



# Media release

**Ted Baillieu MLA**  
Premier  
Minister for the Arts

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## Arts program to support big ideas in small towns

Small towns across the state are being encouraged to think big with the launch of the Victorian Government's latest arts initiative, *Small Town Transformations*.

Premier and Minister for the Arts Ted Baillieu said the *Small Town Transformations* program would support large-scale creative projects that would inspire, transform and create a lasting legacy in Victorian towns with populations of 1,500 or fewer.

"Arts and culture can have a big impact on a community, large or small," Mr Baillieu said.

"From iconic festivals and events to public art projects and unique creative spaces, there are many examples of how the arts and creativity have enlivened small towns across the state; enhancing their identity, developing community pride, raising the town's profile, and attracting attention and visitors from far and wide.

"The *Small Town Transformations* program aims to celebrate the ideas, creativity and resourcefulness in Victoria's small towns, asking communities to envisage how the arts can effect change, improve infrastructure and opportunities, and help realise local aspirations," Mr Baillieu said.

Applications to the program will open in January 2013. Applicants should be based in the town and the proposed projects should be locally driven. Up to \$350,000 will be available for projects that involve strong community support and participation, and will be able to deliver a significant impact.

"The Victorian Government has committed \$2 million over the next two years as a pilot to help bring some of the best ideas to fruition, and further demonstrate the impact the arts can have on our towns," Mr Baillieu said.

"This program is being delivered through Regional Arts Victoria which has a great track record in leading and facilitating high impact arts projects across the state."

Esther Anatolitis, Director of Regional Arts Victoria (RAV) said RAV was delighted to deliver *Small Town Transformations* on behalf of the Victorian Government.

"I can't wait to see the ambitious plans our small towns will make for an arts-inspired future," Ms Anatolitis said.

Residents, artists and community leaders are encouraged to visit the *Small Town Transformations* blog, which contains examples of transformative arts projects from across Australia and around the world, as well as further details about the program. It is also a place to join the conversation about the role and impact of the arts.

"I invite you to join the discussion, ask questions, exchange ideas, connect with Regional Arts Victoria and others, and get thinking about how the arts could transform your town," Mr Baillieu said.

For more information visit [www.smalltowns.rav.net.au](http://www.smalltowns.rav.net.au)

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