, ensuring related expenditure and consumer surplus is retained within the ACT;
- providing residents and visitors with improved amenity, public space and food/beverage providers;
- providing access to an increased variety of inclusive performing arts, resulting in social benefits, community connection, civic amenity, wellbeing, and cultural reputation; and contributing to the cultural and economic landscape of the ACT;
- increasing the attractiveness and number of visitors to Canberra as a destination;
- enhancing Canberra's attractiveness to potential investors; and
- increasing operating efficiencies and improving working environment and work health and safety for employees and patrons.

Commencement of Stage 2 works is at the government's discretion, however, if Stage 2 does not follow Stage 1, then government may be required to undertake compliance upgrades to the existing facilities (more detail in section 1.5 below). The extent of these works will be further tested during the detailed design phase for Stage 1, and if required will form part of the Stage 1 scope¹.

This Business Case seeks endorsement of:

- the delivery of Stage 1 of the Project at a budget of ██████████ over FY2024-25 to FY2027-28 for Stage 1 of the Project; and

¹ Noting subject to further design development during the ECI Phase (refer to 1.7 Delivery Model Analysis, ECI Contract Award anticipated late April 2025), if the Lyric Theatre is considered to be an extension of the existing building, rather than a separate building, then compliance upgrade may be triggered.

- the concept design for Stage 2 of the Project, for the purposes of Works Approval for the whole Project or informing works approval for Stage 1, with an investment decision on Stage 2 to be brought back to government at a future date².

The related CFC Operational Business Case seeks endorsement of funding for the operational capacity uplift to effect the full benefits of Stage 1 of the Project.

The new Lyric Theatre delivered in Stage 1 will establish a high-performing venue in the nation's capital, with stagehouse, orchestra pit and back-of-house facilities to rival the best in Australia. It's inclusive, accessible, and functionally focused design aims to be a drawcard for Broadway musicals, ballets, operas, and other performances of national and international significance. Access to all the 'big' shows in the Lyric Theatre would also provide a point of aspiration for local students, performing arts organisations and arts workers, and highlight what can be achieved in this sector.

The multi-level creative hub will be an important deliverable in Stage 1 for the local performing arts sector. The rehearsal space will enable the making or producing of new content that can be shown locally and potentially toured. It will support emerging and established performance makers being able to work in a professional environment and have access to international and national talent. This will build local capacity, grow networks and be an important factor in retaining talent and creating quality performance content for local audiences by local artists.

The new Landbridge and loading dock for the Lyric Theatre, also part of Stage 1, will transform the back-of-house functionality and provide a landscaped connection to Vernon Circle. It will lead to a complete revitalisation of the urban environment in the CCCD and draw theatre-goers and others through the precinct with opportunities to engage with their surroundings, eat, drink, and buy tickets to a show. These place-making outcomes are a vital part of the Project.

Stage 2 of the Project aims to see the revitalisation of the Courtyard Studio, Canberra Theatre, and Playhouse through a modernisation of the existing theatre facilities in these three venues. An upgrade in theatre systems and back-of-house facilities would allow for more flexible programming and a wider array of performance types. The new, fit-for-purpose, 'black box' Studio Theatre will deliver a step change in the available uses of the space and will be a key asset for the enhancement of local and community art. A new Link building will finalise the Landbridge hospitality precinct.

While the Project and this Business Case analysis addresses both the physical and operational transformation of the CTC, this Business Case only seeks funding for the capital delivery of the Project. The CFC will submit a separate Operational Business Case, which will include the operational funding request for:

- project technical and operational support for the delivery of Stage one
- CTC business disruption during construction;
- operational readiness in the lead up to opening of the new Lyric Theatre; and
- operations and opening program following completion.

² Noting subject to further design development and site investigations during the ECI Phase, Works Approval may be sought for Stage 1 only. Stage 2 concepts design would be for information only to inform NCA for any future planning to the cultural district masterplan.

The transformation of the CTC and, in particular, the new Lyric Theatre, represent an opportunity to attract other funding sources. The CFC has developed and is now implementing a strategy for philanthropic and sponsorship funding for both capital costs and special appeals. Opportunities for attracting federal funding will also be investigated in consultation with CMTEDD.

1.2 Needs Analysis

The current theatre assets in Canberra don't meet the needs of the theatre-going public, or the aspirations of the ACT Government.

Historically, the ACT has had the highest engagement with arts and culture in Australia. It consistently reports the highest levels of attendance at cultural venues and events, as well as the highest cultural participation rate of any Australian jurisdiction, at a rate that is significantly higher than the national average.³

Failure to invest in the CTC will result in far-reaching impacts to Canberra. These include fewer arts and cultural offerings, less public engagement, sector development and employment opportunities, and reduced ability to capitalise on Canberra's strong cultural tourism. This, in turn, will impact hotels, airlines, and hospitality businesses, and the ability to attract quality performances compared to other cities with higher investment in performing arts venues. Moreover, the ACT will continue to be bypassed by major national and international touring productions. This will impact the networks and skills development of the ACT's artists, artworkers and staff, and ensure the continued leakage of Canberra's audience to other cities.

The CTC is a constrained venue that has a number of key issues that stop it from reaching its full potential. The original CTC was constructed in 1965, when Canberra had a population of 100,000 people. It no longer has the capacity to cater for the ACT's growing population, which is currently at 472,800 and estimated to be around 780,000 by 2060.

An Investment Logic Mapping (ILM) workshop undertaken on 11 October 2023, with key stakeholders from across the ACT Government, identified and articulated the following key constraints that impact the CTC.

Table 1-1: ILW Problem statement alignment with the proposed Project solution

Summarised Problem Statement	Drivers	Preferred Option Project Solution(s)
<p>Absence of a critical mass of high-quality, live performance in Canberra</p> <p>Significant barriers faced by Canberra in</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CTC's current configuration suffers from capacity and technical constraints. The CTC has no venue that meets the requirements of notable national and international touring productions. Inflexible theatre design prevents the CTC from providing more diverse performance and activity offerings. 	<p>Lyric Theatre (Stage 1)</p> <p>Adaption of CTC to meet the technical requirements for notable national and international touring</p>

³ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2023) 'Cultural and Creative Activities 2021-22'
<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/cultural-and-creative-activities/latest-release>

attracting a broader range of touring shows

- The lack of a flat floor venue of scale (over 1000 people) means that CTC cannot attract music gigs that require the option for the audience to stand and/or dance during the performance.

productions.
(Stage 2)

Lack of clear and established pathways for local performing artists and organisations

- There is limited affordable black box (flexible) theatre spaces with capacities of more than 200 seats in Canberra available to house local and emerging artists and support their work.
- Limited programs to support local talent, production development and production capability limit the CTC's capacity to support local sector development.

Lyric Creative hub and new rehearsal spaces with flexible use (Stage 1)

New flexible black box venue with 300 seat capacity (Stage 2)

Unwelcoming, disconnected public spaces contributing to a poor level of activation across the District

- The CTC's limited amenities and facilities do not promote the broader precinct-wide activation required to elevate the CCCD.
- The CTC's deficiency in dedicated function and foyer spaces constrain its ability to host more frequent community events and pre- and post-show gatherings.

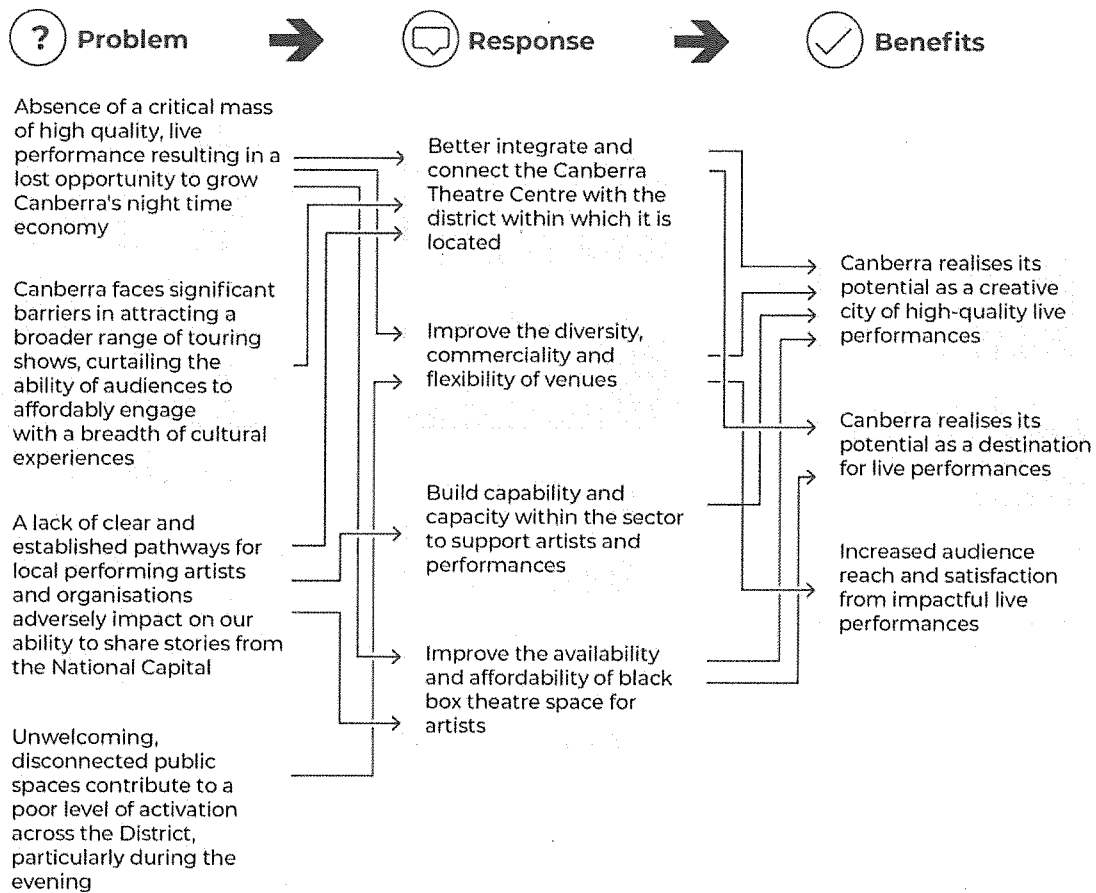
Refurbishment of existing facilities, new back-of-house and enhanced hospitality offering (Stage 1 and 2)

Failure to invest in the CTC will result in fewer arts and cultural offerings, poor public engagement, delayed sector development and forgone employment opportunities. Additionally, reduced cultural tourism visitation would impact hotels, airlines, hospitality businesses and the ability to attract quality performances. Moreover, the CTC will continue to miss out on major national and international touring productions. This will impact the networks and skills development of artists, artworkers and staff as well as ensure the continued leakage of Canberra's audience to other cities. The CTC risks being left behind by its peers, that have fit-for-purpose and recently developed centres and venues and are currently delivering a modern experience for their audiences and performers.

A particular area of need is to support the local performing arts industry in both skills and talent development, incubating the performing arts sector to develop new performances for local production and touring beyond the ACT.

The ILM defines the strategic responses and resulting benefits from addressing the problems faced by the CTC and Canberra more broadly. The outcomes of the ILM workshop are shown in Figure 1.4:4 below, which presents a summary of the key problems, appropriate responses and associated benefits for the Project.

Figure 1.4:4 Overview of the linkages between key problems, responses and benefits



Source: Investment Logic Workshop (2023)

Benefits resulting from the investment include supporting Canberra in realising its potential as a creative city of high-quality live performances and a destination for live performances, and the provision of increased audience reach and satisfaction from impactful live performances.

The City Renewal Authority is currently preparing a Development Masterplan for the Canberra Civic and Cultural District. This masterplan will inform and guide the release of ACT Government-owned land in the District, in particular Block 23, which adjoins the new Lyric Theatre site. Consistent with adjacent infrastructure projects in the city centre (such as the Raising London Circuit and Light Rail 2A projects), the redevelopment of the theatre complex, the proposed revitalisation of the CMAG building and future District public realm upgrades will add significant amenity and value to this site. The Authority is confident that proximity to, and within the

Cultural District (and in particular, the new Lyric Theatre and redeveloped CTC), will add a premium to the anticipated land sale revenue.

1.3 Strategic and Policy Alignment

The Project demonstrates strong alignment to ACT Government strategies and policies. The Project will play a critical role, both in the revitalisation of Civic and in supporting the growth, profile and economic contribution of Canberra's arts and entertainment sector and supporting the ambition for 'Canberra to be recognised as Australia's Arts Capital'.

The Project is a key deliverable of the *Canberra: Australia's Arts Capital: Arts, Culture and Creative Policy 2022-26* and the associated *Action Plan*, as well as a priority in the *ACT Infrastructure Plan* pipeline. The Project aligns with the objectives of key adjacent developments in Canberra's city centre, in particular the City Renewal Authority's (CRA's) City Precinct Renewal Program via the CCCD. Moreover, the Project demonstrates strong alignment to various Commonwealth Government plans and priorities, especially the *National Cultural Policy: Revive, the 2021 Australian Infrastructure Plan* and the National Capital Authority's *National Capital Plan*.

The Project Wellbeing Impact Assessment, undertaken as part of the ACT Government's Wellbeing Framework, highlights the Project's positive impacts in five key domains, including: identity and belonging; social connection; economy; education and life-long learning; and access and connectivity.

1.4 Options Analysis

The Project has developed three options for consideration, assessment and costing within this Business Case, along with a 'do minimum' option. These options were guided by the Capital Framework and developed in close collaboration with directorate partners.

The options built on extensive analysis undertaken on the Project since 2018 and have undergone multiple rounds of design analysis and budget management to reflect changing requirements and priorities. The key decisions and planning inputs that have informed the short-listed project options are:

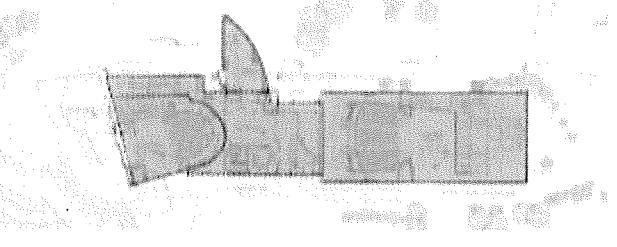
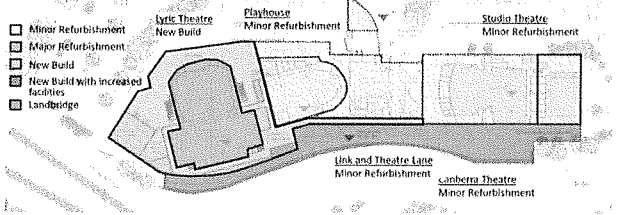
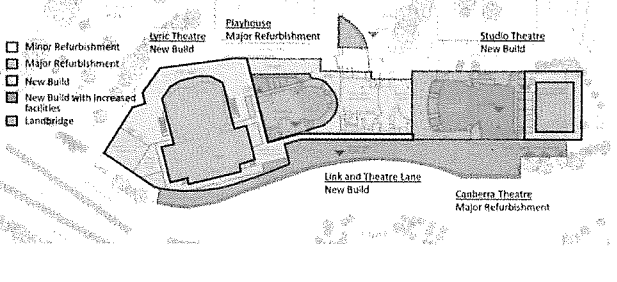
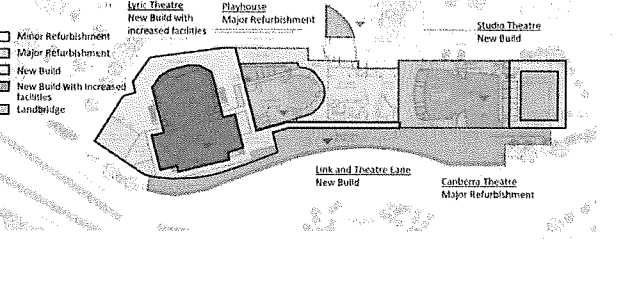
- a new Lyric Theatre of up to 2,000 seats to be located on the upper carpark of block 23;
- the new Lyric Theatre is to be an additional venue rather than replacement of the current Canberra Theatre;
- existing venues (Canberra Theatre, Playhouse and Courtyard Studio) are to be retained in current location and rebuilt / refurbished;
- heritage listing of Civic Square has informed the retention of the outer structure of the original Canberra Theatre; and
- consideration of the City Hill - Mt Ainslie axis should inform the redevelopment of the Link Building.

The size of the Lyric Theatre (up to 2,000 seats) followed advice and stakeholder engagement in 2019, which determined that this capacity was essential to entice the most impressive and technically complicated productions to the ACT and to ensure ACT joins the commercial touring circuit. Furthermore, the new large theatre with supporting rehearsal spaces will 'free up' smaller venues for greater levels of new and emerging local content.

The short-listed project options have considered the preferred design tender concept at three levels of intervention to provide design options for government review.

Given the refinement and analysis undertaken on this Project to date, the three options represent subtle scope variations on a developed and endorsed concept design, rather than a broad range of potential project scopes. A summary of the scope of these options is provided in Table 1-2 below.

Table 1-2: Option scope overview

Option	High-level scope diagram	Scope overview
<p>Base Case</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GFA: 9,300m² • Compliance upgrades • Essential maintenance • Replacing end-of-life systems
<p>Option 1</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GFA: 29,000m² • Lyric – New build • All existing venues – minor refurbishment • Link – minor refurbishment • Landbridge and Theatre lane
<p>Option 2 (Project Option)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GFA: 29,600m² • Lyric – New build • Playhouse/Canberra Theatre – major refurbishment • Studio – New build • Link – new build and major refurbishment • Landbridge and Theatre lane
<p>Option 3</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GFA: 32,950m² • Lyric – New build with increased facilities • Playhouse/Canberra Theatre – major refurbishment • Studio – New build • Link – new build and major refurbishment • Landbridge and Theatre lane

A staging analysis was conducted considering factors such as funding implications and business continuity for the existing theatre. The recommended construction staging option facilitates business continuity for the CTC's operations during construction. The staged delivery commences

with construction of the Lyric Theatre, Theatre Lane and Landbridge in Stage 1, followed by redevelopment of the other venues in Stage 2. The second stage is assumed to occur following the 'go live' of the Lyric Theatre (subject to further funding approval).

A Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA) framework, which combines various qualitative measures, has been used to assess the short-listed options. The results of the MCA options assessment are provided in Table 1.2 below.

Option 2, as a combination of Option 1 from Stage 1 and Option 3 from Stage 2, scored highest in the multi-criteria analysis (refer to Table 1-3 below) and is the recommended Project Option. Option 2 delivers strongest against the project objectives, particularly in its ability to deliver on design excellence within an existing budget provision. Option 2 has a medium risk rating, which is lower than the medium-high rating of Option 1. Option 2 delivers strongly against the ACT Government Wellbeing Impact Assessment objectives.

Subsequent analysis to determine the Project's detailed scope, risk assessment, delivery model, economic and financial appraisal and timeline are considered for Option 2 only and referred to as the Project Option.

Table 1-3: MCA options assessment – Total Project Costs - Stage 1 and Stage 2

Criteria	Base case	Option 1	Option 2 (Project Option)	Option 3
Alignment with Project objectives				
Performance – provides a high-standard modern experience for performers and audiences alike	xx	✓	✓✓	✓✓
Tourism – draws domestic and international visitors to Canberra to see varied performances of all sizes	xx	✓	✓✓	✓✓
Excellence – Optimises design excellence, functionality program and budget achievement	xx	✓	✓✓	✓
Urban design – Architectural / theatre design excellence, underpinning the development of a surrounding CCCD	xx	✓	✓✓	✓✓
Risk Rating				
Risk rating (Project)				
Wellbeing Impact Assessment				
Wellbeing Impact Assessment	~	✓	✓✓	✓✓
Recommended Option	-	3	1	2

1.5 Project Scope

The multi-criteria analysis outlined above resulted in a recommended Project Option – Option 2. This includes the new Lyric Theatre build, covered loading dock in Theatre Lane and building interface with the existing venues, all of which will be delivered in Stage 1. This will be followed by major refurbishment of The Playhouse and Canberra Theatre, new Courtyard Studio and new Link building to be delivered in Stage 2. The staging is structured to ensure that a major theatre is in continuous operation at the Canberra Theatre Centre at all times and that all performing venues are operational at the end of Stage 1.

The Stage 1 scope delivered within the new Lyric Theatre includes:

- a high-performing modern theatre with flexibility for capacities ranging from 1,250 – 1,500 – 2,000 seats;
- the theatre will include variable acoustics to cater for a diverse range of programs, an orchestra pit suitable for major productions, automated systems, recording and broadcasting technology, back-of-house operational efficiency and connections with the new loading dock;
- bar and dining options across multiple levels of the Lyric Theatre, including multiple theatre bars;
- provision of a multi-level creative hub, with a large rehearsal room, hospitality offering and other intimate and dynamic spaces; and
- improving the connectivity to, and use of Civic Square, while refocusing the Canberra Civic and Cultural District (CCCD) as the 'heart' of the city.

The Stage 2 scope includes:

- the refurbishment of the Canberra Theatre and Playhouse includes re-raking of seats to improve sightlines, new theatre systems to meet industry standards, foyer and amenities;
- automated fly system for the Playhouse;
- flexible seating options (including flat floor for the Canberra Theatre);
- converting the Courtyard Studio into a 300-seat functional black box theatre, with dedicated ancillary facilities, new theatre systems and an interconnected foyer to the other venues; and
- overall compliance works and *Disability Discrimination Act* (DDA) upgrades.

Outcomes that result from delivering the recommended Project Option are:

- enabling the CTC to significantly increase Canberra's participation in tours of major productions and attract a broader array of performances to Canberra, including ballet, opera, drama, musicals, and large-scale concerts;
- improving the operational efficiency and financial viability of the CTC through increased sales and alternative sources of revenue;
- improving the internal and external operational efficiency of bumping-in and -out concurrent productions;
- providing attractive food and beverage and entertainment offerings within the CTC;
- new Link connection from Vernon Circle to Civic Square providing hospitality offerings and public space, improving the connectivity to, and use of Civic Square, while refocusing the Canberra Civic and Cultural District (CCCD) as the 'heart' of the city;

- bringing the CTC up to date with contemporary building codes and standards, including for energy efficiency, mechanical ventilation, fire life safety, access for emergency service vehicles, and both front- and back-of-house accessibility; and
- the Project is designed to target a 5 Star Green Star Building, rating with 6 Star as a stretch target, as well as being a 100-per-cent electric building in line with the ACT Government's Net Zero Emissions Policy.

Initiatives included in the design or considered for inclusion.

The Project Option will provide a high-standard modern experience for domestic and international performers and audiences in a built form that exhibits architectural and theatre design excellence.

When developing the design and delivery plan of the recommended Project Option, additional considerations relating to heritage, staging, site logistics, Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD), compliance and ongoing operations and maintenance have been analysed and will continue to be considered as the Project enters detailed design development and subsequent delivery.

This Business Case presents the redevelopment of Stage 2 as a target scope, against a target budget. The budget for Stage 2 is subject to future government approval, and submission of a business case at a future date.

Future Stage 2 design development will continue to interrogate the most effective solutions to achieve the project objectives for the existing facilities. Specifically, the achievement of the desired level of flexibility for the Canberra Theatre within a target budget, is challenging given the existing condition of the venue. The Business Case for Stage 2 works may present options to deliver the full aspiration of the vision for the redeveloped CTC.

Compliance

[REDACTED]

1.6 Risk Analysis

The Project is a complex project with the new build of a premier performing arts venue and a brownfield redevelopment of the existing current venues in an aged facility. It will require specialised theatre systems to operate and complex spatial requirements for performers, patrons and staff.

Work to date on the Project, coupled with further development in this Business Case, provides a thorough understanding of the project risk, including mitigations and controls, providing a strong basis for ensuring project success. When considering risk during the design, planning and delivery phases of the Project, the overall risk rating for the Project Option during design and procurement is [REDACTED] during delivery.

The key risks under management are outlined below.

Material risks include:

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

Market and industry risks include:

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

The ACT Government and iCBR Project team has undertaken several key mitigations and controls to manage the risks identified, including:

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

A detailed risk register is provided in Appendix E. Project risks will continue to be monitored and updated throughout the Project’s lifecycle to ensure key risks are proactively identified and mitigated. The Risk Management Committee (RMC), comprised of members across the ACT Government, meets regularly to assess and provide advice to the Project Advisory Board on all strategic risks related to the Project.

1.7 Delivery Model Analysis

The recommended delivery model is based on detailed analysis, project benchmarking and market sounding feedback. The recommended delivery model is:

- **Early Contractor Involvement (ECI) for Stage 1**, based on the requirement for early involvement of all key Project participants and stakeholders through a collaborative approach that seeks to resolve design and other risks prior to the finalisation of the design,

price certainty and the reduced requirement for design and construction flexibility to respond to existing conditions. Under this model:

- The Tendered ECI Contractor will complete the detailed design and constructability planning for the Project.
- The ECI Contractor will develop the design to ensure budget and scope alignment – which may require some Value Management and reduction in the scope of the current design.
- The nominated contract form is a bespoke ECI Deed with the ACT Government’s Major Works D&C Contract – MWSC-ACT-2014 (as amended) due to the complexity of the design work and project requirements. A select set of design items that will remain to be completed under the D&C Contract are to be determined. Whilst the ACT Capital Framework contemplates that generally speaking a construct-only contract will be used with an ECI, the project risk profile gives rise to a need to rather adopt a D&C Contract for the reasons outlined above.
- The design scope of the D&C Contract will include full suite of Issued for Construction Documents.
- Based on the level of design completion prior to the D&C Contract that forms part of the ECI, iCBR will mitigate risks associated with the Head Contractor's acceptance of a qualified fitness for purpose warranty within the D&C Contract.
- The D&C Contract is to be paid in lump sum.
- The D&C Contract may include pre-priced variations for some or all of the Stage 2 scope.

The recommended delivery model is designed around appropriate allocation of risk between government and the private sector and provides the platform for successful delivery on time and budget, maximising value for money for the ACT Government.

The delivery model analysis for the Project builds on the Risk Analysis (Section 7) to recommend the best approach to transfer, retain or share the risks identified. The selection of the preferred model considered key project risks such as market conditions and site location for Stage 1.

Initial market sounding was conducted with several construction companies in December 2023. The market has confirmed its interest in the Project and the results of the market sounding confirm that industry has begun thinking about how to mitigate key risks and are readying for a future procurement should funding be confirmed.

1.8 Financial Analysis

In Stage 1, the recommended Project Option requires capital funding of ██████████ over FY25 - FY28 to fund the construction of a brand-new Lyric Theatre and all interfacing compliance works. The capital costs are summarised in Table 1-4 summarised by stages and totalled against the base case.

Stage 2, has an indicative costs for the Project Option of ██████████ to enable major refurbishments to the Canberra Theatre and the Playhouse and the construction of a new Studio Theatre and Link building.

The total project capital costs include allowances for P90 construction contingency to reflect key quantifiable risks arising from the risk analysis.

Table 1-4: Total capital costs by stage (\$m)

Item	Base Case	Project Option
Stage 1		
Design & Construction		
Contingency (P90)		
Compliance works or offset to VE scope		
iCBR Project Delivery		
External Advisors		
Stage 1 Total		
Stage 2 (indicative)		
Design & Construction		
Contingency (P90)		
iCBR Project Delivery		
External Advisors		
Stage 2 Total (Indicative)		
Stage 1 and 2 Total (indicative)		

As a result of the increased capacity delivered by the new venues, the annual overall operating net result (estimated at FY36 following construction and operational readiness) increases from [redacted] in the base case to [redacted], representing a larger scale of operations.

The CFC Operational Business Case provides more detail on the assumptions and operating drivers that have informed the operating analysis included in this Business Case.

1.9 Economic Appraisal

When evaluating a city- and nation-shaping project such as this, it is critically important that in addition to the quantifiable benefits, there is also consideration of the wide range of qualitative benefits. The Project’s overall economic framework of quantitative and qualitative benefit achieved by the Project is presented in Figure 1.5 below:

Figure 1.5: Benefits and beneficiaries associated with the Project

BENEFICIARIES				
ACT Government	ACT Community	ACT Businesses	CTC Audiences	All
Increased revenue from new and expanded theatre operations	Consumer surplus – social use or non-use value	Visiting events expenditure benefits	Consumer surplus – use value	Environmental impact from sustainable construction and operational practices ¹
Increased philanthropy from increased recognition	Improved cultural amenity	Visitation expenditure benefits	Improved educational outcomes through access to cultural events	
Residual value of improved assets	Improved liveability and wellbeing	Retained expenditure benefits	Travel time saved for local patrons avoiding interstate travel	
Attractiveness and Branding of the City Centre	Improved community benefits			
Enhance Canberra's attractiveness to potential investors	Enhanced pride and community connection			
Increased operating efficiencies and improved working environment and work health and safety for employees and patrons	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts and Cultural Benefits			

Legend
Quantifiable
Qualitative

The economic benefits of the Project are a combination of the qualitative (non-monetised) and quantitative (BCR) benefits. Traditionally, social infrastructure (especially in the arts and culture space) has a high level of qualitative benefits, due to the challenges of quantifying areas such as: wellbeing, reputation, accessibility and amenity. These do not form part of the BCR but substantially add to the societal benefits of delivering the Project.

A cost-benefit analysis (CBA) framework was employed to evaluate the quantifiable net benefit/cost to the ACT economy of each the Project options. The overall results of the CBA are presented in below, discounted using a 7 per cent discount rate. The recommended Option 2 has a BCR of 0.68. Social infrastructure projects, including cultural infrastructure projects commonly have a BCR under 1.0.

Table 1-5: Quantitative economic appraisal results – Total Project (incremental to the Base Case, \$m, real FY24, discounted, FY25 – FY59, 35 years)

	Project Option
Economic costs	591.8
Economic benefits	399.5
NPV	(192.3)
BCR	0.68
BCR sensitivity	0.52 – 0.86

As part of the methodology for determining the quantitative benefits of the Project, an ACT resident survey was conducted as part of this Business Case. The resident survey found strong support for the Project, as well as a high proportion of surveyed ACT residents indicating interest in attending performances at the redeveloped CTC.

<p>A high proportion of Canberrans currently use the CTC or would be likely to use the CTC if redeveloped:</p>	<p>Canberrans are excited by the new offerings of a Lyric Theatre:</p>
<p>78% of respondents had attended the CTC in the past 5 years</p>	<p>86% said they'd likely attend new international musical theatre productions at the Lyric Theatre</p>
<p>An additional 19% said that they would likely attend the venue if redeveloped, indicating a future attendance rate of 97%</p>	<p>72% said they'd likely attend international non-musical theatre productions at the Lyric Theatre</p>
<p>30% of new attendance was indicated to replace existing interstate attendance</p>	<p>63% said they'd likely attend international ballet or opera at the Lyric Theatre</p>

In addition to the quantified benefits, there are a range of qualitative benefits the Project will provide to the ACT community, the CTC and its patrons as well as to broader ACT Government, including:

- providing the opportunity for locals to attend more cultural performances in their hometown, rather than travelling interstate for theatregoing experiences, ensuring related expenditure and consumer surplus is retained within the ACT;
- providing residents and visitors with improved amenity, public space and food/beverage providers;
- providing access to an increased variety of inclusive performing arts, resulting in social benefits, community connection, civic amenity, wellbeing, and cultural reputation; and contributing to the cultural and economic landscape of the ACT;
- increasing the attractiveness and number of visitors to Canberra as a destination;
- enhancing the reputation of ACT Government due to investment in culture and history; and
- increased operating efficiencies and improved working environment and work health and safety for employees and patrons.

1.10 Project Governance

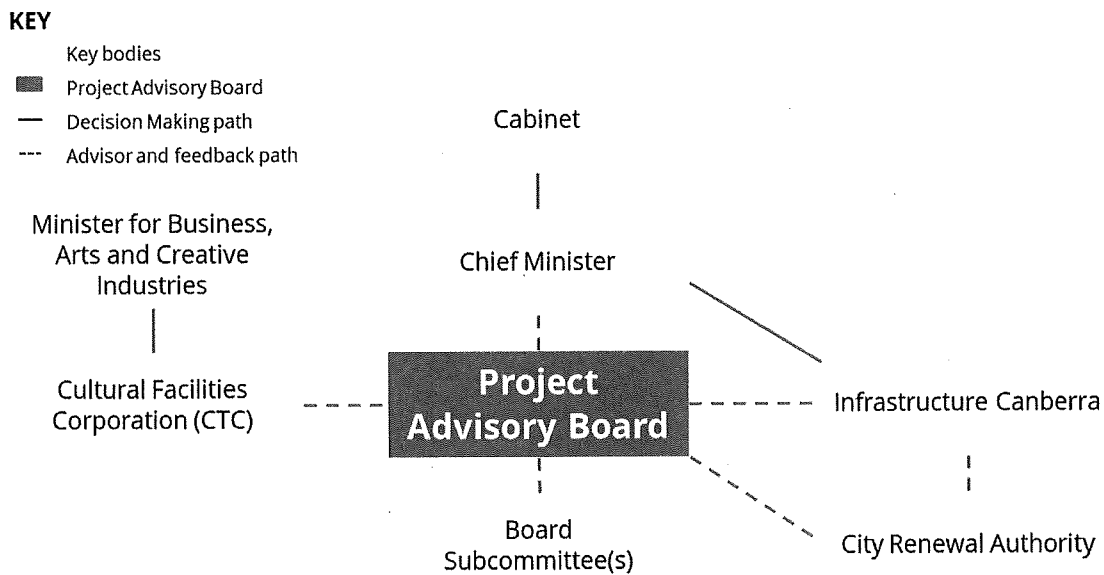
Governance measures have already been defined and established following the approval of \$28 million in funding for design in the 2022-23 ACT Budget and \$13.5 million in the 2024-25 ACT Budget. These established governance measures will continue to apply through the design and construction phase of the Project.

The Chief Minister is the Minister responsible for the Project and reports on the project to Cabinet. iCBR is the directorate responsible for the development and the delivery of the Project. The Project's governance framework aligns with the iCBR Governance Framework and is set up in a similar manner to other major projects being delivered by iCBR, such as the Canberra Hospital Expansion and CIT Campus Woden.

A Project Advisory Board was established in 2022 and meets monthly. Its core responsibility is to guide strategic oversight of the Project and provide advice to Infrastructure Canberra. The Chair of the Project Advisory Board is an independent member (that is, non-government) and provides independent leadership and direction to the operations of the Project Advisory Board and Project team. Board subcommittees are developed by the Project Director as the need arises to address specific issues that require cross stakeholder coordination.

The governance structure for the Project is summarised in the Figure 1.6 below:

Figure 1.6: Simplified governance structure



In addition to the above, a Project Control Group and Risk Management Committee have also been established to actively manage the design and delivery of the Project and risk identification and management respectively.

The Project Governance Framework facilitates close collaboration with relevant ACT Government agencies through their representation on the Project Advisory Board, other project governance groups and through stakeholder engagement with the Project delivery team.

1.11 Advisor Engagement Plan

Taking into the consideration the scale, complexity, and brownfield nature of the Project, including the specialist nature of technical theatre design, the Project team has engaged a number of external advisors to provide specific expertise and support for the successful delivery of the Project. Advisors to date have primarily been involved with the design pathway, including contracting, legal, financial, commercial, procurement, due diligence, technical design and engineering, peer review, probity, stakeholder management and communications, environment and sustainability, and other specialist advisors for this Business Cases and design development.

Following business case endorsement and funding of Stage 1, the focus of the advisors will be to support the Project through design finalisation, procurement of the main contractor, delivery, and eventual commissioning and close out of the of the redeveloped CTC.

1.12 Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Extensive stakeholder engagement with the community, the performing arts industry, and other government agencies has been undertaken to inform the planning and design stage of the Project.

iCBR is responsible for most communications and engagement for this Project and is guided by the iCBR CTR Project Communication and Engagement Strategy 2023-24 (C&E Strategy), which outlines key stakeholder groups, principles and approach, tools and channels, and monitoring, reporting, and evaluation requirements.

To ensure the voices of stakeholders and audiences were heard and considered in this design phase, the following initiatives were implemented:

- Yerrabingin-led engagement to ensure First Nations knowledge and input are incorporated, ensuring respect of Country and Culture.
- Detailed design consultation meetings and workshops with theatre user groups and theatre staff
- A Performing Arts Reference Group to provide input and feedback from the local performing arts sector with diverse community representation.
- Online and in-person opportunities for the Canberra community to input ideas on improving theatre experience, including current and future theatre attendees.
- Stakeholder meetings and workshops to gather insights from special interest groups.
- Regularly informing and seeking input from the national and international performing arts sector.

During the period of community consultation from 3 October to 4 December 2023, Canberra residents have had an opportunity to have their say on what they want from a future Canberra Theatre Centre. This included opportunities to participate online through the YourSay website, from survey kiosks in the venue and at a series of pop-up events hosted in the venue, as well as other public places, with strong community support being reported in the engagement feedback.

Targeted stakeholder engagement has focused on ensuring the key project values of Inclusion, diversity and accessibility are achieved. The Project team will continue to proactively identify and engage with stakeholders to ensure the Project's success and minimise the risk of delays due to stakeholder objections and issues that are discovered too late.

1.13 Timeline

The Project is presented for a two-stage delivery, with Stage 1 being comprised of the new Lyric Theatre, loading dock and interface to The Playhouse, and Stage 2 being the refurbishment of the existing venues – Canberra Theatre, The Playhouse, Courtyard Studio, and the Link Building. The timeline developed for the Project indicates that the anticipated completion is:

- Stage 1: Construction substantial completion by the late 2027 / early 2028, followed by operational commissioning, with completion and opening in mid/late 2028; and
- Stage 2: Construction substantial completion by the end of 2029, followed by operational commissioning, with completion and opening in mid-2030.

Key dates, such as the 60th Anniversary of the theatre in June 2025, as well as implications of working within a live theatre environment; have been taken into consideration when developing the Project program. The Playhouse will require notable periods of closure during Stage 1 for construction activities and interface works with the new Lyric Theatre.

During Stage 1 it is intended that the Canberra Theatre and Courtyard Studio will remain operational, and the Stage 2 construction works will only commence on completion of Stage 1 works at a future date determined by the Government. The Playhouse will experience a closure period during Stage 1 for interface works with the new Lyric Theatre.

The program has considered interfaces with notable adjacent projects within the city centre and overlapping construction timeframes. For example, the revitalisation of Civic Square and the development of the CCCD is an important alignment with the delivery of the Project.

The Project team will continue to liaise with key stakeholders and external delivery teams for these projects to anticipate and mitigate any potential timing or interface impacts.

The Project's program will continue to be assessed and refined throughout the ongoing design development, documentation, and construction phases.

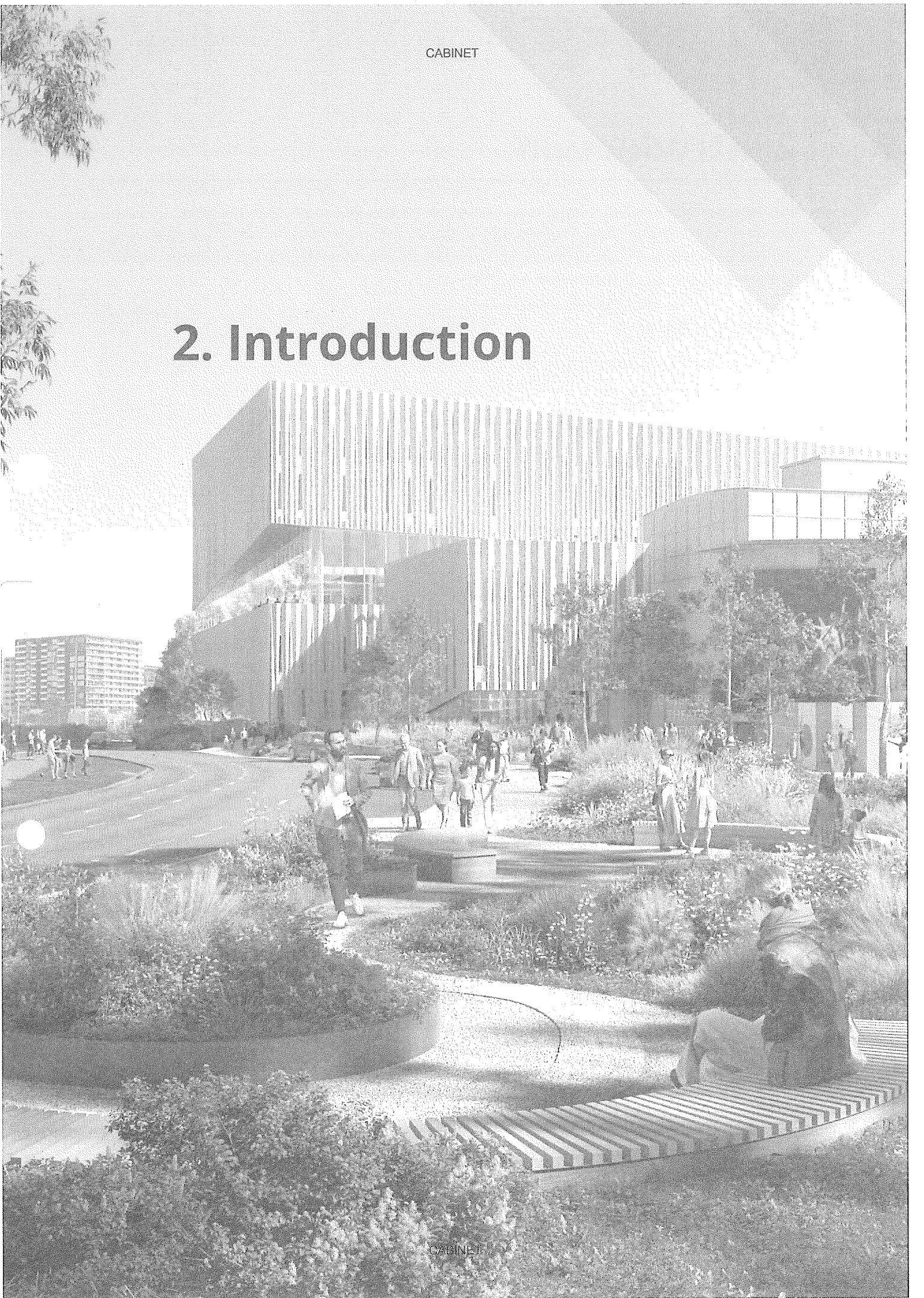
1.14 Budget Funding Request – Stage 1

Table 1-6 below presents the net impact of the Project on the current ACT Budget.

Table 1-6: Financial impacts summary (P90, \$m, nominal)

	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	Total
Capital impacts							
Capital Impacts	-	38.385	-	-	-	-	38.385
Capital injection – Project funding	-	33.385	-	-	-	-	33.385
Technical Adjustment (MYR Appropriation)	-	5.0	-	-	-	-	5.0
Revised Provision	0.0	0.0					
Reprofiling of Provision	-			-	-	-	0.0
Capital Offset – Existing Provision - Lyric Theatre							
Capital offset – Existing Provision - Compliance	-	-	-	-			
iCBR fee – resources received free of charge (if applicable)	n/a – as project is delivered by iCBR. Agency costs are within Capital Injection – Project Funding						0.0
Expense Impacts							
Expenses	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Operational expenses	Refer to Cultural Facilities Corporation (CFC) Operational Business Case						
Depreciation	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Revenue/Commonwealth contributions/savings impacts							
Revenue	n/a	-	-	-	-	-	0.0
Commonwealth contribution	n/a	-	-	-	-	-	0.0
Savings	n/a	-	-	-	-	-	0.0
Staffing Impact							
Additional FTE (capital)	1	2	-	-	-	-	3.0
Additional FTE (operational)	Refer to CFC Operational Business Case						

2. Introduction



2 Introduction

This section provides an introductory overview of the transformative Canberra Theatre Redevelopment Project (the Project), states the Project objectives, summarises the work completed to date and outlines the rigorous analysis process undertaken in this Business Case to substantiate the recommended Project Option.

Key messages

- The Project represents a transformative opportunity for the CTC to fill a major gap in its service offering and capability, enabling it to foster increased audience and artistic engagement, to tell stories from the national capital, and to establish itself as a theatre of national significance.
- This investment will further position Canberra as a culturally significant tourist destination, while simultaneously offering Canberrans access to a diverse display of contemporary performances, enhancing local artistic participation, delivering economic growth, and reinforcing the vision for the arts.
- CTC is Canberra's main performing arts centre, yet its facilities are no longer suitable for contemporary performances and do not include a venue in Canberra capable of hosting top tier performances of scale. Investment is required to transform the CTC into a premier performing arts venue.
- The transformation will unlock the CTC's capability to host national and international arts companies and leading touring performances which are currently bypassing the ACT.
- A redeveloped CTC is also a key enabler of a broader cultural revitalisation of the city centre via the development of the Canberra Civic and Cultural District (CCCD).
- Without immediate investment, the ACT risks losing its ability to attract high quality live performances, driving the local populations' strong traditional engagement with arts and culture to alternate offerings and locations interstate. This impediment to local access is expected to negatively impact the well-being of many in the community.
- CTC risks being left behind by other capital cities who have suitable and recently developed centres and venues and are currently delivering on a modern experience for their audiences and performers.
- The backlog and growing maintenance and asset compliance requirements and the need to respond to evolving performance requirements amplifies the need for the recommended Project solution to be implemented urgently. The Canberra Theatre Redevelopment Tier 1 Project Business Case recommends:
 - delivery of the Project in two stages, with Stage 1 delivering the new Lyric Theatre with supporting back-of-house facilities and, Stage 2 being the redevelopment of the CTC's current theatres and facilities;
 - capital funding of ██████████ over four years for Stage 1 of the Project, and
 - endorsement of the concept design for Stage 2.
- The recommendation and request for investment within this Business Case is based on rigorous analysis and a refined design solution. The recommended Project solution meets

the project objectives within the provisioned budget whilst staging the build and maximising value for money.

- Separate to this Business Case, the Cultural Facilities Corporation (CFC) will seek funding for the operational costs associated with Stage 1 delivery, as a part of the broader CFC Operational Business Case.

2.1 Project Overview

Situated in the heart of the city, and linking City Hill to Civic Square, the CTC precinct holds the potential to be transformed into a vibrant cultural and creative hub, activating and uniting Canberra at its heart. The Centre's strategic position in the Canberra Civic and Cultural District (CCCD) provides the opportunity for the Centre to be a key stage for diverse performance, storytelling, artistic and creative expression, and a beacon for night-time economy activation. These transformative outcomes are achievable through the Project, which aims to deliver a theatre centre of national and international significance to Australia's capital.

The construction of a new Lyric Theatre will ensure that Canberra becomes a creator and contributor as well as a destination for significant high-profile national and international performances. Additionally, through upgrade and enhancement of the existing facilities, the Project will also provide new opportunities to showcase and elevate local talent and reinvigorate the existing local performing arts community.

The recommended option for the Project will be delivered across two stages, with each stage bringing exciting new opportunities to the heart of Australia's capital.

Stage 1 will bring a high performing up to 2,000 seat Lyric Theatre to the nation's capital, with stagehouse, orchestra pit and back-of-house facilities to rival the best in Australia. Its inclusive, accessible, and functionally focused design aims to be a drawcard for Broadway musicals, ballets, operas, and other performances of national and international significance. This has the potential to boost arts tourism in Canberra and draw in new and bigger performances that have previously only been showcased in Sydney or Melbourne. Access to all the 'big' shows in the Lyric Theatre would also provide a point of aspiration for local students, performing arts organisations and arts workers, and highlight what can be achieved in this sector.

The new Lyric Theatre aims to be a unique landmark and monumental building that is of its place, sharing a dialogue with the buildings throughout the capital. This design was chosen during the tender phase for the way it spoke of Canberra and to Canberra, and highlighted opportunities to activate the precinct through its Creative Hub and food and beverage offerings.

The design of the new Landbridge and loading dock will provide a covered functional back of house spine for the theatre – transforming back of house operations, while providing a landscaped connection from Vernon Circle.

Stage 2 of the Project aims to see the revitalisation of the CTC through a modernisation of the existing facilities. An upgrade in theatre systems and back-of-house facilities would allow for more flexible programming and a wider array of performance types. The new, fit-for-purpose Studio Theatre will deliver the high-standard modern experience demanded by performers and the audience, and will be a key asset for the local performing arts sector. The new Link building, with the Knowles Place laneway extending through a reimagined 'library' Fin, would lead to a complete

revitalisation of the urban environment in the CCCD and draw people through the precinct with opportunities to engage with their surroundings, eat, drink, and buy tickets to a show.

The Project's goal is for the Canberra Theatre Centre to be a welcoming space for all – an exemplar in the field of accessibility and inclusivity. It has been designed carefully with this in mind for the audience, staff, and performers. The Yerrabingin design process of listening to Country will ensure that this Project is also welcoming to First Nations people and that their culture is a core foundation of this Project. First Nations engagement has already inspired the design process, which envisions each theatre as a clearing in the landscape, for people to gather and collectively engage with performances.

The Project aspires to deliver on the ACT Governments key sustainability policies, including the ACT Climate Change Strategy and its focus on Net Zero by 2045 and the Transition from Gas to Electric across ACT Government facilities, through a critical evaluation of the design to deliver a functional, yet sustainable Canberra Theatre Centre.

The arts, culture and creative sector has undergone transformational change and its audience has fundamentally changed how they interact with live performances, with this cultural shift being further accelerated since the COVID-19 pandemic. As the arts, culture and creative sector and its audiences continue to evolve, so too must the CTC to cater to their needs. Investment is required to respond to these opportunities, with the evolving technical requirements of the performing arts and to appropriately cater for the significant recent and projected growth in population of the ACT and surrounds.

Without immediate investment, the ACT risks losing its ability to attract high quality live performances, driving the local populations' strong traditional engagement with arts and culture to alternate offerings and locations interstate. This impediment to local access is expected to negatively impact the well-being of many in the community. CTC risks being left behind by its peers who have suitable and recently developed centres and venues and are currently delivering on a modern experience for their audiences and performers. Furthermore, the backlog and growing maintenance and asset compliance requirements and the need to respond to evolving performance requirements amplifies the need for the recommended Project solution to be implemented urgently.

2.1.1 Recommendation

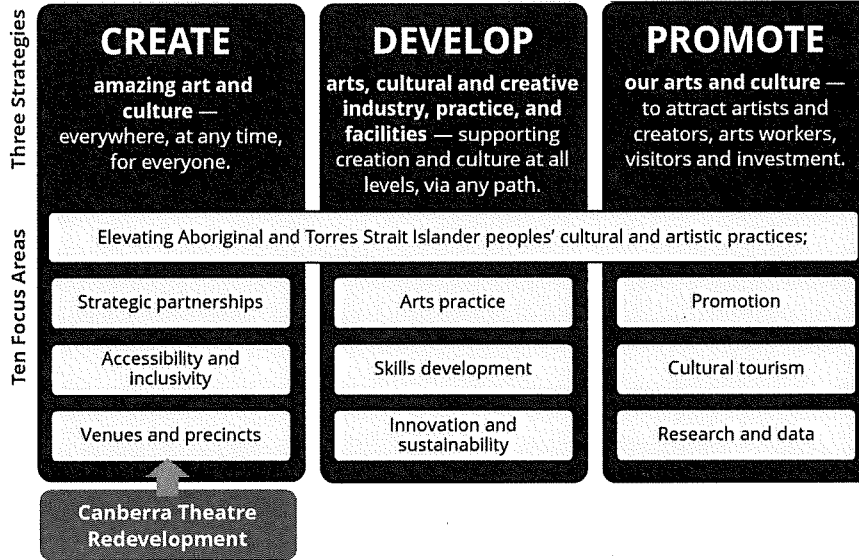
The Canberra Theatre Redevelopment Tier 1 Project Business Case recommends:

- delivery of the Project in two stages, with Stage 1 delivering the new Lyric Theatre with supporting back-of-house facilities and, Stage 2 being the redevelopment of the CTC's current theatres and facilities;
- capital funding of ██████████ over four years for Stage 1 of the Project;
- indicative endorsement of the concept design for Stage 2 (with a separate funding business case to be supplied for consideration for this stage).

2.2 Project Objectives

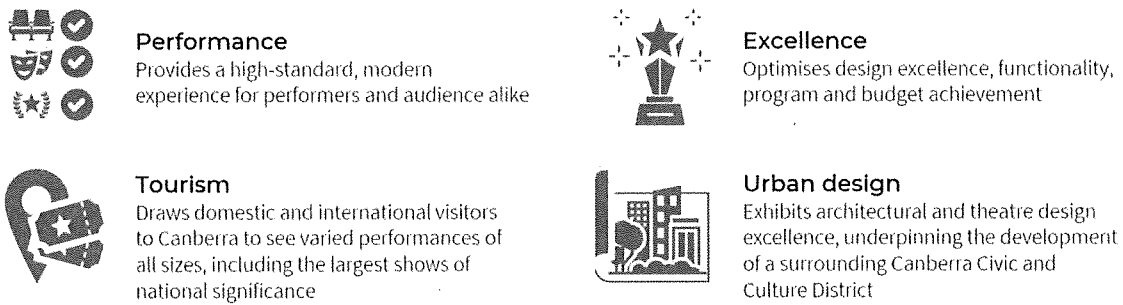
The Project is one of the targeted projects within the ACT Government’s action plan.⁴ to achieve its statement of ambition to be Australia’s Arts Capital.⁵ The Project sits within the venue and precincts focus area within the action plan, which is one of ten focus areas underpinning the three strategies for achieving the arts ambition, refer to Figure 2.1 below:

Figure 2.1: ACT Statement of ambition for the arts strategies and focus areas



Accordingly, the vision for the Project is to deliver a theatre centre of national and international significance, that supports Canberra’s strategic ambition to be Australia’s Arts Capital. Figure 2.2 identifies the key objectives of the Project, which are central to achieving the Project’s vision.

Figure 2.2: Canberra Theatre Redevelopment Project objectives



Source: ICBR (2023)

The Project objectives were approved by the Project Advisory Board and based on an assessment of success factors for the Project, while also aligning to the ACT Government’s ambition for the arts in Canberra and the broader CCCD plan.

⁴ ACT Government (2022), ‘Canberra: Australia’s Arts Capital – Arts, Culture and Creative Policy 2022–2026 Action Plan’

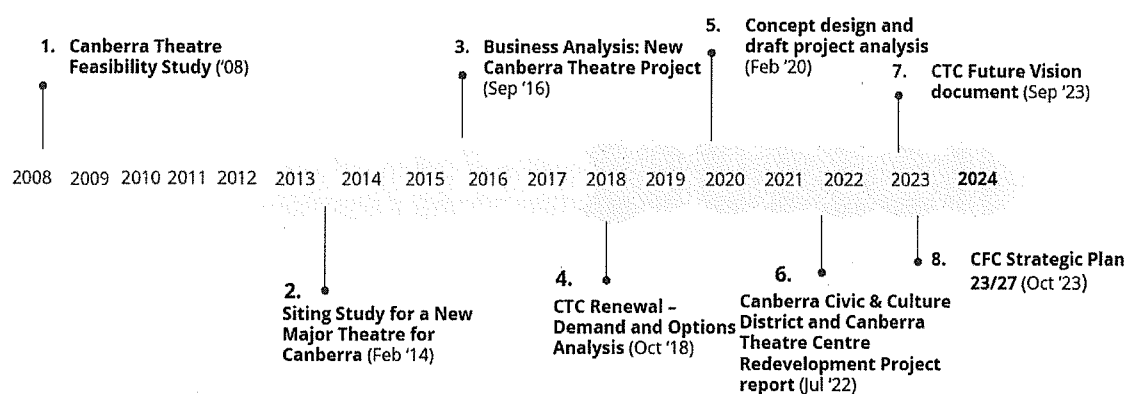
⁵ ACT Government (2021), ‘Canberra: Australia’s Arts Capital - a statement of ambition for the arts 2021-26’

2.3 Project Background

The feasibility, justification and refinement of strategic focus and scope options for the Project has been tested, developed and refined over a range of studies starting with the **2008 Canberra Theatre Feasibility Study**. This section provides an overview of the previous work to date on the Project.

Figure 2.3 below provides a summary of the key historic work and analysis, which informs the development of the Project and this Business Case.

Figure 2.3: Timeline of previous work



Source: Deloitte (2025)

Prior work on the Project examined the feasibility of a new theatre for Canberra, including site location, demand analysis, early design and options for development. Further detail on the key works is provided below.

1. The **2008 Canberra Theatre Feasibility Study** analysed a range of options and concluded that a new or redeveloped theatre with up to 2,000 seats would be feasible for the ACT.
2. The **2014 Siting Study for a New Major Theatre for Canberra** recommended the site to the north of The Playhouse and recommended that further investigation be undertaken for a new 2,000 seat theatre.
3. The **2016 preliminary Business Analysis** for a new 2,000 seat theatre or Lyric Theatre provided indicative demand analysis and high-level operational expense impacts.
4. The **2018 Demand and Options Analysis for a new Canberra Theatre Complex** shortlisted two Project options for further concept development.
5. **Concept design and draft project analysis** – Proof of concept designs and analysis were developed by ARM architects. Further analysis to progress to an investment decision was deferred, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
6. The **2022 Canberra Civic and Cultural District and Canberra Theatre Centre Redevelopment Project report** built on project analysis to date and provided combined consideration and estimated economic benefits for the CTC and CCCD redevelopment.
7. **The CFC's 2023-27 Strategic Plan** establishes the vision of building Australia's arts and culture capital and defines the values and goals to achieve its strategy.

- 8. The 2023 Vision for our Future**, endorsed by the CFC Board in 2023, outlines the design principles and strategic focus areas for the redevelopment of the CTC and its future operating model.

The concept design and project analysis for the Project was developed for the CFC in 2019. However, in early 2020 the ACT Government reprioritised its capital program due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in consideration of the redevelopment of CTC being put on hold.

Following the end of formal pandemic measures, the ACT's 2022-23 Budget provided \$28 million for the development of initial design, preparation for planning approvals, community consultation and a business case for the final design and delivery of the Project. In May 2023 an international design team led by Australian architects, Architectus, was appointed following an international tender process. The design work has provided an updated concept design, and the basis for a proposed budget and plan for delivery to be presented to Government in this Business Case.

2.3.1 Business Case Purpose

The primary purpose of this Business Case is to present the investment proposition for capital investment for Stage 1 of the Project, and an indicative endorsement of the concept design for Stage 2, ready for design and planning approvals.

This Business Case outlines three options for the redevelopment of the CTC. Given the refinement and analysis undertaken on this Project to date, the three options represent subtle scope variations on a developed and endorsed concept design, rather than a broad range of potential project scopes. The Business Case compares these three options with a base case that would still require significant investment in the existing facility to continue current operations.

This Business Case seeks approval and funding from the ACT Government on the recommended Project option and delivery model for Stage 1 of the Project.

This Business Case includes detailed whole of project analysis on:

- the need for investment;
- the costs and benefits of the Project, including future operations;
- key risks across the Project's lifecycle;
- budget funding requirements and implications for Stage 1 (and indicative for Stage 2);
- the engagement approach for stakeholders;
- the governance structure for the Project; and
- the Project's overall delivery timeline.

While the Project and this Business Case analysis addresses both the physical and operational transformation of the CTC, this Business Case only seeks funding for the capital delivery of Stage 1 of the Project, specifically the new Lyric Theatre and associated back-of-house facilities and interface with the existing complex. The CFC will submit a separate Operational Business Case, which includes the operational funding request for:

- project technical and operational support for the delivery of Stage one;
- CTC business disruption during construction;
- operational readiness in the lead up to opening of the new Lyric Theatre; and

- post completion operations and opening program.

2.4 Current State

The CTC is the premier performing arts venue for the ACT and is the first government-built performing arts centre in Australia.

Opened in 1965, when the ACT's population was only 85,000, the CTC was originally designed to cater for a city of 100,000 residents.⁶ Despite the incremental expansion of the CTC in subsequent years, development of the Centre has not kept pace with the significant growth and evolution of the city and broader capital region over the past 50 years, nor has the CTC kept pace with the more recent changing requirements of the performing arts sector.

The following subsections provide an overview of the CTC's geographical location, the capacity of its existing facilities, an audience and activity overview, and the separation of responsibilities for its current operations.

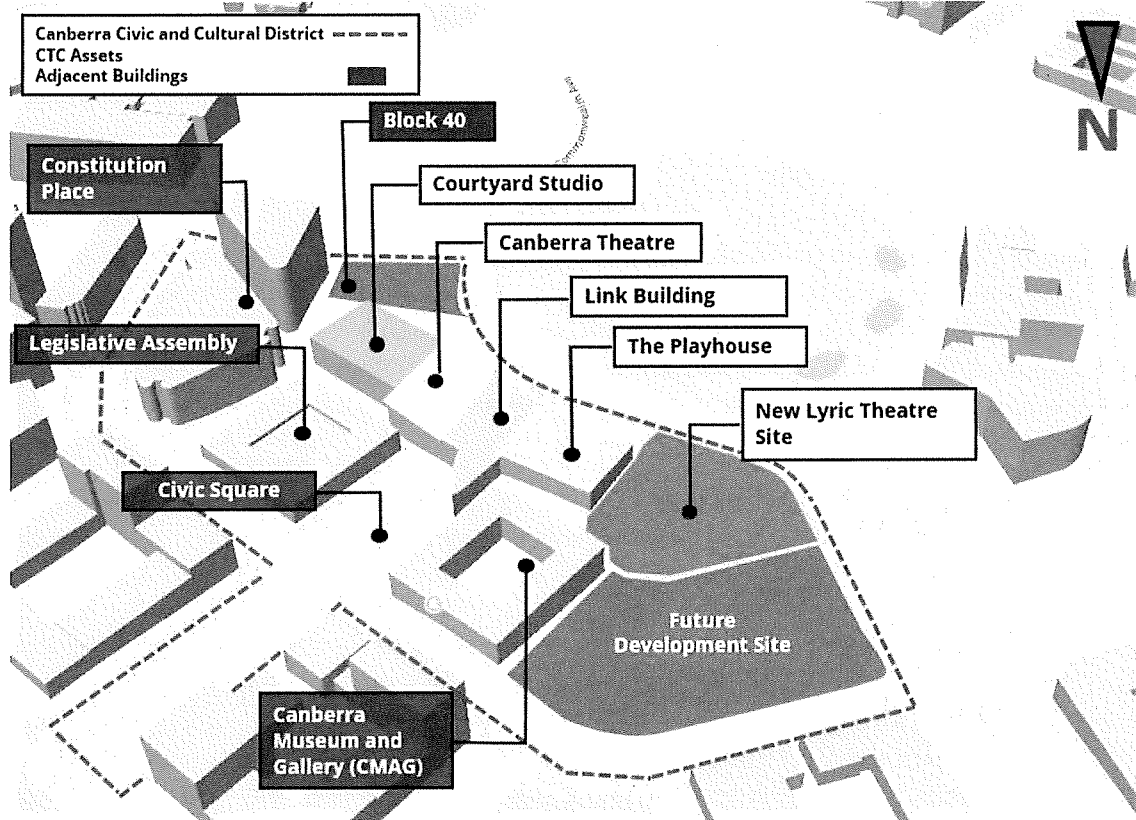
2.4.1 CTC Location

Part of Canberra's historical city centre and central business district, the CTC is located in the CCCD.⁷ Located immediately to the north-east of City Hill and bounded by Vernon Circle, London Circuit, Constitution Avenue and Northbourne Avenue, the CCCD is part of the broader City Hill Precinct, which is also a designated area under the National Capital Plan (NCP). Figure 2.4 shows the current layout of the CTC and its location within the City Hill Precinct and the CCCD.

⁶ ACT Government (2019), 'ACT Government Infrastructure Plan', https://www.treasury.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1432449/act-infrastructure-plan.pdf

⁷ Previously known as the Canberra Civic, Arts and Cultural Precinct (CCACP).

Figure 2.4: The CTC and CCCD



Source: ACT Government site diagram with label based on planning and designs

2.4.2 CTC Facilities

The CTC currently comprises three primary performance spaces – outlined in Table 22.11 below, and includes the Link building, which connects the Canberra Theatre and The Playhouse and provides the Centre’s foyer and food and beverage function areas and the Civic Library. The Link building is where the CTC’s reception and ticketing, bar and hospitality services are delivered and is a key space where guests meet, mingle and wait before and after shows.

Table 22.11: CTC performance spaces

Venue	Description
Canberra Theatre (1,239 seats, fixed)	Built in 1965, the Canberra Theatre hosts national and international touring productions such as musicals, dance and larger scale drama performances.
The Playhouse (614 seats, fixed)	Originally built in 1965 and rebuilt in 1998, The Playhouse is a venue for ‘spoken word’ and acoustic performances and mainly caters to smaller drama performances, comedy events, and intimate music/theatre productions.
Courtyard Studio (92 seats, modifiable)	Built in 1984, the studio was originally designed as a rehearsal space but has since been used to cater for smaller, more intimate performances. It is the CTC’s most versatile space as all seats can

be removed to provide a rehearsal and support space for the Canberra Theatre and The Playhouse.

2.4.3 Operations and management

Cultural Facilities Corporation

The CFC is a statutory corporation of the ACT Government which was established to oversee and manage the CTC, the Canberra Museum and Gallery (CMAG) – including the Nolan Collection, and the ACT Historic Places (ACTHP), as the ACT's key arts and cultural assets and facilities. The CFC's core functions are to seek greater artistic and economic contribution, through the management, development, presentation, co-ordination and promotion of cultural activities at designated locations and other places in the ACT, including the delivery of performing arts activities at the CTC.

In addition to providing strategic direction to, and oversight of the CTC, which operates as a key business area of the CFC, the CFC employs all staff and undertakes a range of corporate functions for the CTC.

Canberra Theatre Centre

The CTC is the Canberra region's premier performing arts centre, incorporating the Canberra Theatre, The Playhouse and the Courtyard Studio. There is a dedicated operating team located at the CTC who are responsible for day-to-day operations including all venue programming, technical production services, ticketing services, marketing and publicity services and food and beverage services for shows.

Facilities and maintenance

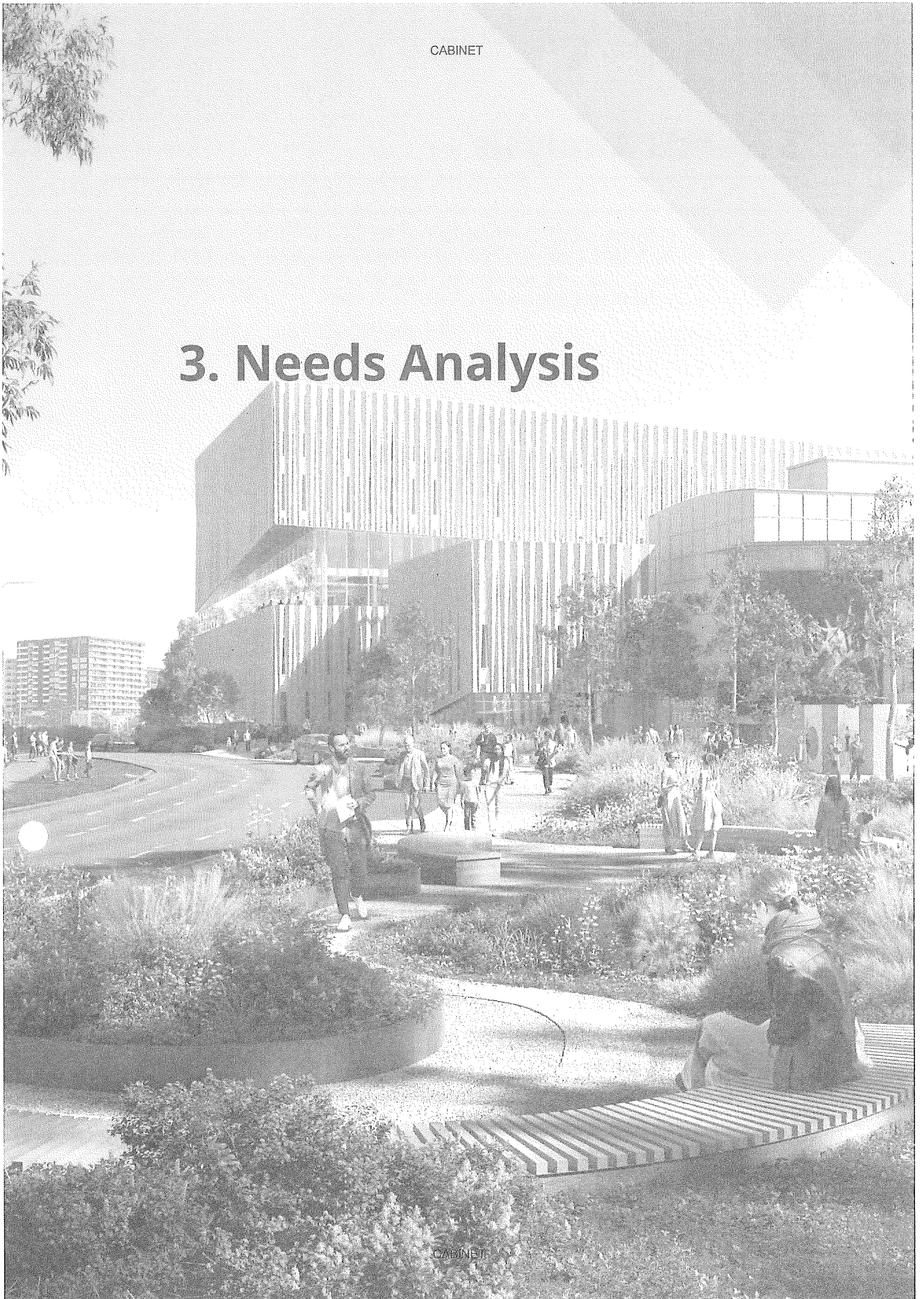
The CFC Facility Operations and Capital Works team currently manages the CTC facilities and contracts with various private sector parties for facilities management services (e.g., building maintenance, cleaning services, cleaning supplies and security). Table 2-2 below outlines the current CTC facilities management contracts/arrangements:

Table 2-2: Current CTC facilities management contracts/arrangements

Service	Contract / Arrangement
Cleaning Services	Contract with a private provider for cleaning services – purchased on demand and based on the CTC's schedules for upcoming shows and events.
Cleaning Supplies	Separate contract with a private provider for cleaning supplies and cleaning-related fixtures.
Security Services	Separate arrangements for perimeter security and for event security, both with private providers. Perimeter security provides night-time drive by checks. Event security is provided on an as-needed basis for events that require the presence of security personnel.
Building Maintenance	Several contracts with private providers for all planned and reactive maintenance services.

Source: ACT Government and CTC

3. Needs Analysis



3 Needs Analysis

This section provides the background and summary of the current state of the CTC and describes the rationale for investment in the redevelopment of the CTC. This section summarises the outcomes of the Investment Logic Workshop and provides further details about the current problems facing the CTC, the proposed strategic responses and the benefits expected from addressing these problems, including how these will be measured.

Key messages

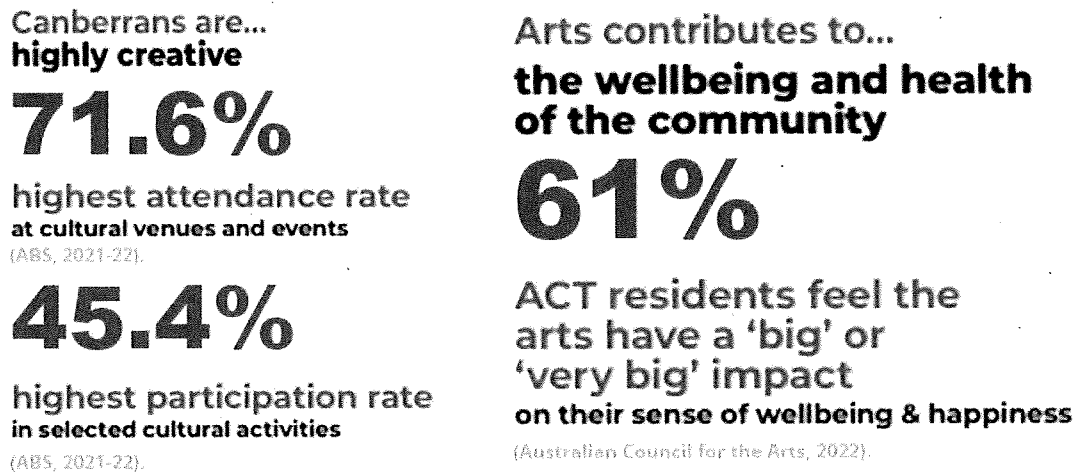
- The CTC currently faces several critical infrastructure and service delivery limitations that are already restricting its capacity to host diverse and high-quality live performances, attract and cater to diverse audiences and support further growth and opportunities for the arts and other complementary sectors.
- The ACT has historically had the highest engagement with arts and culture, consistently reporting the highest levels of attendance at cultural venues and events, as well as the highest cultural participation rate of any Australian jurisdiction - significantly higher than the national average⁸.
- The CTC's strategic position in the CCCD makes it a vital investment in shaping the city's cultural identity and igniting its night-time economy and realising its ambition to be recognised as Australia's arts capital.
- Failure to invest in the CTC will result in far-reaching impacts to Canberra, including fewer arts and cultural offerings, public engagement, sector development and employment opportunities, and reduced cultural tourism visitation, impacting hotels, airlines, hospitality businesses and the ability to attract quality performances compared to other cities with higher investment. Moreover, the ACT will continue to be by-passed by major national and international touring productions; this will impact the networks and skills development of artists, artworkers and staff as well as continued leakage of Canberra's audience to other cities.
- The current CTC is an aged facility with limited historic investment and does not meet contemporary standards. In the event of the 'do minimum' scenario, necessary upgrades and a backlog of deferred maintenance are required in the near future, including replacement of end-of-life theatre systems and upgrades to address compliance within existing facilities, including compliance upgrades for the Work Health & Safety (WHS) guidelines and the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA). This is costed in the 'do minimum' scenario in Section 5.1.
- These responses are expected to address existing gaps in facilities, provide opportunities for a more diverse range of performances and generate significant benefit for Canberra's cultural identity, local economy, sector sustainability and community wellbeing.

⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2023) 'Cultural and Creative Activities 2021-22'
<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/cultural-and-creative-activities/latest-release>

3.1 Problem (or opportunity) and strategic responses

The ACT consistently holds the highest engagement with arts and culture of any Australian jurisdiction, both in attendance and participation.⁹ Furthermore, ACT residents attribute the arts to having a 'big' or 'very big' impact on their sense of wellbeing and happiness.¹⁰

Figure 3.1: Importance of arts and culture to ACT residents



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2023) and Creative Australia (2023).

Between 2022 and 2023, the ACT recorded year-on-year growth in revenue by 11.1%, reaching \$36.7 million, despite a 2.7% decline in attendance. This growth underscores the resilience of certain sectors within the arts and cultural industry, particularly Circus and Physical Theatre, Theatre, and Children's/Family categories.

- In the Children's/Family category, the ACT recorded the third-highest year-on-year growth in both revenue (76.0%) and attendance (35.3%), driven by major performances such as Storytime Ballet: Cinderella, which was held at the CTC.
- In Theatre, the ACT achieved the second-highest year-on-year growth in revenue (89.0%), further demonstrating its capacity to attract audiences and foster engagement in a competitive sector.

As the premier performing arts centre for Canberra and the broader Canberra Region, the CTC is an integral part of Canberra's cultural, social and economic landscape, with a pivotal role in reflecting and shaping the city's cultural identity, economic vitality and well-being. The Centre's strategic position in the CCCD positions it not only as a key stage for performance, artistic and creative expression and storytelling, but also a beacon for diverse cultural and social engagement, dialogue, and a core component of the creative and night-time economy of the city.

⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2023) 'Cultural and Creative Activities 2021-22'

<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/cultural-and-creative-activities/latest-release>

This data represents the most up-to-date publicly available release, with ABS publishing updated results every five years.

¹⁰ ACT Government (2022), 'Canberra: Australia's Arts Capital – Arts, Culture and Creative Policy 2022–2026'

With the CTC's construction dating back to 1965, the CTC's dated infrastructure is currently unable to appropriately cater to the ACT's growing population, the arts, culture and creative sector's evolving needs and the modern expectations of cultural visitors.

An Investment Logic Mapping Workshop (ILW) with key stakeholders from across ACT Government, identified and articulated the key constraints impacting the CTC. The problems currently impacting the CTC (as drawn out in the ILW workshop) are addressed by the proposed Project solutions within this Business Case as shown in Table 3.1 (overleaf).

Table 3-1: ILW Problem statement alignment with the proposed Project Solution

Summarised Problem Statement	Drivers	Preferred Option Project Solution(s)
Absence of a critical mass of high quality, live performance in Canberra	The CTC's current configuration suffers from capacity and technical constraints. There is no venue of sufficient seating capacity, stage size, technical capability and back-of-house facilities that meet the requirements of notable national and international touring productions. Therefore, promoters do not consider Canberra for inclusion in the national touring circuit for major shows.	Lyric Theatre (Stage 1)
Canberra faces significant barriers in attracting a broader range of touring shows	Inflexible theatre design prevents the CTC from providing more diverse performance and activity offerings, limiting its audience development and attraction.	Adaption of Canberra Theatre to meet the technical requirements for notable national and international touring productions. (Stage 2)
Lack of clear and established pathways for local performing artists and organisations	There are limited affordable black box (flexible) theatre spaces with capacities of more than 200 seats in Canberra which are available to house local and emerging artists and support their work. Limited programs to support local talent, production development and production capability limit the CTC's capacity to support local sector development.	Lyric Creative hub and new rehearsal spaces with flexible use (Stage 1) New flexible black box venue with 300 seat capacity (Stage 2)
Unwelcoming, disconnected public spaces contribute to a poor level of activation across the District	The CTC's limited amenities and facilities do not promote the broader precinct-wide activation required to elevate the CCCD. The CTC's deficiency in dedicated function, foyer spaces, or other physical and conceptual spaces constrains its ability to host more frequent community events and pre- and post-show gatherings, a feature commonly found in major theatres nationwide.	Refurbishment of existing facilities, new back-of-house and enhanced hospitality offering (Stage 1 and 2)

The backlog and growing maintenance and asset compliance requirements and the need to respond to evolving performance requirements amplifies the need for the recommended Project solution to be implemented urgently. The arts, culture and creative sector has undergone transformational change, and its audience has fundamentally changed how they interact with live performances, with this cultural shift being further accelerated since the COVID-19 pandemic. As the arts, culture and creative sector and its audiences continue to evolve, so too must the CTC to cater to their needs.

Investment is required to respond to these opportunities, with the evolving technical requirements of the performing arts sector, and to appropriately cater for the significant recent and projected growth in population of the ACT and surrounds. Without immediate investment, the ACT risks continuing to lose its ability to attract high quality live performances, driving the local populations' strong traditional engagement with arts and culture to alternate offerings and locations interstate. This impediment to local access is expected to negatively impact the well-being of many in the community. Furthermore, the CTC risks being left behind by other capital cities that have suitable and recently developed centres or venues, and are currently delivering on a modern experience for their audiences and performers.

“The proposal to upgrade Canberra Theatre including by building a new state of the art theatre is an exciting opportunity for the ACT and the city of Canberra. The recently completed Decade of Renewal at the Sydney Opera House, largely funded by the NSW Government, demonstrates the benefit of investment in arts and cultural facilities. Our major venues are now future-ready, and artists and audiences are loving the upgraded and new facilities. The place is alive with wonder and possibility, hugely adding to the dynamism of the city.”

Louise Herron AM, CEO Sydney Opera House

The Project will generate significant benefit for Canberra's cultural identity, local economy, sector sustainability and community wellbeing. As part of the Investment Logic Workshop, key benefits expected to be achieved and their measures by addressing the Project's problems were identified in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3-2: Investment Logic Workshop benefits

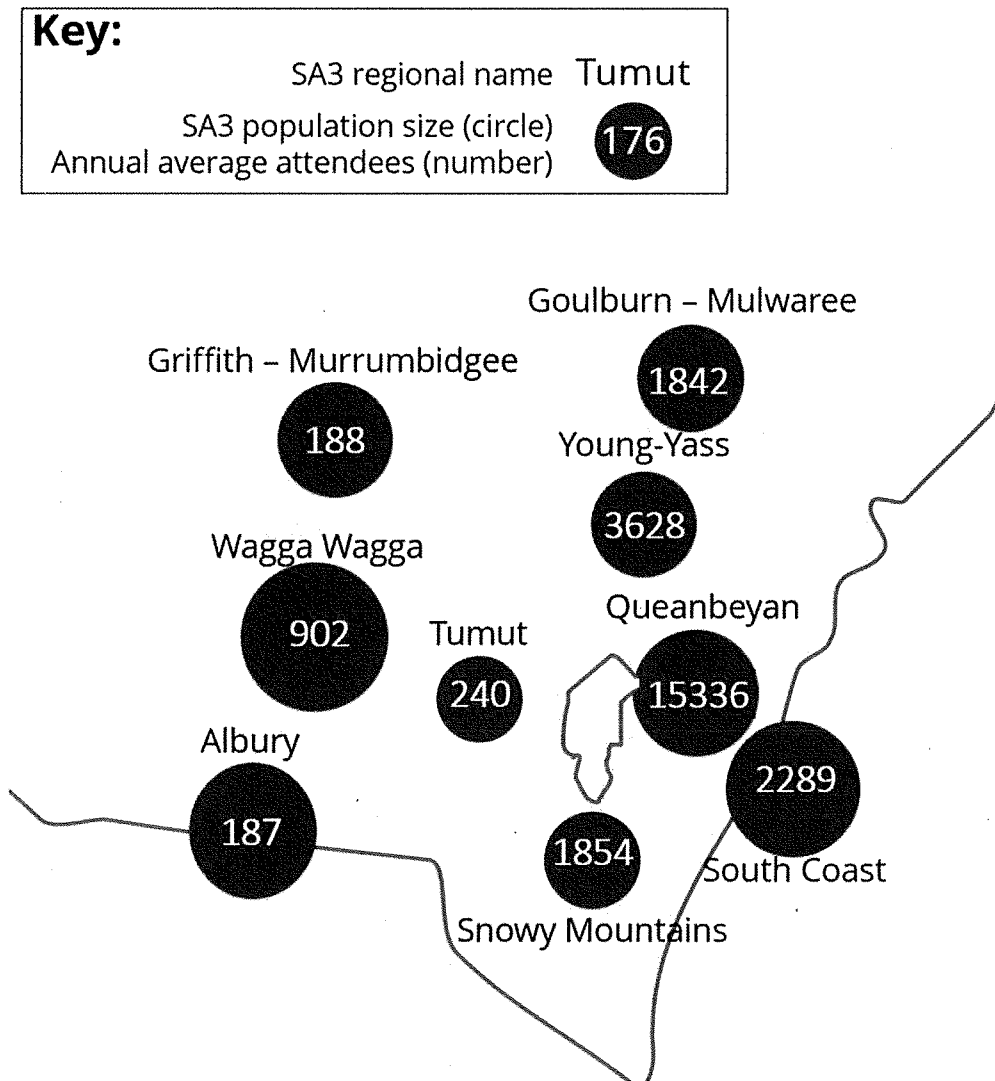
Benefit	Measure
Canberra realises its potential as a creative city of high-quality live performances	Increase in the number and diversity of genres in live performances Increase in total attendance
Canberra realises its potential as a destination for live performances	Increase the contribution of the live performance sector to the ACT's economy Increase activation of the District Increase in audience reach
Increased audience reach and satisfaction from impactful live performances	Increase in audience satisfaction

3.1.1 Audience and activity overview

Audience

The CTC caters to a regional catchment population of approximately one million people, with 472,800¹¹ residents in the ACT, and a broader NSW regional catchment population of 477,000.¹² This is in addition to other domestic as well as international visitors. Figure 3.2 provides an overview of the annual average attendees from the catchment area of the Theatre.

Figure 3.2: ACT and broader regional catchment area



Source: Deloitte (2025) utilising ABS census data and CTC patron statistics

¹¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2024) 'National, state and territory population - March 2024

¹² Australian Bureau of Statistics (2023) 'Statistical Level 3 data', Catchment determined as populations of regional cities in New South Wales that are relatively closer in proximity to Canberra than other capital cities.

The majority of the CTC’s visitation (over 75% historically¹³) comes from residents in both the ACT and the neighbouring NSW areas including Queanbeyan, Bungendore and Braidwood.

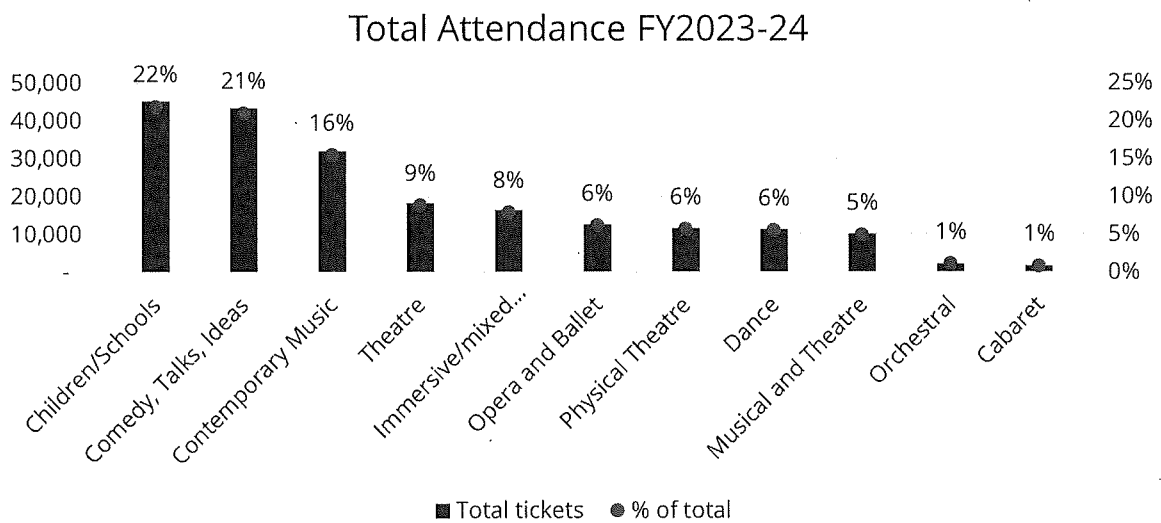
In 2023-24, 94% of CTC visitors were from the ACT and adjacent NSW towns, 4% were from elsewhere in NSW and 2% from elsewhere in Australia. Overall, the CTC attracted 37,100 visitors from out of town – primarily from NSW, who contributed an estimated \$19.4 million in expenditure to the local economy. With Canberra attracting 5.68 million visitors annually, there is a large opportunity to further increase the contribution of the CTC to the ACT’s cultural visitor market.

Performances and programming

Over the past nine years the CTC held an average 456 performances each year. In 2023-24 total performances soared to 789 demonstrating the continued rebound and growth in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. This significantly surpasses CTC’s pre-COVID peak of 558 performances in 2018-19 and up from a low of 261 performances in 2020-21. The 213,644 tickets sold in 2023-24 represents a return to pre-COVID-19 attendance levels, indicating rising demand for live performances.

Figure 3.3 identifies the CTC’s current performance genres: and includes a breakdown of tickets sold by genre in 2023-24.

3 Figure 3.3: CTC total attendance by genre in FY2023-24



Source: Deloitte (2024) utilising data from CTC

The CTC’s top four performing segments in 2023-24 were children/schools and comedy, talks and ideas, followed by contemporary music and theatre. These segments/genres align with its current venue capability.

Activities

Some of the CTC’s key activities in 2023-24 are listed below.

- **Delivering a diverse program of performances, including:**

¹³ Based on CTC historical ticketing data from 2015-16 to 2023-24.

- comedy performances – including John Cleese, Tom Gleeson and Ross Noble;
- contemporary music events – including Jessica Mauboy, Kate Miller-Heidke and Shannon Noll; and
- family programming – including The Wiggles, Possum Magic and A Christmas Carol.
- **Working closely with commercial presenters to attract national touring works of significant scale**, including Akram Khan's *The Jungle Book*, Bell Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and John Frost's *Chicago*.
- **Supporting local artists, companies and producers**, including:
 - supporting venue access through subsidies and sponsorships; and
 - supporting creative and performance development via the CTC New Works program.
- **Supporting junior development in the arts** via the CTC's ACT UP! Student fringe program.
- **Supporting First Nations programming** including through:
 - presentations, including Bangarra Dance Theatre's *Yuldea* and *Wakakirri*; and
 - the Emerging First Nations program, which aims to increase opportunities for emerging First Nations music performers, local and national, at the Theatre.
- **Community engagement and broader associated programming activations** including special meet and greet events for *Mystique* and *Beauty and the Beast*; and a community choir night for *Sing Australia*.
- **Collaboration with a wide range of national and local institutions including festivals**, supporting connectivity in the arts and culture sector and audience development such as *TEDx*, *Canberra Writers Festival* events, *Ausdance ACT* and *Canberra Comedy Festival* events, as well as *Sydney Comedy Festival* and *Melbourne International Comedy Festival* roadshows and showcases.

Case Study: CTC's first national co-production - *JULIA*

- In April 2023 the CTC partnered with the Sydney Theatre Company to co-produce the world-premiere season of Melbourne-based playwright Joanna Murray Smith's play, *Julia*, which played to sold-out houses in Canberra and Sydney.
- The play, which examined the life and career of Australia's first female Prime Minister, The Hon. Julia Gillard AC, and the social and political landscape leading to her now world-famous 'misogyny speech' in the Australian Parliament, demonstrated the CTC's ability to contribute to the development of significant national and impactful works which tell a uniquely Australian story as well as demonstrating the contribution of Australian women in politics, society and theatre, winning the Blake Beckett Trust Female Playwrights and Female Director's award.

Source: CFC 2022-23 Annual Report

3.1.2 CTC Vision

Further to the Project vision, the CTC Future Vision¹⁴ has been developed to inform design principles and strategic focus areas for the redevelopment of the CTC. The CFC commissioned

¹⁴ Claringbold Consultants (n.d.), 'Canberra Theatre Centre Future Vision'

Claringbold Consultants to develop the **CTC Vision for our Future**, to inform the design principles and strategic focus areas for the redevelopment of the CTC and its future operating model.

The CTC Vision for our Future encompasses each aspect of the CTC's development, from spatial and functional requirements through to business model, programming, audience development and integration. The vision would result in a Centre that is:

- **a destination** for visitors and the community, whether during the day or at night;
- **integral to Canberra's identity and ambition;**
- **a centre of creativity and connection** for all generations and cultures; and
- **accessible, diverse and vibrant** on stage, on site and online.

The Project provides a key pathway to achieving the Vision for our Future via:

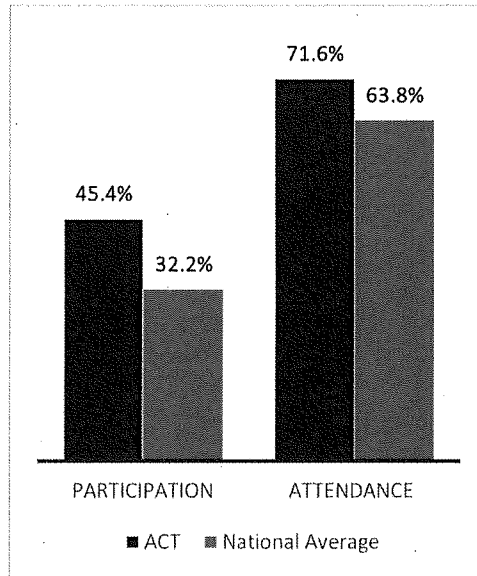
- comprehensive redevelopment and expansion of the existing CTC, including development of a large new theatre and associated hospitality, commercial and other performance-related facilities; and
- operational and programming transformation and growth of the CTC, with the redeveloped CTC facilitating an overall uplift of 157% in performances by FY36 for the Project Option.

3.1.3 Importance of arts to the Canberra region

The ACT is home to a vibrant arts community with a wide spectrum of activity including visual arts and crafts, music, literature, dance, theatre, film, digital arts and community arts. The many touring artists, performances by national organisations, festivals, musicals, comedies, theatre and stage shows hosted in Canberra attract visitors from across the region and country, as well as providing a home for the creation, performance and consumption of performing and creative arts in the region. This section highlights the importance of the arts sector to the ACT, the opportunity to grow its social and economic contribution and the significant opportunity cost faced by under-investment in its people, facilities and production capacity.

Illustrated in Figure 3.4, national data shows that residents of the Canberra region have the highest level of engagement with arts and culture in the country, consistently recording attendance and participation rates for arts and cultural events ahead of all other Australian jurisdictions.

Figure 3.4: ACT versus national average participation and attendance (2021- 22)



Source: Deloitte (2023) utilising Australian Bureau of Statistics (2023) released every four years

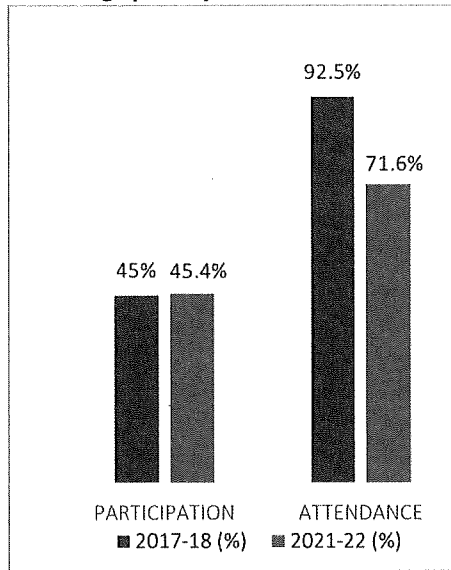
The most recent National Arts Participation Survey conducted in 2022 demonstrates that the creative and cultural outlets in the ACT play a significant role in creative development (59%), understanding of other people and cultures (65%), shaping and expressing Australian identity (51%), and supporting ACT residents' sense of wellbeing and happiness (61%). Attitudes towards the arts in the ACT demonstrate their ability to support a richer and more meaningful life (73%), important role in education (81%), and ability to support connection with others (61%).¹⁵

Results of a consumer survey undertaken for the Project found that 78% of ACT residents indicated that they had attended the CTC in the past 5 years and the 2022 National Arts Participation Survey found 99% of residents in the Canberra region engaged in creative and artistic activities and events. All this has combined to drive an all-time high of over \$33 million of ticket sales revenue in 2021-22 or approximately 400,000 ticket sales to events held in the ACT. Particularly strong growth has been experienced in contemporary music both as single performances and festivals.

The region's strong arts and culture foundation has however been impacted by the pandemic, with constraints on gatherings and national travel limiting the performances able to be shown at CTC and leading to audience disengagement. While participation post pandemic in the region has increased by a modest 0.5% (well below national levels), attendance levels have decreased by 20.9% over the four years since the start of COVID period.

¹⁵ Creative Australia (2023), 'Creating Our Future, Results of the National Arts Participation Survey, ACT highlights'

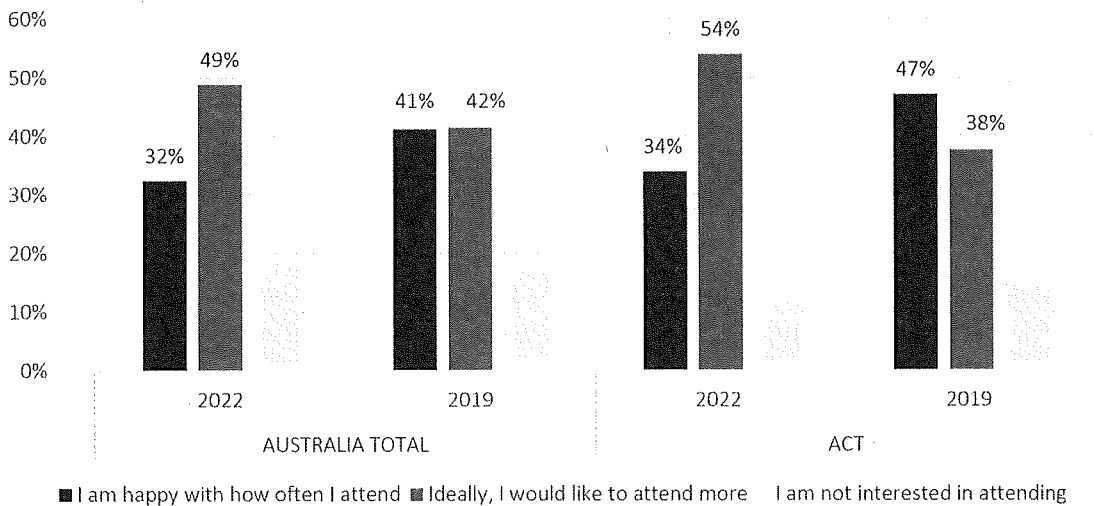
Figure 3.5: Average participation and attendance in the ACT (2017-18 and 2021-22)



Source: Deloitte (2023) utilising Australian Bureau of Statistics (2022) data released every five years

Over this time, the number of people travelling interstate to attend performances has started to increase, as they chase performers, performances and experiences beyond what the region can offer. Data shows that residents' happiness with ACT events has declined while their desire to attend more events has grown. This trend is illustrated in Figure 3.6 below.¹⁶

Figure 3.6: Happiness with creative/cultural/artistic event attendance – ACT responses versus overall national responses



Source: Deloitte, utilising ACT responses to the National Arts Participation Survey 2023

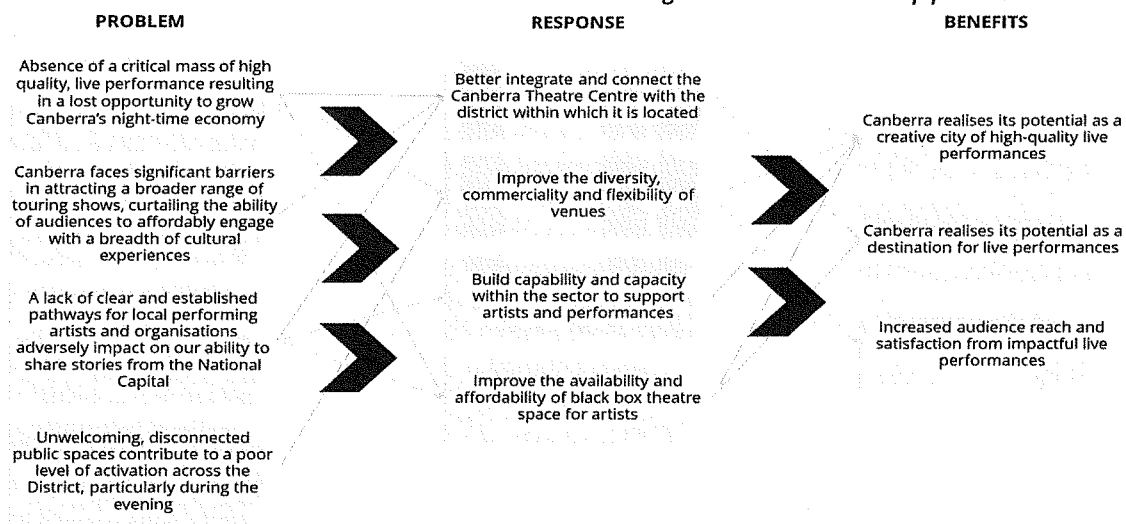
This data indicates that the latent demand of ACT and surrounding residents for performing arts content is strong, however being able to offer them the variety and quality of offerings and participation experiences that they can get from other centres appears to be a key challenge to be addressed.

¹⁶ Based on the findings of the 2022 National Arts Participation Survey, which surveyed a representative sample of ACT residents on their attendance and participation in or at arts and cultural events and venues.

3.2 Problems

An Investment ILM workshop was undertaken with key stakeholders from iCBR, the CFC, including the CTC, CRA, the CMTEDD with representatives from Treasury and artsACT. The resulting problems identified through the ILM process are set out in Figure 3.7 below.

Figure 3.7: 8ILM workshop problem statements



Source: Deloitte (2023) from Investment Logic Workshop

This section explores the key problems identified in the ILW, including relevant problem drivers and subsequent impacts. This section is followed by an overview of the proposed strategic responses and their benefits. The full ILM is provided in Appendix B.

3.2.1 Problem 1

Problem 1: Absence of a critical mass of high quality, live performances resulting in a lost opportunity to grow Canberra’s night-time economy.

The 2024 report on Australia’s Night-Time Economy 2024 identified that while Canberra’s strong hospitality sector plays an outsized role in its night-time economy, its entertainment sector is comparatively weaker with a smaller proportion and growth of establishments (24%) compared to the national rates (30%).

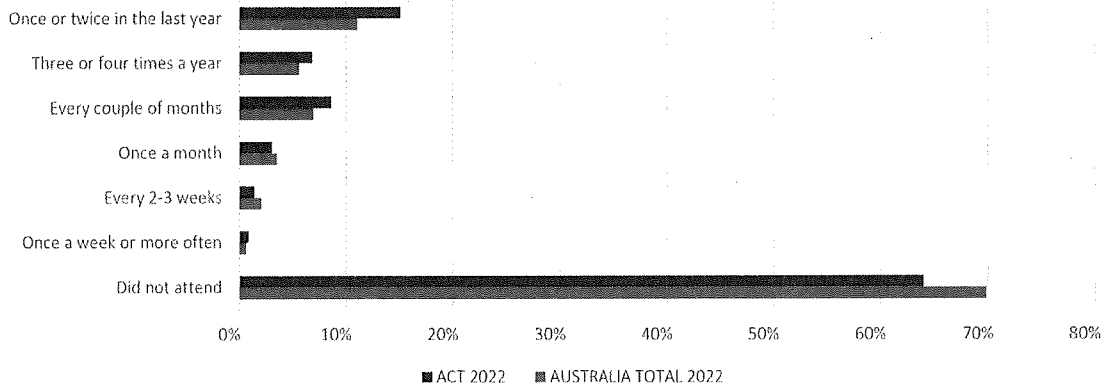
In particular, ongoing weakness in the performing arts sector is a key concern, with the closure of a number of local live music venues in recent years,¹⁷ at a time when other major Australian cities have experienced strong leisure and entertainment sector growth, much of it underpinned by strong investment in the Creative and Performing Arts sector.¹⁸ Whilst recent updates to liquor licence regulations from 2024 have sparked a boost in Food and Drink sub-sectors, there continues to be a lost opportunity to further support the night-time economy with more and high quality live performances.

¹⁷ Riotact (2019), 'The plummet of music venues in Canberra.', <https://the-riotact.com/the-plummet-of-music-venues-in-canberra/334335>

¹⁸ The 2021-22 Measuring the Australian Night Time Economy report identified Adelaide, Brisbane and Newcastle in particular as cities with strong investment in arts and culture, which recorded strong sector growth in 2021-22.

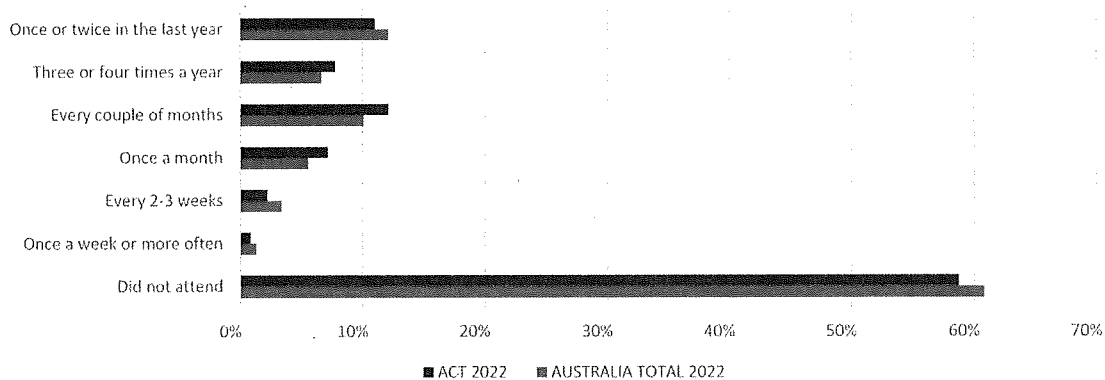
Supporting this, survey responses from ACT residents indicate less frequent attendance at theatre and music events in particular, suggesting that ACT residents have fewer opportunities to attend such events compared to residents of other jurisdictions due to undersupply. This is displayed in Figure 3.99 and Figure 3.99 below:

Figure 3.8: Theatre event attendance behaviour from ACT residents



Source: Deloitte, based on ACT response to the National Arts Participation Survey 2023

Figure 3.99: Music event attendance behaviour from ACT residents

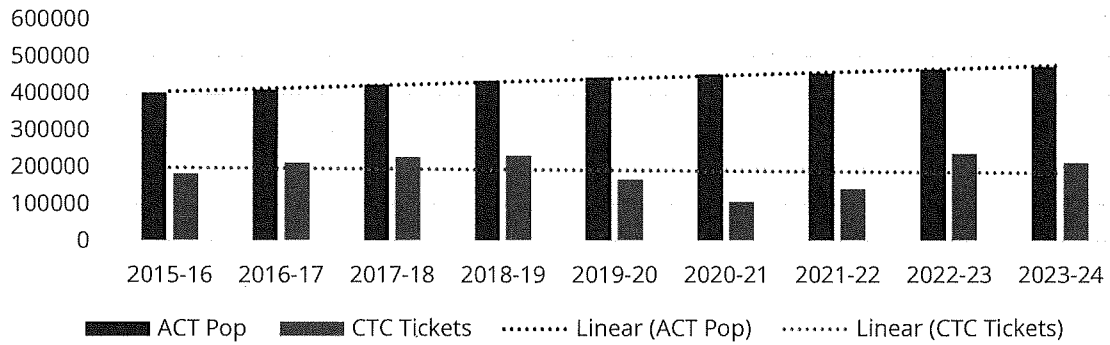


Source: Deloitte, based on ACT response to the National Arts Participation Survey 2023

Similarly, community feedback in 2023 on the update to the 2014 city plan highlighted strong demand for more live entertainment options in the city centre – particularly live music performances, and a thriving night-time economy. This reflects current unmet demand for more quality live performances in the city and the critical role of the performing arts as a key driver of cultural, social and economic vitality.

ACT population growth in the past eight years has seen positive growth, however, the CTC ticket sales against ACT’s population growth demonstrates a stagnation in attendance. Whilst there was a sharp increase in attendance from 2020-21 to 2022-23 as part of COVID-19 recovery, the reduced attendance in 2023-24 reflects a return to ‘business as usual’ operations where attendance at the CTC is not growing in line with ACT population growth. This is summarised in Figure 3.9:10 below:

Figure 3.9:10 ACT population growth vs CTC sales



Source: Deloitte (2025) utilising ABS and CTC data

Inadequate high quality live performances within the CCCD’s night-time activity

The CCCD is challenged by low levels of public activity throughout the week, but particularly at night and there is little public amenity outside of the CTC.

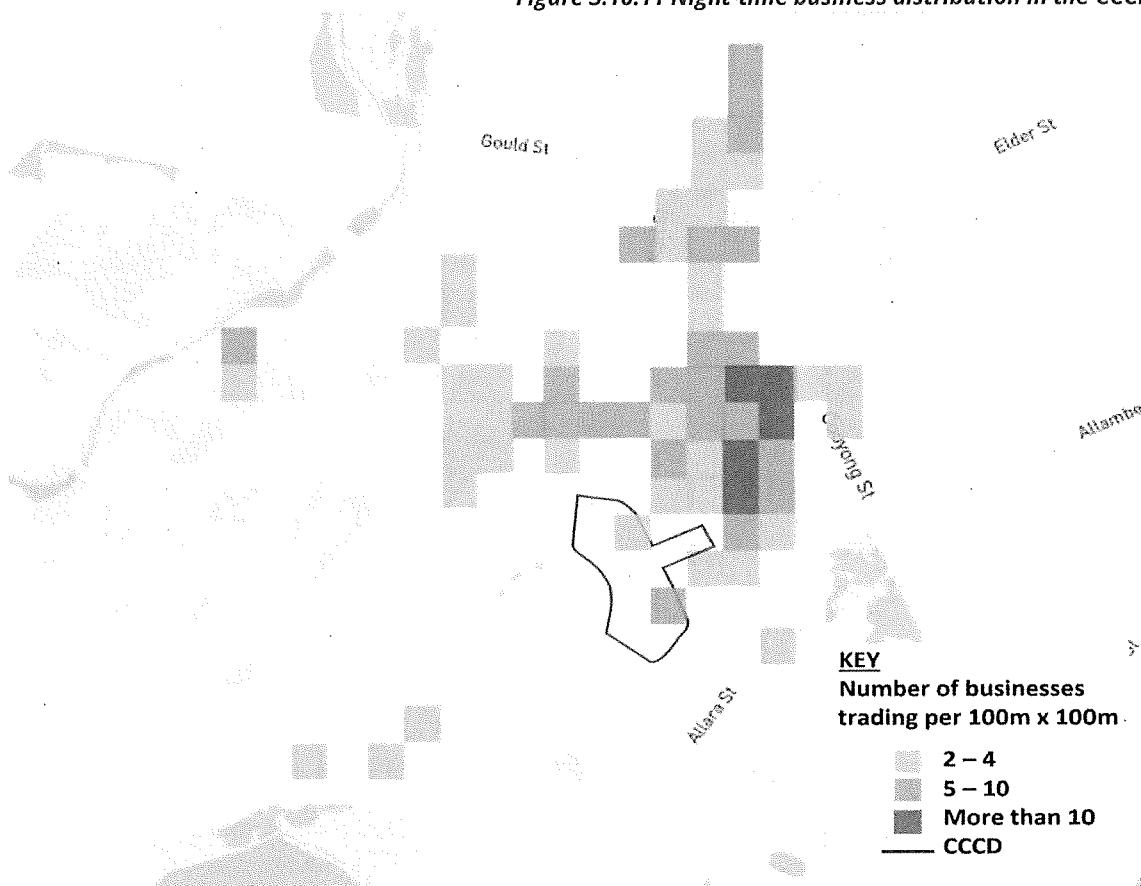
Highlighting this, analysis of Canberra’s night-time economy indicates that the CCCD has a relatively weak zone of night-time economy distribution, as shown in Figure 3.15. Specific analysis of the composition and distribution of key businesses which inform the CCCD’s night-time economy¹⁹ indicates that, apart from the CTC and a few hospitality businesses there is a distinct scarcity of core night-time economy businesses centred around and catering to the performing arts – namely smaller live entertainment venues, restaurants, bars and hotels.

In contrast, the area to the north-east of the CCCD demonstrates much stronger night-time economy distribution and activity, which coincides with a higher distribution of restaurants and bars, a notable few of which specialise in quality live music entertainment and support significant local patronage.

This contrast in activity and distribution is indicative of a lack of quality live performances to underpin a vibrant night-time economy in the CCCD, and further reflects a lack of diverse and accessible live performances to attract and engage a broader cross section of the community.

The concentration of businesses open at night is displayed in Figure 3.10:11 below:

¹⁹ Namely entertainment and hospitality establishments, followed by accommodation and retail businesses as non-core elements.

Figure 3.10:11 Night-time business distribution in the CCCD

Source: Deloitte utilising MapBox (2025); Ingenium Research (2023) Measuring the Australian Night Time Economy 2024.

Impact

The CTC's current limitations thus have a ripple effect; they not only could impact the diversity of performances and audience engagement, but they also will likely limit the venue's potential as a community hub and a catalyst for broader economic activity within the CCCD and ACT. Failure to address these CTC and CCCD problems would likely result in the impacts listed below.

- **Impact on Tourist Attraction** – the absence of compelling live performances at the CTC will deter tourists (domestic and international) and local residents from engaging in evening activities at the CCCD and the City more broadly. Visitors often seek vibrant cultural experiences, and a lack of such performances can significantly reduce the appeal of the city as a tourist destination. Out of the 5.68 million tourists that the ACT attracts annually, only 32,100 or 0.06% attended a performance at the CTC in 2022-23.
- **Diminished Cultural Richness** – a decline in volume and quality live performances will likely lead to a lack of diverse cultural experiences, impacting the city's overall cultural richness. This absence will deter tourists who seek dynamic and engaging cultural activities, leading to a decrease in tourism revenue.
- **Impact on Local Businesses** – a decrease in live performances could adversely impact the night-time economy as restaurants, bars, and other local businesses depend on the foot traffic generated by cultural events at the CTC. Conversely, increases in events will influence higher demand of local ancillary business (e.g., restaurants, bars and hotels) to support workers while they visit.

- **Employment Opportunities** – a reduction in customers due to the absence of cultural activities could lead to fewer employment opportunities for individuals in the hospitality, arts and entertainment sectors. There are indicators to suggest that this is already occurring with the ACT's nighttime economy jobs reducing by 7% in 2022.²⁰
- **Limited Entertainment Options** – a scarcity of entertainment options due to a lack of high-quality live performances may affect the cultural and social development of the city. Canberra's appeal as a vibrant and culturally rich destination will falter, as the city's reputation and attractiveness for residents and potential visitors are closely linked to its cultural offerings.

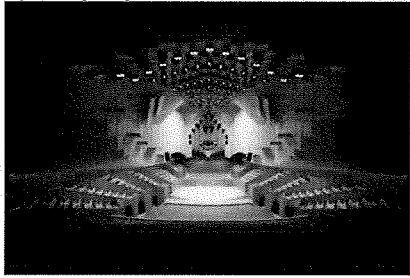
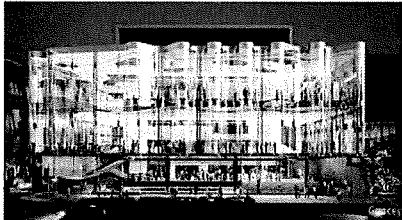
3.2.2 Problem 2

Problem 2: Canberra faces significant barriers in attracting a broader range of touring shows, curtailing the ability of audiences to affordably engage with a breadth of cultural experiences.

Despite being Canberra's premier performing arts theatre venue, the CTC is unable to attract the same volume and diversity of touring shows compared to theatres in major cities and touring locations in Australia. It is restricted by its capacity, logistical and technical constraints which make it not commercially viable for major productions to come to Canberra, and promoters no longer consider Canberra for major shows or for inclusion in the national touring circuit.

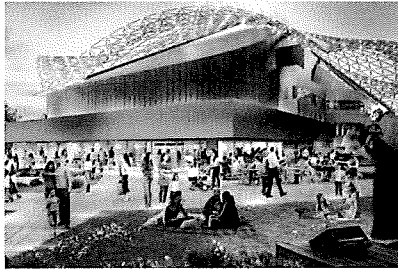
Whilst other government-built performing arts centres have experienced significant investment to enhance their performance capacities and facilities, the CTC has not experienced the same level of upgrades, with no major investment in the main Canberra Theatre in almost 40 years.

Table 3-3:3 Major national performing arts centre investments

Venue	Year	Construction Contract*	Description
Sydney Opera House 	2017 – 2020	\$221 million	Renewal of 1,507 seat opera theatre Renovation of 2,500 seat concert hall
Queensland Performing Arts Centre 	2019	\$175 million	New 1,500 seat theatre

²⁰ Based on Australian Bureau of Statistics CABEE 2017-2022 dataset

Melbourne Arts Precinct



2021

\$241 million
(\$1.7 billion
total for the
precinct)

Key theatre
improvements to
accessibility features,
acoustics, back-of-
house facilities, and
new rehearsal
studios

Source: IbisWorld (2023.) R9003 Performing Arts Venues in Australia Industry Report; QPAC Queensland performing centre (n.d) 'Building a new state of the art theatre for Queensland'.

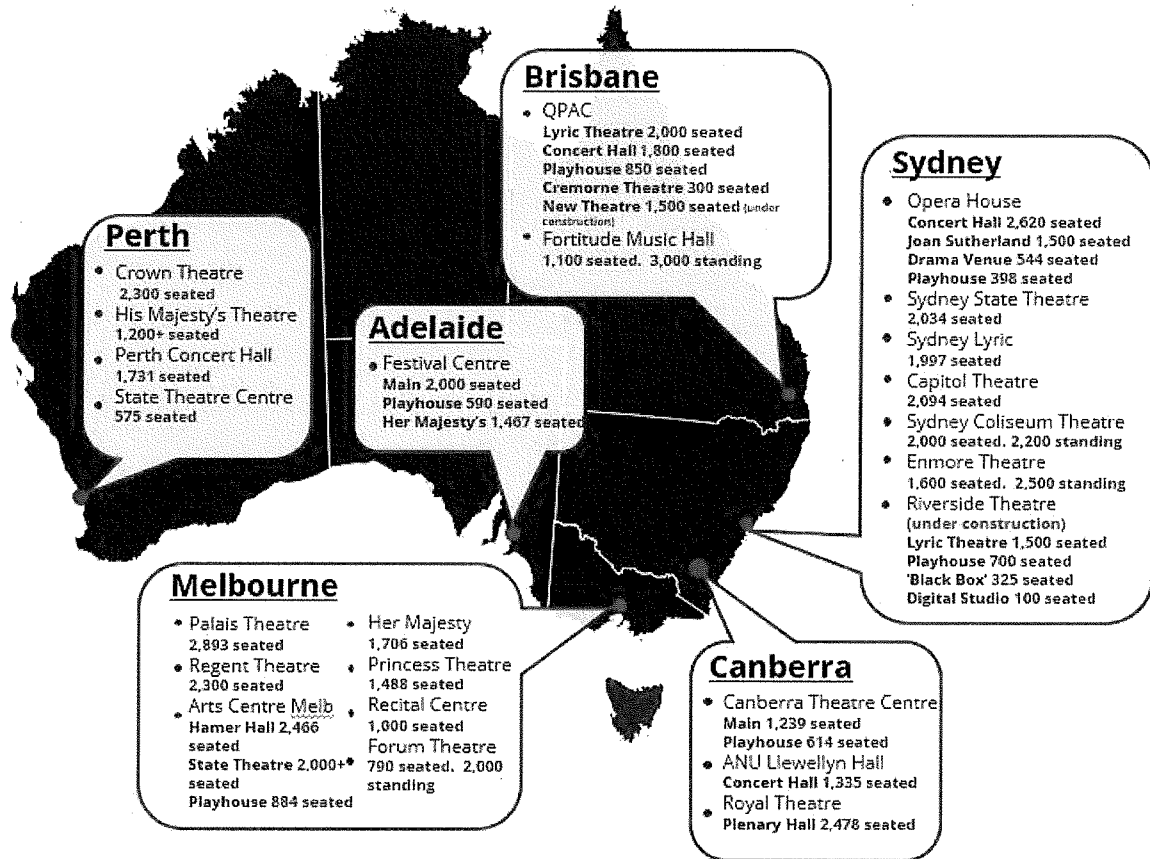
* Note above costs are construction costs, not total project costs.

This historical lack of investment at the CTC has led to significant barriers in attracting a broader range of touring shows which are detailed below.

Seating capacity constraints

The current capacity of Canberra's main theatre of 1,239 seats is significantly smaller than large theatres in other capital cities across Australia, which have one or more theatres with capacity of around 2,000 seats, with additional 1,500 to 2,000 seat theatres currently under construction. Notably, Canberra does have the Royal Theatre with 2,478 seats, located at the National Convention Centre. The Royal Theatre, however, is a standard Plenary Hall, without any a full-sized stag, theatre rigging to hang curtains or sets, or appropriately sized back-of-house facilities for musical theatre, opera, ballet and other major shows currently not coming to Canberra. The venue has limited availability to be utilised as a major performing arts venue with its primary purpose to support conventions. The Llewellyn Hall at Australian National University suffers similar constraints, being designed as a concert hall. The distribution of major theatre venues across Australia is displayed in Figure 3.11:12 below:

Figure 3.11:12 Major Performing Arts venues across capital cities of Australia



As a result, the CTC is experiencing significant barriers. This is supported by the findings from sector consultation²¹ conducted, with the key feedback summarised below.

- Bringing major national and international touring productions to Canberra is currently unviable, as day-to-day operating costs are high, and constrained theatre capacity requires longer runs/seasons.
- A theatre with 2,000 seats would reduce required run/season time to generate revenue, thereby increasing viability opening up the Canberra market up to more major national and international touring productions.
- A suitable 2,000 seat theatre in Canberra would be an important link in tour dates around Australia and would improve overall viability of nation-wide touring shows.

Technical performance constraints

Productions are becoming larger, more complex, and more technically demanding than the CTC can support. The CTC has numerous technical and design constraints which limit the ability of its primary theatre – the Canberra Theatre, to host contemporary productions with greater operational complexities such as larger set elements, moving objects and “flying” objects and

²¹ Conducted by KPMG in 2019 for the early CTR project analysis.

performers, as well as access issues which add to the operational costs of productions. Key constraints are summarised in Table 3-4:4 below.

Table 3-4:4 Current Canberra Theatre constraints

Constraint	Description
Technical Performance constraints	<p>Stage Floor Area</p> <p>The stage floor area in the Canberra Theatre is too small to accommodate the personnel, offstage storage and substantive set changes required by today's major productions.</p>
	<p>Proscenium Arch and Fly Tower</p> <p>The height of both the proscenium arch and the fly tower are both significantly lower than current contemporary standards.</p> <p>The current proscenium arch height is 5.9 metres whereas contemporary theatres now have proscenium arch at 9.0 metres, limiting size and lifting capacity for stage scenery that can fit and visibility to the audience of the full production.</p>
	<p>Current fly tower height is 14.0 metres whereas other theatres have a fly tower of 24.0 metres, based on the lower proscenium arch.</p> <p>The depth of the fly tower also restricts the number of batten lines that can be used for productions. The manual fly system in the fly tower needs replacing as it is end of life.</p>
<p>Orchestra Pit</p> <p>The orchestra pit is 76 square metres and can accommodate 45 musicians – approximately 20% smaller than sector standards of at least 90 square metres and is often too small to cater for musical theatre, opera and ballet orchestras. The sector standard generally allows for 80 musicians within the orchestra pit.</p>	
Auditorium	<p>The venue has inadequate seating capacity for major productions to be commercially viable.</p> <p>The auditorium's interior is dated with insufficient services such as toilets and food and beverage offerings and does not meet modern standards of accessibility. Heritage listed aspects also pose greater challenges to update in a way that is sympathetic to the original design.</p>
Loading Docks	<p>The Canberra Theatre lacks sufficient dedicated loading facilities and is situated on a laneway that is currently accessible by the public (Theatre Lane), adding complexity to the management of load-in and load-out situations. The dock is not covered or secure and there is inadequate space to cater for bump ins of large shows and storage of sets, road cases, lighting and sound equipment.</p> <p>Loading is completed at street level rather than stage level, requiring the use of further equipment such as forklifts plus a high degree of manual handling and requirement for people to mix with vehicles, and heavy equipment.</p>
Back of House	<p>Back of House</p> <p>The Centre's back-of-house design does not meet contemporary standards. For example:</p>

- Dressing rooms are insufficient in number, small and lack adequate amenities such as dedicated bathrooms.
- Size of communal areas such as green rooms does not meet contemporary standards.
- Access to back-of-house areas, particularly during large productions is very limited.
- There is inadequate back-of-house space for storage of equipment, sets and costumes.

Rehearsal Space

The Courtyard Studio is the only current rehearsal space at the CTC and is too small in floor area and height to support major touring and theatre productions.

Source: Schuler Shook – Canberra Theatre Centre Existing Conditions Report June 2019

Inflexible venue design

The Canberra Theatre's current fixed seating and traditional theatre design restricts its flexibility and use for contemporary and interactive performances. In contrast flexible theatre venues with flat floor and adaptable/retractable seating enable venues to be used for popular music events such as standing concerts, large sit-down catered events, cabaret, comedy and other special events that are not suitable for traditionally styled theatre spaces.²²

Flexible flat-floor venues of this type in other cities include:

- the Enmore Theatre in Sydney – estimated 1,600 seated capacity and circa 2,500 standing capacity;²³
- the Forum Theatre in Melbourne – 790 seated capacity and 2,000 standing capacity;²⁴ and
- the Fortitude Music Hall in Brisbane – 1,100 seated capacity and 3,000 standing capacity.²⁵

These venues are centrally located within their cities, and regularly feature an array of live music, comedy shows and other special events, with up to 4-5 shows/events per week. Promoters have also noted that there is an increase in demand for flexible venues, and the Enmore, Forum and Fortitude are all seeing significant growth in the number of live music shows they are hosting.²⁶

Limited performance venue diversity

The CTC's primary focus on theatre-based performances and its limited theatre venue restricts the Centre's ability to offer a wider array of live performances that cater to broader audience interests and audience perceptions regarding the Theatre's ability to cater to their interests.

In comparison, the Queensland Performing Arts Centre on Southbank Brisbane successfully demonstrates the benefits of evolving as a multi-venue complex. Its diverse array of flexible theatres and performance spaces — accommodating everything from major performances to cabaret and business functions — establishes it as the cultural and entertainment nexus of its community.

²² Randall Arts Management (2018), 'Canberra Theatre Centre Renewal – Demand and Options Analysis'

²³ Various Sources. Outline desktop research of the Enmore Theatre. Conducted November 2019.

²⁴ Forum Melbourne (2023), 'Forum Melbourne', <https://forummelbourne.com.au/>

²⁵ The Fortitude Music Hall (2023), 'The Fortitude Music Hall', <https://thefortitude.com.au/>

²⁶ Canberra Theatre Centre Business Case – Demand and Consultation Analysis Report (2019)

Impact

A lack of investment to address these constraints has already resulted in a multitude of productions of various genres declining the CTC’s invitation to perform at the CTC due to capacity constraints, lack of venue availability or lack of appropriate format as shown in Table 3-5:5 below.

Table 3-5:5 Shows not accommodated at CTC

Due to Venue Unavailability	Due to Capacity Constraints / Lack of Appropriate Venue
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Russell Howard • Urzilla Carlson • Tim Minchin • Dawn French • Julia Morris • Sandy Toksvig • Joe Lycett • Sarah Millican • Bob Geldof • Bill Bailey • Gladys Knight • Nick Cave • Human Nature • Rob Beckett • Rolling Stones Revue • Romesh Ranganathan • ARC presents Led Zeppelin IV • Richard Marx • multiple other events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phantom of the Opera • Wicked • Lion King • Hamilton • Opera Australia – multiple main stage productions • The Australian Ballet – multiple main stage productions • Circus/spectaculars - multiple • Sweeney Todd • Moulin Rouge • Tina • 42nd Street • Charlie and the Chocolate Factory • Kinky Boots • Miss Saigon • Mary Poppins • Frozen • Jack & Michael Whitehall • Tyler Childers • Jim Jeffries • Stephen Fry • Russell Howard • Most large scale Australian ballet works • Annie the Musical • Cats • Jesus Christ Superstar

Source: CTC (2024)

The total annual impact of these lost opportunities equates to over \$20 million of economic activity to the ACT based on the current performing capacities of the CTC. ²⁷ Moreover, the potential 164,200 ticket sales of the above shows coupled with merchandise royalties, food and beverage sales would increase revenues by up to \$17.8 million.²⁸

Continued lack of investment will result in Canberra being continuously excluded from the national touring circuit, with the CTC constrained as a regional performance centre, resulting in the likely impacts listed below.

²⁷ KPMG (2022), ‘Canberra Civic & Cultural District and Canberra Theatre Centre Redevelopment Project’

²⁸ Based on \$78.09 spent per person on live performance events sourced from Live Performance Australia 2023 Ticket and Attendance and Revenue Report.

- **Reduced touring, revenue and exposure opportunities for productions** – with limited touring, CTC faces challenges in reaching and attracting new audiences, resulting in decreased revenue from ticket sales, venue hire, merchandise and other associated income streams. The lack of exposure to diverse audiences will impact CTC's growth, recognition of productions and brand, which will detriment its long-term success and sustainability.
- **A lower volume and diversity of arts and cultural experiences for locals and visitors** – locals and visitors in the area have fewer options and less variety when it comes to arts and cultural experiences. This reduction might lead to a decline in cultural vibrancy and a diminished appeal for the region, affecting tourism and overall local engagement.
- **'Leakage' of local patrons to other major cities** – the absence of certain productions in the local area might drive local audiences to other cities in search of diverse cultural experiences, resulting in a loss of local spending in the community. This outflow of audiences to other areas incurs additional costs such as travel, accommodation, and potentially higher ticket prices in other cities, which could deter some patrons from attending such events altogether.
- **Reduced exposure, development and support for the local arts sector** – a lack of touring opportunities limits exposure for local artists and creatives to showcase their work in different cities. This limitation hampers their growth and potential success. Reduced exposure and development opportunities can negatively impact the local arts and creative sector's capacity for innovation and economic growth. This can also lead to a decrease in support, leveraged partnerships, attraction of sponsorship, export of work and collaboration opportunities for local artists.
- **Reduced business opportunities for CCCD and its night-time economy** – reduced arts activities may lead to a decrease in business opportunities in the CCCD, affecting the local night-time economy.

3.2.3 Problem 3

Problem 3: A lack of clear and established pathways for local performing artists and organisations adversely impact on our ability to tell stories from the National Capital

To be recognised as Australia's arts capital, the *Canberra: Australia's Arts Capital – a Statement of ambition for the arts 2021-26* has outlined three key strategies, listed below.

- **CREATE** amazing art and culture – everywhere, at any time, for everyone
- **DEVELOP** arts, cultural and creative sector, practice, and facilities – supporting creation and culture at all levels, via any path
- **PROMOTE** our arts and culture – to attract artists and creators, arts workers, visitors and investments.

Investment is urgently needed to realise this ambition and to address the following factors which are currently impeding the ACT's arts, culture and broader creative sector workforce, including:

- access limitations with respect to suitably sized and equipped performing arts venues for the local community; and

- limitations in the number and scale of local performances developed and held in Canberra, with Canberra being a net importer of major productions from touring companies.

These critical factors limit Canberra's ability to create amazing art and culture that develop and present stories from the National Capital, and in particular develop and present works of national significance on a similar scale to other major cities, resulting in leakage of local arts and creative talent to pursue career development opportunities elsewhere.

High access costs and venues

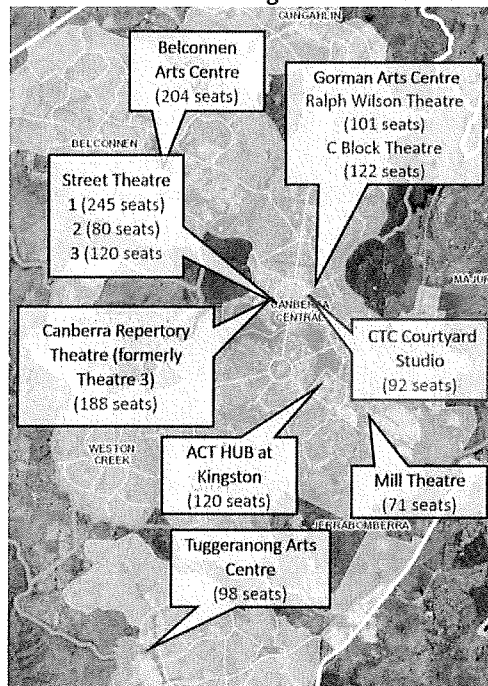
The ACT's performing arts companies are dominated by small, independent, amateur groups. Their ambition, expertise and financial capacity to access the CTC venues and stage a program of scaled performances is limited. This subsequently impacts on the pathways available for people to follow to explore their interests, develop their skills and create a career from the arts in the ACT. Creating spaces that offer best practice facilities and equipment, are accessible for foundational community organisations to access and use and cater to a diverse range of performing styles is critical for the growth of the sector in the region and development of local talent to work in and inspire the next generation of creative endeavours. A more attractive and financially sustainable CTC increases its capacity to support local groups to perform at a CTC venue, helping to develop the next generation of front and back-of-house performing arts workers.

Whilst the ACT Government has made significant investment in a number of smaller theatres over recent years, as identified in Figure 3.17, further investment is needed to address issues commonly raised by the local performing arts groups as outlined below.

- **Limited access to the CTC** – while The Playhouse and Canberra Theatre are appropriate for the purposes of local groups, there is limited access to these venues as they currently cater towards larger productions which can pay the full commercial venue hire rate. Due to requirements for the bump-in and bump-out of productions, rehearsal days and maintenance days, the maximum number of performances that can be held in the Canberra Theatre is around 200 per annum, and therefore is operating close to capacity. As a result, a number of events that require a large theatre venue are often unable to be accommodated at the CTC and there is currently little capacity for any additional performances within the theatre spaces.
- **Limited supply of larger (circa 300 seat) black box type theatres** – there is a currently a limited number of larger format studio theatre venues across Canberra with the flexibility to configure the space and the audience size depending on community need and support the local professional arts sector. The Courtyard Studio currently seats 92 patrons and is not technically fit for purpose due to small floor area and height restrictions, to host the diversity of programming intended for the redeveloped CTC. The space was originally intended as a rehearsal space and has now become a core part of CTC's venue offerings; however, it is too small to be commercially viable for the local professional arts sector.

Figure 3 Local ACT small theatre capacities:

Figure 3.12: Black box style and flexible venues in ACT



Source: Deloitte (2023)

The CTC plays a crucial role in nurturing and supporting the ACT's artistic, culture and creative sector, providing it with the necessary platforms, resources and exposure. Failure to provide this investment and support will critically impact the local sector and will result in the key impacts detailed below.

- **Building Cultural Identity** – without adequate venues and pathways, local artists do not have the necessary exposure and recognition which impedes the evolution of a distinct Canberra cultural identity, impacting the city's artistic legacy and representation.
- **Attraction to Established Art Scenes** – in the absence of suitable venues, resources, training, and employment, local emerging artists seek opportunities in cities with more established art scenes and better infrastructure, resulting in a talent drain from Canberra to these locations.
- **Impact on Local Talent Pool** – the departure of local artists to other cities can have a detrimental effect on Canberra's artistic community. This talent drain results in a loss of creativity, diversity, and innovation within the local arts sector, impacting the overall cultural landscape of the city.
- **Minimal Local Participation Opportunities** – limited opportunities for local artists to engage and participate in the cultural scene diminish the representation of Canberra's diverse artistic voices. The absence of local participation leads to a cultural vacuum, reducing the breadth and richness of artistic experiences available to the community.
- **Impact on Community Engagement** – a lack of local participation can result in reduced community engagement in cultural activities. This affects the vibrancy of the community and limits the opportunity for residents to connect and engage with their local arts and cultural heritage.

3.2.4 Problem 4

Problem 4: Unwelcoming, disconnected public spaces contribute to a poor level of activation across the District, particularly during the evening

The CCCD aims to establish a thriving national arts, culture and creative district in the heart of the national capital. However, as identified by the 2022 Final Report on the Canberra Civic and Cultural District and Canberra Theatre Centre Redevelopment Project (CCCD and CTR Report) by KPMG, commissioned to support the ongoing planning of the of the CCCD Project and associated business case development, the CCCD is currently challenged by:

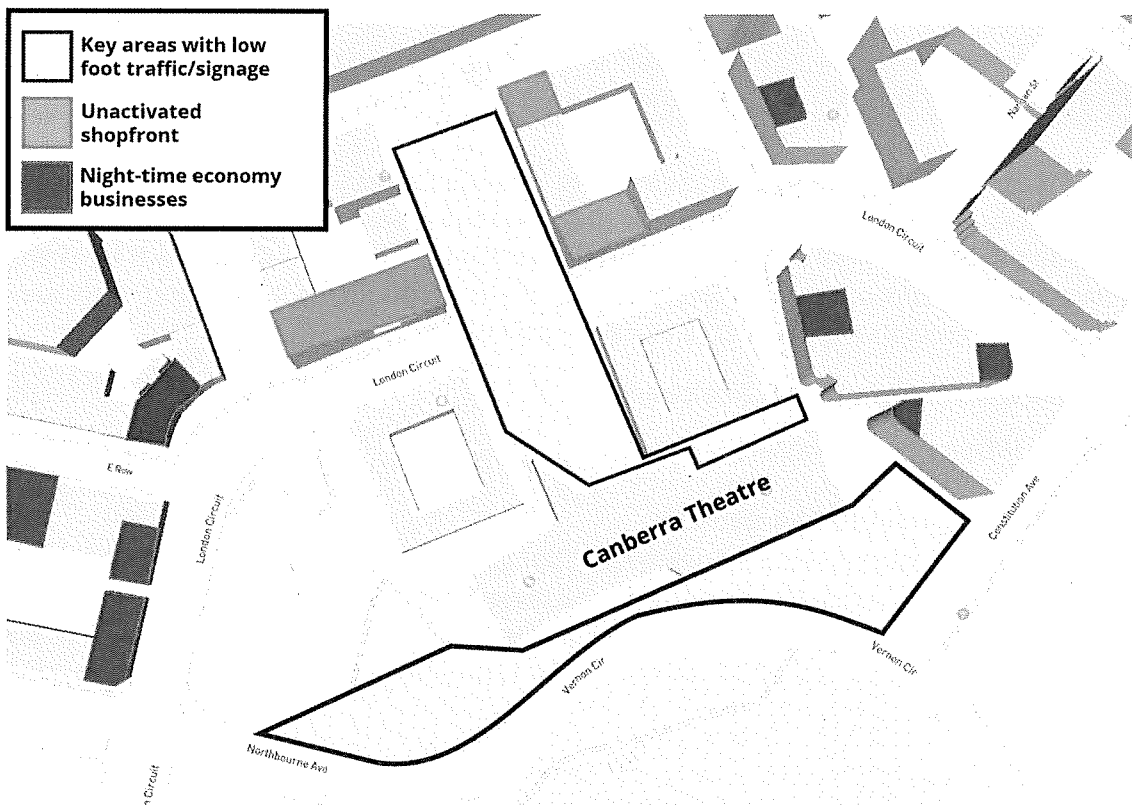
- limited CTC integration in the District; and
- limited Hospitality and Ancillary Facilities.

Limited CTC integration in the district

As previously identified in Problem 1, while the CTC has high potential to drive significant Night-Time Economy activity and public engagement, the theatre's amenity and influence currently does not extend beyond the venue. Its activities and activation of spaces are largely contained to the theatre and have limited connection or interaction with other businesses and other arts and cultural institutions in the CCCD.

For example, analysis of the CCCD's night-time economy business distribution indicates that there is a potential disconnect between the CTC and the District's key hospitality area as shown in Figure 3.13 below:

Figure 3.13: CCCD's current shopfront and signage



Source: Deloitte (2025)

Investment will integrate the CTC as the cornerstone of the CCCD. Activation of the CTC will increase foot traffic throughout the District, enhancing local security and safety as well as enabling a sense of local pride.

Limited hospitality and ancillary facilities

Additionally, the CTC's deficiency in dedicated function, foyer spaces, or other flexible spaces constrains its ability to host more frequent community events and pre- and post-show gatherings, a feature commonly found in major theatres nationwide. This shortfall contributes to reduced patron dwell times and minimal interaction, thereby limiting the potential for the development of complementary businesses within the vicinity.

In contrast, the Sydney Opera House exemplifies integration of performance and hospitality, with its array of in-house facilities that serve as social and leisure destinations throughout the day. The Arts Centre Melbourne has been integrated into a broader precinct²⁹ that creates a destination for visitors to enjoy a number of cultural venues, spaces for relaxation and multiple amenities not restricted to venue operating times or admission. These facilities not only enhance the visitor experience but also foster a synergy between performing arts, hospitality, and leisure activities, thereby contributing to the venue's role as a vibrant, all-encompassing destination.

Impact

The CTC plays a crucial role realising the CCCD's intended purpose of being the cultural heart of Canberra and an iconic arts and civic location. Failure to provide this investment and support will

²⁹ Development Victoria (2023), 'Melbourne Arts Precinct'

critically impact the CCCD as a whole and will result in the following key impacts, which are detailed below.

- **Low public activity** – low public activity will result in a lack of vibrancy and vitality in the CCCD and diminish its appeal as a cultural and social hub, impacting tourism and local engagement. Reduced public activity will affect the economic viability of businesses in the CCCD and hinder the District's overall cultural impact.
- **Minimal urban amenity** – lack of urban amenities at the CTC limit the overall experience for visitors and residents, diminishing the potential for the CTC to serve as a dynamic cultural and social space.
- **Poor visitor experience** – the lack of activation, limited amenities and facilities impacts the visitor experience and discourages visitors from spending extended periods at the CTC.

3.3 Strategic Responses

In response to the core problems identified above, the ILM identified four key strategic responses, against the key problems which they address which are summarised in Table 3.6:

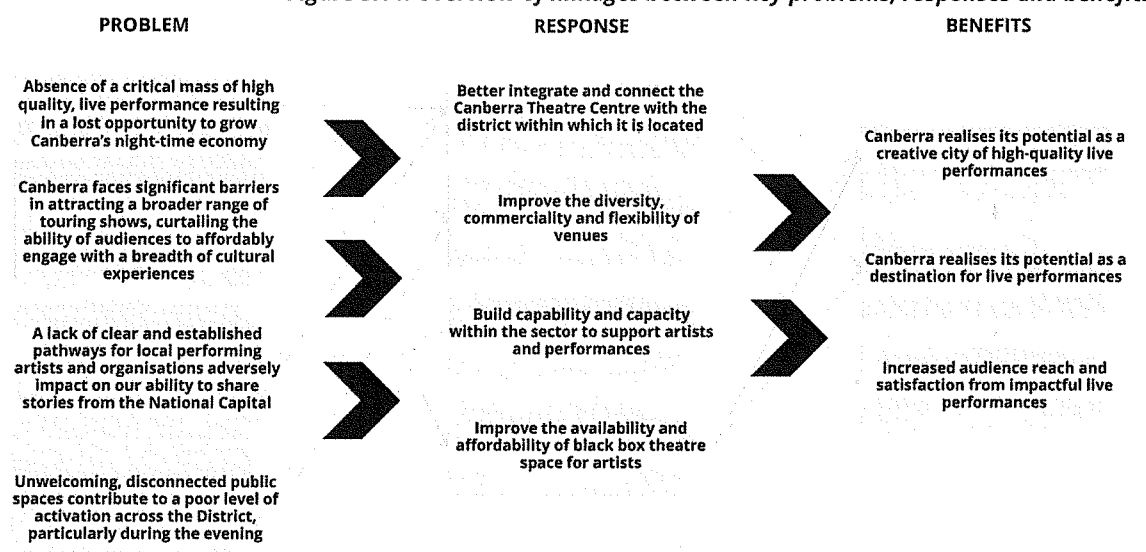
Table 3-6: Strategic responses and problem alignment

Response	Problem Alignment			
	1	2	3	4
1. Better integrate and connect the Canberra Theatre Centre with the District within which it is located		✓	✓	
2. Improve the diversity, flexibility and commerciality of venues	✓	✓	✓	
3. Build capability and capacity within the sector to support artists and performances			✓	✓
4. Improve the availability and affordability of black box theatre space for artists	✓			✓

Source: ICBR (2023)

Figure 3.14 below provides a summary of linkages between the key problems, proposed strategic responses and benefits arising from addressing the problems, which are considered further in the next section.

Figure 3.14: Overview of linkages between key problems, responses and benefits



Source: Deloitte (2023) from Investment Logic Workshop

3.3.1 Response 1: better integrate and connect the CTC with the Canberra Civic and Cultural District within which it is located

This strategic response would address current barriers in relation to building a vibrant night-time economy underpinned by quality live performances and disconnected, inactive and unwelcoming public spaces in the CCCD by improving the CTC's integration and connections within the District. This includes:

- establishing better connections and collaboration between the CTC and key neighbouring and nearby businesses; and
- utilising the CCCD's currently underutilised and underdeveloped spaces to:
 - improve access and connections between the CTC and key spaces surrounding the Centre;
 - establish stronger connections between the CTC and complementary nearby businesses; and
 - encourage the development of complementary buildings and businesses which link to the CTC and build on the District's core offerings and identity.

Table 3.7 below outlines how this response will address the key problems, and the expected impacts of this response.

Table 3-7: Strategic Response 1 – problem alignment and impact

Response 1	Problem Alignment	Response and expected impact
Better integrate and connect the Canberra Theatre Centre with the Canberra	1. Absence of a critical mass of high quality, live performances, resulting in a lost opportunity to grow Canberra's	Transform the CTC from a discrete theatre venue to an open and connected performing arts centre with active linkages to other complementary businesses and activities in the District.

Civic and Cultural District within which it is located	night-time economy 4. Unwelcoming disconnected public spaces contribute to a poor level of activation across the District, particularly during the evening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend the stage beyond the theatre by facilitating development of more spaces for live performance in key areas around the CTC as part of District planning, supporting greater public visitation and engagement. • Support improved public access, wayfinding and linkage to and between the CTC and other key civic and cultural institutions and complementary hospitality and retail experiences, encouraging exploration and activity. Environmental design targeting weather constraints to make a more comfortable patron space. • Better food and beverage offerings and more activated edges in the CTC will encourage visitation and dwell time (even if not attending a performance) and enhance the vibrancy of the District.
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Source: ILM Workshop (2023)

This would support the extension and connection of the CTC's core activities and audience to surrounding spaces and businesses within the District. This includes providing:

- opportunities for the redeveloped CTC to respond to the activated edges and connect to adjacent public spaces with live performances and focus on an outward facing design that interfaces with the public domain;
- increased public visibility and accessibility of quality arts and cultural experiences which showcase Canberra's local creative talent; and
- increased visitation, public engagement and spending, complementary business opportunities and growth and increased employment.

This will deliver the key benefits including:

- improved employment opportunities in the arts sector and contribution to the economy;
- Canberra realises its potential as a creative city of high-quality live performances; and
- improved happiness and wellbeing, built on shared, impactful, live performances.

3.3.2 Response 2: improve the diversity, flexibility and commerciality of venues

This strategic response would address the CTC's current barriers to hosting a critical mass of high-quality performances to build a vibrant night-time economy in the CCCD, barriers to attracting a broader range of touring shows and the current lack of established pathways for local performing artists and companies. Specific elements of this response include:

- improving the flexibility of the CTC's current theatre venues to cater to a broader range of live performances and audiences;
- providing more diverse venues and spaces in the CTC that are capable of showcasing a variety of live performances; and

- improving the commerciality of the CTC's key venues to attract and accommodate larger performances and audiences, facilitate improved operational access and lower costs for the sector, and expand the range of settings in which live performances are delivered.

Table 3.8 below outlines how this response will address the key problems, and the expected impacts of this response.

Table 3-8 Strategic Response 2 – problem alignment and impact

Response 2	Problem Alignment	Response and expected impact
<p>Improve the diversity, flexibility and commerciality of venues</p>	<p>1. Absence of a critical mass of high quality, live performances, resulting in a lost opportunity to grow Canberra's night-time economy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address inflexible theatre design to facilitate and attract a broader range of live performances and audiences. • Improve and develop in-house hospitality and ancillary amenities to facilitate more live performances in a variety of settings throughout the day and night, linking performance to complementary sectors, attracting larger and more diverse audiences and increasing visitor dwell times and activity. • Build the CTC into a centre of diverse social, cultural and economic activity, capable of growing and expanding its influence to surrounding areas and businesses and encouraging complementary business and activity growth.
	<p>2. Canberra faces significant barriers in attracting a broader range of touring shows, curtailing the ability of audiences to affordably engage with a breadth of cultural experiences</p>	<p>Address current theatre design and technical constraints and deliver more diverse venues to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accommodate a more diverse range and size of performances; • deliver improved amenities for audiences and performers; • improve venue access and lower operational costs for touring companies; and • improve local community access to a variety of high-quality performances in every day and theatre settings.
	<p>3. A lack of clear and established pathways for local performing artists and companies adversely impact on our ability to tell stories from the National Capital.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address venue cost and availability barriers by providing a more diverse, accessible and affordable range of spaces and venues for local artists and companies to develop and showcase their work. • Allow local arts companies to take a more commercial approach to program development with a 300-seat theatre and invest in local skills and audience development. • Provide an ideal stepping stone for local arts to scale up productions from 300 seats to 600 seats and beyond.

Source: ILM Workshop (2023)

This will deliver key benefits including:

- improved employment opportunities and economic growth; and
- realise Canberra's potential as a destination for live performances.

Further details are provided in Section 3.

3.3.3 Response 3: Build capability and capacity within the sector to support artists and performances

This strategic response would address the current lack of pathways for local artists by building further capability and capacity in the sector to support artists and performances.

Table 3.9 below outlines how this response will address the key problems, and the expected impacts of this response.

Table 3-9 Strategic Response 3 – problem alignment and impact

Response 3	Problem Alignment	Response and expected impact
Build capability and capacity within the sector to support artists and performances	3. A lack of clear and established pathways for local performing artists and companies adversely impact on our ability to tell stories from the national capital.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing limited commercial work and sector exposure opportunities for local performing artists and companies by; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ attracting a greater volume and diversity of productions to Canberra, providing additional work and exposure opportunities; ○ providing more high-quality venues, program allocation and development programs to support local performing artists and companies in developing and showcasing their work; ○ developing the CTC's capacity to attract major state, national and international producers on a more regular basis and facilitate greater sector collaboration and co-development of works; and ○ developing the CTC's capacity to support the development of resident companies and produce local works.

Source: ILM Workshop (2023)

This will further enable Canberra to realise its potential as a creative city of high-quality, live performances. By attracting major state and national producers to Canberra, greater collaboration between performing arts organisations will be encouraged. It is also likely to support improved employment opportunities in the arts sector and contribution to the economy as well as opportunities to export or tour locally produced works, giving exposure to ACT developed stories, artists and companies.

3.3.4 Response 4: improve the availability and affordability of black box theatre space for artists

This strategic response would address the current lack of clear and established pathways for Canberra's local performing artists and organisations by,

- facilitating development of more accessible, flexible and affordable studio space
- facilitating continued delivery of artist and artworker support and development programs.

Table 3.10 below outlines how this response will address the key problems, and the expected impacts of this response.

Table 3-10: Strategic Response 4 – problem alignment and impact

Response 4	Problem Alignment	Response and expected impact
Improve the availability and affordability of black box theatre space for artists	3. A lack of clear and established pathways for local performing artists and companies adversely impact on our ability to tell stories from the national capital.	Development of more affordable and accessible studio space will support Canberra's local artists and companies with appropriate spaces to develop and stage more high-quality works alongside the creation of tour-ready works for export.

Source: ILM Workshop (2023)

This strategic response is strongly aligned with Strategic Response 3 and also supports Canberra's ability to realise its potential as a creative city of high-quality live performances.

It is important to note that access to more affordable studio space alone will not sufficiently support Canberra's local artists and organisations and must be complemented by an operational investment to support the development of locally produced works. This is explored in further detail in the CFC Operational Business Case.

3.4 Benefits

As part of the Investment Logic Workshop, key benefits expected to be achieved by addressing the Project's problems were identified. For each of these benefits, associated key performance indicators (KPIs) and baseline and target measures were determined which will be used to measure the extent to which the Project is able to achieve these benefits. These are outlined below for each benefit area. A detailed quantitative and qualitative analysis of the Project's expected economic benefits is provided in Section 10 and is supported by a robust Benefits Realisation Plan in Appendix N - to provide a detailed plan on how the Project team will realise, monitor and report the Project's benefits. It is important to note that the Project's benefits can only be realised with both capital and operational investment. This will provide the uplift in capacity and capability required to enable the transformational change of the arts in the ACT.

3.4.1 Benefit 1: Canberra realises its potential as a creative city of high-quality live performances

Addressing the key problems through the above responses and key solution elements will enhance Canberra's ability to tell stories from the national capital and realise its potential as a city

of high-quality live performances and a key regional and national hub for arts, culture and innovation. This would put Canberra on a more equal footing with other major Australian cities which are widely recognised as centres of excellence in performing arts and culture, similar to Canberra's current reputation as a city of national cultural institutions.

This is a primary benefit which supports not only delivery of the ACT Government's vision for Canberra to be recognised as Australia's arts capital, but also delivery of other key benefits – increased employment and economic contribution by the arts sector and improved happiness and wellbeing.

In particular the Project solution will facilitate a number of elements which comprise this benefit. These are listed below.

- **Curation of high-quality performances** – investing in the redevelopment of the CTC will facilitate the staging of a diverse range of high-quality performances, attracting and supporting performances by local, national and international artists and arts organisations, elevating the city's cultural profile and enhancing its night-time economy.
- **Supporting affordability and accessibility of performing arts** – addressing barriers to attracting touring shows and facilitating more quality live performances across a range of venues, spaces and times supports more affordable local access to a wide spectrum of cultural experiences, enabling more members of the community to engage with the arts, enriching the city's cultural landscape and supporting inclusivity.
- **Fostering local talent** – creating clear support pathways through venues, programs, and sector collaboration, and supporting affordable venue access for local performing artists and companies in the redeveloped CTC will support further growth and development of individuals and the sector and empower ACT residents to demonstrate and share their artistic skills and talents, stories and culture on a larger, more influential stage.
- **Enhancing public spaces** – the Project solution would facilitate the transformation of the CCCD into a dynamic ecosystem of welcoming and connected public spaces and business activity at all times of the day and night, improving infrastructure, lighting and facilities, encouraging increased public footfall and dwell times and enhancing the overall vibrancy and activity in Canberra's city centre.

Table 3.11 below identifies the key performance indicators (KPIs), measures, baseline and targets through which this benefit will be measured.

Table 3-6: Benefit 1 measurement

Key performance indicators	Measures	Baseline (FY24)	Target (FY34)
Increase in the number and diversity of genres in live performances	Number of annual performances	425	802
Increase in total attendance	Total attendance	233,510	648,033

Source: ILM Workshop (2023)

KPI 1.1: increase in the number and diversity of annual performances

Increase in the number and diversity of live performances was identified as a key performance measure as it links to Government's objectives of improving public access to a diverse range of performing arts, enabling diverse members of the community to access and participate in arts and culture and support and supporting a variety of artistic expression in the city, as well as the utilisation of the CTC's venues as a reflection of return on Government investment in the Project.

KPI 1.2: increase in total attendance

Increase in total attendance was identified as a key performance measure as it directly reflects the economic viability and commercial success of performing arts in the CCCD as delivered and measured through the CTC and aligns with the ACT Government's ambition for Canberra to be recognised as Australia's Arts Capital.

3.4.2 Benefit 2: Canberra realises its potential as a destination for live performances

Investment to increase the volume and diversity of quality live performances in Canberra's city centre through the CTC and improve connection, integration and activation between the CCCD's key cultural attractions and surrounding businesses is expected to support:

- **increased economic contribution by the sector** – including increased locally created original performances and increase in the total number of non-ACT resident visitors to the theatre; and
- **increased activation of the CCCD** – including increased visitors to the District and expenditure at the CTC's ancillary facilities.

This benefit reflects the importance of Canberra's performing arts sector to its people, the city's identity and economy, as a key attractor of domestic tourism and enabler of thriving visitor and Night Time Economies, and as a key employer of Canberra artists and creatives, whose creative output and innovation underpins the sector's appeal, success and further growth. The redeveloped CTC will need to be more integrated into local tourism promotion as there is significant potential for strong growth as previously identified in the National Arts Participation Survey.

Table 3.12 below identifies the key performance indicators (KPIs), measures, baseline and targets through which this benefit will be measured.

Table 3-7: Benefit 2 measurement

Key performance indicators	Measures	Baseline (FY24)	Target (FY34)
Increase the contribution of the live performance sector to the ACT's economy	Total annual locally created original performance works hosted at CTC	23	30
	Total annual number of non-local visitors	37,088	141,800
Increase activation of the District	Annual visitors/patrons to CFC facilities within CCCD	339,243	598,269*

Annual visitor expenditure at CTC ancillary facilities (excluding Ticketing) i.e. F&B / Merchandising. \$1.1 million \$7.9 million

Source: ILM Workshop (2023)

*NB: this target is based on an average of projections: CPI (3%), conservative (5%) and stretch (8%) increase over the years.

KPI 2.1: increase the contribution of the live performance sector to the ACT's economy

Increasing the contribution of the live performance sector to the ACT's economy was selected as a KPI as it aligns with the Government's goals of facilitating increased economic growth, job opportunities and cultural enrichment for the community through the performing arts. It measures success in achieving these goals through local performance development and the economic contribution of non-local visitors. The contribution of the arts to the economic, cultural and societal value of the ACT is a key component of the *Canberra: Australia's Arts Capital – a statement of ambition for the arts*.

KPI 2.2: increase activation of the District

Increasing activation of the CTC as part of the CCCD was selected as a KPI as it reflects the Project solution's success in attracting and engaging the community, fostering cultural vibrancy and promoting economic vitality in the District as measured through increased footfall of patrons to the CTC and expenditure at CTC ancillary facilities. This KPI will be achieved through various policies and strategies discussed in Section 4.

3.4.3 Benefit 3: Increased audience reach and satisfaction from impactful live performances.

Responses to the 2022 National Arts Participation Survey demonstrate that Australians, and Canberrans in particular, derive significant social, community and overall wellbeing benefits from engagement with the arts. This includes facilitating greater social connectivity, cohesion and wellbeing, improved appreciation of diversity and shared cultural values and identity, increased civic pride and increased sense of belonging.³⁰

Addressing the current barriers to attracting and facilitating a broader range of quality live performances and facilitating greater connection, appeal and activity in the CCCD will support transformation of the District into a vibrant culture district that supports broad access and engagement in diverse, engaging and memorable performing arts experiences, enriching the lives of Canberra's local community and visitors to Canberra. This will ultimately enhance overall quality of life both in Canberra and broader region.

Table 3.13 below identifies the key performance indicators (KPIs), measures, baseline and targets through which this benefit will be measured.

³⁰ Creative Australia (2022), 'Creating Value: Results of the National Arts Participation Survey', <https://creative.gov.au/advocacy-and-research/creating-value/>

Table 3-8: Benefit 3 measurement

Key performance indicators	Measures	Baseline (FY24)	Target (FY34)
Increase in audience reach	Average venue utilisation rate	63%	70%
	Total annual visitors to CTC	248,675	492,019
Increase in audience satisfaction	% of audience very satisfied	70%	80%

Source: ILM Workshop (2023)

KPI 3.1: increase in audience reach

Increase in audience reach was identified as a KPI as it indicates the proposed solution’s effectiveness in diversifying and expanding the CTC’s audience base as the primary centre for performing arts in Canberra, fostering inclusivity, and ensuring that a broader cross-section of the community can access and benefit from quality live performances. It is measured through the venue utilisation rate and the annual visitors to the CTC.

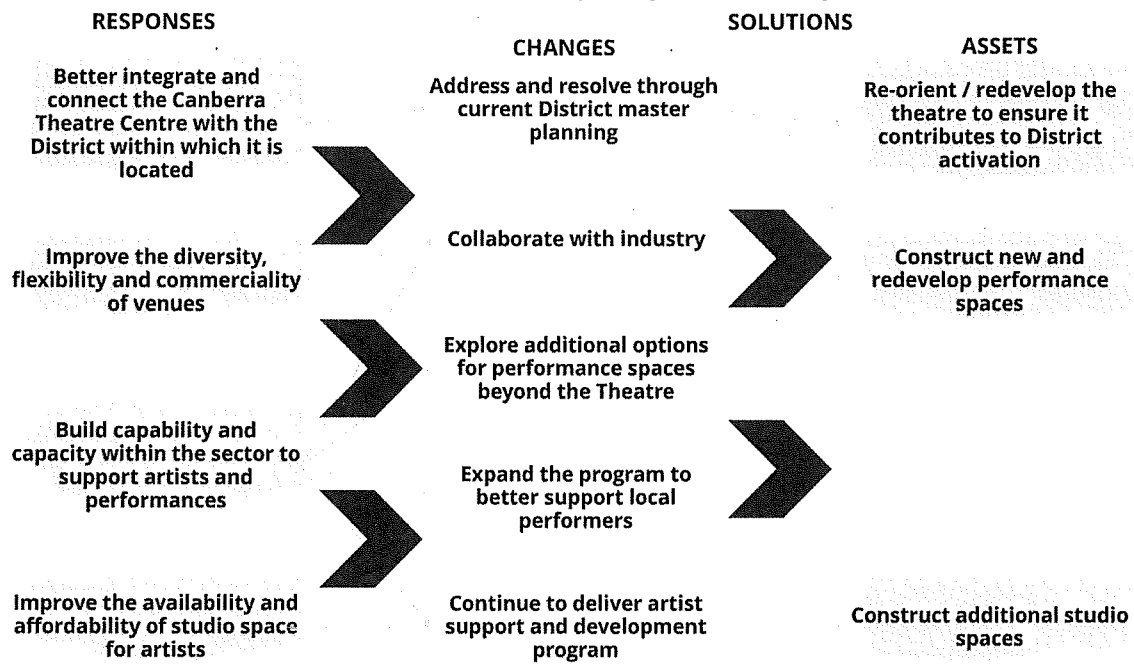
KPI 3.2: increase in audience satisfaction

Increasing audience satisfaction was identified as a KPI as it measures the satisfaction with the CTC’s live performance offering, ensuring that the audiences derive the highest level of enjoyment and engagement from the theatre’s offerings.

3.5 Alignment of Responses and Solutions

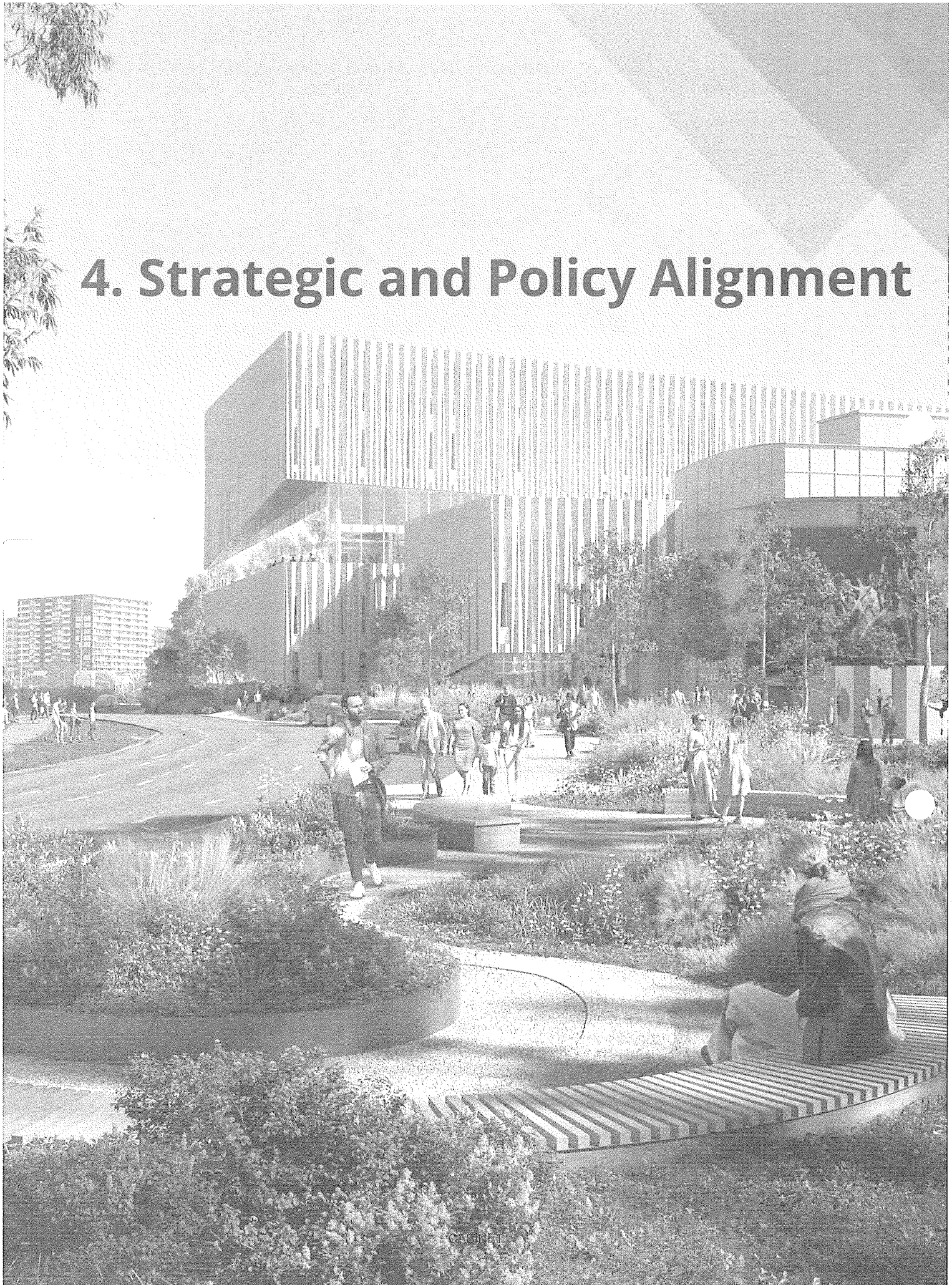
Figure 3.1515 below provides an overview of the linkages between the strategic responses and the proposed Project solution, including the linkages between non-capital and capital elements of the solution. The Project’s solution and options are addressed in Section 5: Options Analysis.

Figure 3.1515: Overview of linkages between responses and solution elements



Source: Deloitte (2023) from Investment Logic Workshop

4. Strategic and Policy Alignment



4 Strategic and Policy Alignment

This section addresses the alignment between the Project and relevant ACT Government policies and priorities, including the ACT Wellbeing Framework, as well as alignment with Australian Government policies and priorities. This section also provides an overview of the Project's alignment with other projects, programs and precincts.

Key messages

- The Project demonstrates strong alignment to ACT Government strategies and policies and will play a critical role, both in the revitalisation of Canberra's city centre and in supporting the growth, profile and economic contribution of Canberra's creative arts and entertainment sector. The Project is a key deliverable of the *Canberra: Australia's Arts Capital: Arts, Culture and Creative Policy 2022-26* and the associated *Action Plan*, as well as a priority in the *ACT Infrastructure Plan* pipeline.
- A Wellbeing Impact Assessment has highlighted the positive impact in five key domains including: Identity and Belonging; Social Connection; Economy; Education and life-long learning; and Access and Connectivity.
- The Project demonstrates strong alignment to various Australian Government plans and priorities, especially the National Cultural Policy: *Revive - a place for every story, a story for every place*, the National Capital Authority's *National Capital Plan* (NCP) and City and Gateway Urban Design Framework.
- The Project is the cornerstone project for the CCCD. The Project aligns with the objectives of key adjacent developments in Canberra's city centre, in particular the CCCD's City Precinct Renewal Program.

4.1 Alignment with ACT Government commitments, strategies and policies

The Project overall demonstrates alignment with key ACT Government commitments, strategies and policies. This section lists these relevant guiding documents and notes how the Project is in alignment and/or contributes to achieving the aims of the ACT Government.

4.1.1 Key Government vision and policy alignment

The Project contributes to the achievement of ACT Government's ambition for Canberra to be recognised as Australia's Arts Capital through showcasing and supporting Canberra's rich cultural offerings and local talent, as well as through attracting national and international performances, visitors, and investment to the city.

The Yerrabingin design process of listening to Country will ensure that this Project is also welcoming to First Nations people and that their culture is a core foundation of this Project.

The Project delivers on key domain areas within the ACT Wellbeing Framework and contributes to the ACT's Economic Development priorities.

Table 4.1 below provides a further summary regarding the alignment of the Project with key ACT vision and policy documents, and a detailed description is provided within *Appendix M - Relevant Government Policies, Strategies, Plans*.

Table 4-1: Key Government vision and policy alignment

Policy/Priority	Alignment of Project
Canberra: Australia's Arts Capital – A Statement of Ambition for the Arts 2021-26	As the premier performing arts centre in the ACT, the Project realises the statement of ambition for the arts by incorporating a significant redevelopment of the CTC within the CCCD, to provide more than double the current patronage and significantly activate the precinct.
CBR Switched On: ACT's Economic Development Priorities 2022-25	The Project will support delivering on ambition, in particular: attracting and retaining talented people; opening and diversifying the economy; delivering better metropolitan infrastructure; and creating a city open and welcoming to all.
ACT Wellbeing Framework	The Project will deliver on improving at least five of the domains: Identity and Belonging; Social Connection; Economy; Education and life-long learning; and Access and Connectivity.
ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019-2028 National Cultural Policy: Revive - a place for every story, a story for every place	The redevelopment of the CTC is committed to advancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Self-Determination, Connection to Culture, community, and Truth-Telling. The Australian Government's National Cultural Policy aims to revitalise the arts post-COVID-19, emphasising a place for every story. This directly aligns with the Australian Government's strategic objective of offering comprehensive support to institutions that uphold national arts, culture, and heritage, such as CTC.
ACT Disability Strategy and First Action Plan 2024-2033	The Project promotes accessibility and inclusivity through its design and ensures that the theatre is a welcoming space for all people with disability. It incorporates universal access design principles shaped by input from the disability community to promote greater opportunities for engagement, employment, training, and performance.
Gender Sensitive Urban Design Framework	The Gender-Sensitive Urban Design Framework is the strategic document explaining principles aimed at achieving gender-sensitive urban environments. The redevelopment of the CTC will leverage strategic urban design to enhance accessibility, inclusivity, and equality within its spaces and venues. Through embracing diversity, the CTC redevelopment is prepared to transform into a more secure and productive space for the broader community.
Age-Friendly Canberra – A Vision for Our City	The redevelopment of the CTC will be reflective of a city that caters to individuals of all age groups, offering opportunities across the ACT that promote healthy living for both families and the elderly. The revitalised CTC will develop an Age-Friendly scheme designed to encourage community participation from diverse age groups, with a particular focus on fostering inclusivity for our elderly community. The redeveloped CTC will embrace the four core principles of being 'involved,' 'Secure,' 'Diverse,' and 'A city for all ages.'

Age-Friendly City Plan 2020-2024

The Project is composed to develop an Age-Friendly scheme designed to encourage community participation from diverse age groups, with a particular focus on fostering inclusivity for our elderly community. In adherence to this vision, the redeveloped CTC will embrace the four core principles of being 'involved,' 'Secure,' 'Diverse,' and 'A city for all ages.'

Capital of Equality Strategy 2024-2029 and First Actions Plan 2024-2026

The Project advances the representation of LGBTQIA+ communities in urban planning and infrastructure by promoting equity and inclusion through consultation with LGBTQIA+ communities. The Project integrates inclusive design elements, such as All-Gender bathrooms and by creating welcoming, accessible spaces for all audiences, performers, and staff. These efforts align by removing barriers and promoting respect for individuals that identify as part of the LGBTQIA+ communities, positioning the theatre as a model for diversity and inclusion in public infrastructure.

ACT Women's Plan 2016-2026 – Third Action Plan 2023-2026

By supporting the increased representation of women, girls, and non-binary artists, the Project incorporates gender-sensitive design principles, which will enable the theatre to showcase diverse artists and increase their visibility in public art and performance areas in inclusive and safe spaces.

Source: ACT Government policy and strategy document and plans as available

Further to the ambition for Canberra's arts sector, the Project is expected to play a critical role, both in the revitalisation of Canberra's city centre – via the redevelopment of the City Hill Precinct and the CCCD, and in supporting the growth, profile and economic contribution of Canberra's creative arts and entertainment sector.

4.1.2 City development and infrastructure plans

The Project is a priority infrastructure project and deliverable under the ACT Government's city development plans and for key delivery agencies – the CRA and CFC, in delivering on development, infrastructure and sector objectives. The Project's alignment with city development and infrastructure plans are summarised in Table 4.2 below:

Table 4-2: Alignment with city development and infrastructure plans

Policy/Priority	Alignment of Project
<p>National Capital Authority (NCA) 'National Capital Plan' (NCP)</p>	<p>The NCA's NCP is a key strategy and planning document of the Australian Government's interests and objectives for planning in the ACT. The Project team within ICBR and the CRA has engaged closely with the NCA on the Project as the design develops towards planning approvals. As discussed later in Section 4.3.1, the Project has been designed to leave a lasting impression on the public realm, engenders people-friendly streetscapes, and contributes to the development of a city that is more economically, socially, and environmentally resilient.</p>
<p>ACT Planning Strategy 2018</p>	<p>The Project supports the strategy by supporting a diverse and liveable Canberra and a sustainable and resilient city.</p>

2023 City Plan update

The Project and CCCD are directly mentioned as relevant to delivering on the vision and goals of the City Plan, which directs the future growth of the City Centre to ensure it remains Canberra's cultural and economic hub servicing the needs of the ACT's growing population

ACT Government Infrastructure Plan 2019

The Project is included as a priority project in the plan.

ACT Climate Change Strategy 2019-2025

The ACT Government's key sustainability policy, incorporating the ACT Net Zero by 2045 target and the Transition from Gas to Electric across ACT Government facilities

2021 Australian Infrastructure Plan

The 2021 Australian Infrastructure Plan is a practical roadmap for infrastructure reform. The CTC redevelopment aligns with the Plan, specifically visions 1, 3, and 8, focusing on place-based outcomes, industry productivity, and social infrastructure.

ACT Circular Economy Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2030

The ACT Government has developed its first Circular Economy Strategy and Action Plan which sets the ACT's circular economy vision through to 2030. The Project will source sustainable materials, implement recycling initiatives and incorporate a circular design principals in alignment with this plan.

Canberra's Living Infrastructure Plan – Cooling the City 2018

The ACT Government, through the ACT Planning Strategy 2018, has set a development target of 70% within the existing urban footprint, emphasising the need to balance urban density with green spaces. The Project aligns with the development target of 70% within the existing urban footprint, and will balance urban density with green spaces.

Source: ACT Government policy and strategy documents and plans as available

4.1.3 Arts and entertainment sector plans and strategies

The Project is a key deliverable in meeting Canberra's ambition to be recognised as Australia's arts capital. Delivery of the Project will also support the development of the local entertainment economy, encourage global collaboration opportunities and attract more tourists. Table 4.3 below outlines the Project's alignment with other relevant sector and organisational plans aligned with *Canberra: Australia's Arts Capital - Arts, Culture and Creative Policy 2022-26*.

Table 4-3: Alignment with arts and entertainment sector plans and strategies

Policy/Priority	Alignment of Project
Canberra: Australia's Arts Capital - Arts, Culture and Creative Policy 2022-26	The Project is a key deliverable of the Policy and associated Action Plan and is a major step in realising the ACT Government's ambition for Canberra to be recognised as Australia's Arts Capital.
ACT Infrastructure Plan Update – Entertainment, Arts and Sports 2023	The Project is included as a priority project in the plan.