



STRATEGIC PLAN

2022 - 2026



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Addison Road Community Organisation acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to Elders past and present.

We pay particular respect to the Gadigal and Wangal people who cared for the land on which we are currently based. We acknowledge the impacts of violent colonisation on the local people, and their resistance and resilience in the face of colonisation.

We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members at Addison Road Community Organisation and thank them for their work, guidance and sharing of their traditional knowledge.

Sovereignty was never ceded.





STRATEGIC PLAN

2022- 2026

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CEO FOREWORD

Addison Road Community Organisation's (ARCO) commitment to making a difference in the world through working with and in our community is clearly demonstrated in our five-year Strategic Plan 2022-2026.

This Plan emphasises our pursuit of courageous leadership and focus on strengthening and extending our achievements across the four strategic objectives as we continue to work towards our vision of a just, equal, sustainable and diverse community.

“Without the contribution, engagement and energy of our local multicultural and creative communities, and the gift of a dedicated place at Addison Road where this work could take place and grow, Sydney would be a poorer place today.”

This Strategic Plan provides a broad framework for the organisation, an imaginary map with plenty of destinations circled in pencil and various roads and rivers marked in highlighter. It maps out four strategic pillars, which are measurable through the ten activity goals we have identified.

ARCO was founded in 1976 to support and strengthen the multicultural communities – many formed by first- and second-generation migrants – of the Inner West of Sydney, with the expectation that it could provide a model for similar initiatives across Australia. Without the contribution, engagement and energy of our local multicultural and creative communities, and the gift of a dedicated place at Addison Road where this work could take place and grow, Sydney would be a poorer place today.

This Plan should provide a deep understanding for the Addison Road community, of what we are doing and why. It is essential for us to stay on course as we work to strengthen and broaden our impact and services.



The historical background and our organisational values provide the necessary context to understand why we do what we do, and the principles that motivate our ways of working.

The analysis of internal and external environment illustrates how we understand our surroundings and our awareness around our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. It gives us the ability to plan a realistic and prepared approach to changing needs in our community.

A strategic plan is a means to an end, not an end in itself. We must keep this Plan alive. To this end, we ensured we consulted with our extensive community, and had the necessary frank and honest conversations needed to bring this Plan to life. The Plan was developed for 2022-2026. Now, in 2024, we take stock and pivot our programs to accommodate changes in global and local environments, while working towards our strategic pillars.

ARCO values diversity and recognises the unique experiences of the people we work with. We continue to respond to rising food insecurity and social isolation post-the COVID-19 pandemic by operating a Food Relief Hub that provides culturally appropriate emergency hampers to vulnerable individuals and communities. The high cost of living and rising rates of inequality have demanded a continuation of this work which began with our one-day-a-week food rescue pantry back in 2016, two strategic plans ago.

ARCO's successes to date are a tribute to the hard work of our staff, volunteers and Board of Directors, and we invite others to join us in pursuing our ambitious goals for the future. We believe that our achievements and our uniqueness are due not only to having a special 'home' from which to work, but also to the attention and passion we give to the arts and culture, the environment, human rights and community sustainability. All our work takes into consideration these elements – from a big-picture analysis of the global social-justice landscape to the parent skipping meals to pay their rent, to the young person fed up with racist treatment, to a grey butcherbird looking for somewhere to nest – and we bring them together to develop unique and hugely impactful programs.





AROUND THE SITE





AT ADDI ROAD



HISTORICAL BACKGROUND



The success of Addison Road Community Organisation (ARCO) today is built on the foundations of a long history of place and people, a history that has involved dealing with numerous challenges over the past 47 years.

ARCO was founded in 1976 to create and manage the Addison Road Community Centre following community consultation and a strong campaign to keep the former Marrickville army barracks in community hands. ARCO is an independent community development organisation that, since its inception, has provided a hub of diversity for Sydney's Inner West and beyond. It's said that the model used for the foundation of ARCO became what are recognised across Australia today as neighbourhood centres.

ARCO developed and implemented many well-known community development programs that would support multiculturalism, the creative industries and environmental action, such as the Magic Yellow Bus, the Addison Road Early Learning Centre, youth services, migrant education programs and employment training. In ARCO's early years, these were primarily government-funded and community-driven.

Historically, members of ARCO have also leased buildings, spaces or parts of buildings at the Centre, where rental fees are charged well below market rates, allowing these members to operate social enterprises, services or studios with the security of subsidised tenure.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND



A few founding members, such as the Hellenic Arts and Culture Association and the Turkish Welfare Association are still active ARCO members, running the Greek Theatre and the Australian Martial Arts Academy, respectively.

Faced with stagnation from years of under-management and a lack of strategic planning after major de-funding in the 1990s, ARCO began a restructuring process in 2012, encouraging participation from the broader community.

The ARCO Board and staff have worked closely together to create a relevant, accessible and ethical organisation that plays a significant role amongst the diverse communities of Sydney's Inner West. ARCO is once again designing and implementing community development programs and has created a more inclusive, relevant and dynamic community centre. Now attracting over 1.4 million visitors annually, ARCO is a community leader in building diverse, resilient and sustainable communities.



BUILDING
43



*Addi Road is a living working museum.
Our infrastructure stands to give memory to those
who have been and those to come.*



CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITY



AT ADDI ROAD



OUR VISION is a just, equal, sustainable and diverse community

OUR PURPOSE is to help create lasting alternatives for social, economic and environmental justice.

ARCO spearheads a rights-based approach to community development programs in arts, culture, environmental and social justice. ARCO also provides affordable workspaces to NGOs, artists and community organisations.

Through managing the Addison Road Community Organisation, ARCO facilitates the provision of services and community development opportunities, working collaboratively with various levels of government, educational institutions, community organisations and members of the public.

It is not only about giving. It is also about connecting and building community together.



ADDI ROAD



AT A GLANCE

VALUES

CREATIVITY,
HUMOUR &
CELEBRATION

FIRST
NATIONS
JUSTICE

ECONOMIC
JUSTICE

ANTI -
RACISM

CLIMATE
JUSTICE

IN SUMMARY

Promote justice
& anti-racism
principles

Protect, conserve
& enhance our
heritage

Human rights & social
justice to underpin
services and policies

Build ourselves to deliver
sustainable community
development

Support community
services, artists &
interest groups

OBJECTIVES

3 SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT:
Land, Site & Facilities

4 BUILD & STRENGTHEN PROGRAMS:
Humanitarian, Arts & Culture and
Environmental

4

Our Goals give us a roadmap on how to build an equitable and sustainable community



OUR GOALS

Why we do what we do

To relieve poverty and food shortage among socially and economically disadvantaged individuals.

Promote inclusion, access and social justice opportunities for all.

Facilitate the empowerment of socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, particularly culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) groups, women and youth through capacity-building and access to resources.

Build alliances across differences with communities, organisations, businesses and government to further ARCO's purpose.

Provide accessible and flexible spaces to build a community hub for supporting disadvantaged communities and addressing gaps in services.

Promote justice and anti-racism principles in the wider community.

Build a strong, responsive, effective and sustainable organisation with a robust and transparent governance structure that delivers sustainable community development outcomes.

Protect, conserve and enhance the heritage assets of ARCO in their historical context while ensuring maximum access for public enjoyment and education.

Provide in-kind support to not-for-profit services, artists and community interest groups that support the values of ARCO and contribute to community development.

Engage with governments to ensure that a human rights framework and social justice outcomes underpin services and policies.

OUR VALUES

The way in which we work

Addison Road Community organisation is committed to fostering independent, sustainable, diverse communities, based on our universal civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

INCLUSIVENESS AND DIVERSITY

We are committed to anti-oppression and non-discrimination in all aspects of our work. We work towards this goal by creating a workplace that respects and incorporates a diversity of experiences and identities that reflect our organisational commitment to substantive equality and social justice. We value the unique contributions that individuals with lived experience can make and we strive to build an organisation that is inclusive through proactively recruiting staff, board/committee members and partners who support and reflect our goal of inclusiveness and diversity. Respect for all is treating each other in a friendly, fair and equitable way.

TEAMWORK AND SOLIDARITY

We recognise the importance of teamwork and collaboration in achieving our mission and vision. We are committed to an organisational culture that is warm, supportive and respectful of one another and of ourselves, one that is both welcoming and accessible to the public. We see the wellbeing of our staff as an integral part of ARCO's work and strive to promote a healthy work-life balance for all staff.

GROWTH CHALLENGE AND LEADERSHIP

We support a leadership model that promotes the empowerment of staff, facilitates co-responsibility between colleagues and encourages staff initiative where possible. We encourage personal and professional growth. We strive to be flexible and open to new opportunities and challenges. We embrace conflict as part of change and strive to create a work environment where staff are able to voice their different opinions in a climate of respect and understanding.

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

In our actions, we maintain a strong ethic of accountability to each other, to our members and to the vision of the organisation. We commit to do our work with integrity and honesty and in ways that are financially and environmentally responsible. We acknowledge the importance of both process (for transparency) and results (for accountability) in our work and strive to maintain a harmonious balance between the two.

OUR VALUES

The way in which we work

CREATIVITY, HUMOUR AND CELEBRATION

We are dedicated to the use of creativity and innovation to ensure that we consistently deliver the highest possible quality. We strive to maintain humour, fun and celebration as principles of our work. As Emma Goldman famously said, "If I can't dance, I don't want to be part of your revolution."

COMMITMENT TO FIRST NATIONS JUSTICE

We acknowledge that all the work we do with the community and at ARCO is predicated on the struggle for First Nations justice and self-determination. We cannot achieve meaningful social justice without First Nations justice and we are committed to ensuring that, as staff, we are strong allies. We are constantly working toward this goal in all of our strategies, objectives, activities, events and programs.

CHALLENGING ECONOMIC INJUSTICE

We are dedicated to challenging the injustices of capitalism and supporting those disadvantaged by its competitive and exploitative structures. Economic inequality is the major contributing factor for people and communities experiencing homelessness, food insecurity, social isolation, racism and other forms of discrimination. We are committed to unpacking the cultural effects of capitalism, such as elitism and mistrust, and bringing this approach to our strategic plans, objectives and programs.

ANTI-RACISM APPROACH

In all of our work and interactions, we are committed to being anti-racist and using anti-racist principles. We acknowledge that structural racism significantly impacts the lives of staff and people in the ARCO community and that it is reinforced by other structures such as capitalism and patriarchy. We hold space for people's lived experiences of racism, support and empower communities to create initiatives to bring people together to learn from each other, to create solutions, foster solidarity and enrich Australian society. We continue to challenge and interrogate our own internalised racism so we can make our initiatives more inclusive and safe for everyone.

CLIMATE JUSTICE

We recognise the importance of climate justice in pursuit of first Nation and economic justice, particularly around distributive justice for those experiencing climate change at disproportionate levels. We recognise the role of ARCO in advocating for those marginalised communities that face the brunt of climate change both in Australia and globally, particularly youth and global South communities. We see the interconnectedness of climate justice with food insecurity locally and globally.

OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

How we will do it

CONSOLIDATE ARCO: Identity, Reputation & Influence

1

It is important to have a good reputation to be relevant, credible and legitimate in our community. With this, we can advocate and influence for change and create a space where people can come to have their practical needs met within a rights-based approach.

STRENGTHEN INTERNAL CAPACITY: Staff, Programs, Systems & Process

2

To make our organisation resilient and robust while maintaining agility. This will provide us with good governance, and with transparency and accountability which will enable a sustainable future.

SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT: Land, Site & Facilities

3

So much of Addi Road is the place we exist in. Our connection and custodianship of the site is critical to our ability to run our programs, respect our history and ensure environmental sustainability through our pursuit of creating a biodiverse ecosystem.

BUILD & STRENGTHEN PROGRAMS: Humanitarian, Arts & Culture & Environmental

4

Recognising the interconnectedness of issues, our programs are designed and implemented to ensure people actively participate and become agents of their own change.

#RACISMNOTWELCOME

"All of Australia should be like Addi Road"
Thomas Mayo

DI
ROAD

ISON ROAD
UNITY ORGANISATION

CONSOLIDATE ARCO

Identity, Reputation and Influence

It is important to have a good reputation to be relevant, credible and legitimate in our community. With this, we can advocate and influence for change and create a space where people can come to have their practical needs met within a rights-based approach.

1.1 Positioning ARCO as a Hub of Excellence and Significance

- Develop and implement a comprehensive communications strategy highlighting ARCO's key achievements, impact stories and community contributions
- Organise awareness campaigns showcasing ARCO's success stories in providing food relief and essential services to vulnerable individuals
- Engage local media outlets for feature stories and interviews that highlight ARCO's role as a vital community resource.

1.2 Strengthening Partnerships and Collaborations

- Host regular partner appreciation events to acknowledge and celebrate the invaluable contributions of collaborators, donors, volunteers and stakeholders
- Foster ongoing dialogues with key community organisations and institutions to identify potential areas of collaboration and synergy
- Establish joint initiatives with local businesses, NGOs and government agencies to enhance the scope and effectiveness of services.

1.3 Creating Inclusive and Welcoming Environments

- Develop diversity and inclusion training programs for staff and volunteers, promoting an environment that respects all cultures, backgrounds and abilities
- Enhance signage and physical spaces within ARCO to reflect an inviting and inclusive atmosphere, ensuring everyone feels comfortable and valued
- Organise community events that celebrate cultural diversity, encouraging social interaction and cross-cultural understanding.

1.4 Engage Community Through Interactive Programs

- Launch regular community engagement workshops, seminars and town hall meetings to gather feedback and ideas from local residents
- Host interactive forums where community members can contribute suggestions for service improvements, fostering a sense of ownership and involvement
- Organise open-house events that offer guided tours of ARCO's facilities, allowing the community to witness firsthand the positive impact of its programs.

CONSOLIDATE ARCO Identity, Reputation and Influence

1.5 Establish Thought Leadership

- Develop a series of thought leadership articles, blog posts and whitepapers related to food security, community development and social responsibility.
- Participate in relevant conferences, panels, and webinars to showcase ARCO's expertise and innovative approaches in addressing community challenges
- Collaborate with academic institutions to conduct research and share findings that contribute to the broader understanding of food insecurity and social welfare.

1.6 Amplifying Online Presence

- Revamp ARCO's website with compelling visuals, success stories and easily accessible information about services, events and volunteer opportunities
- Leverage social media platforms to share engaging content, behind-the-scenes glimpses and success stories fostering a sense of community online
- Initiate online campaigns and challenges that encourage supporters to share their experiences with ARCO, expanding its digital reach and impact.



STRENGTHEN INTERNAL CAPACITY

Staff, Programs, Systems and Process

To make our organisation resilient and robust while maintaining agility. This will provide us with good governance, and with transparency and accountability which will enable a sustainable future.

2.1 Enhance Operational Effectiveness

- Conduct regular operational assessments to identify inefficiencies and implement process improvements
- Develop key performance indicators (KPIs) for different departments and regularly review progress towards meeting them
- Implement technology solutions to streamline administrative tasks and optimise resource allocation.

2.2 Ensuring Financial Sustainability

- Conduct a thorough financial audit to identify areas for cost savings and revenue growth
- Develop diversified fundraising strategies, including grants, donations and partnerships to ensure financial stability
- Monitor financial performance against budget and adjust strategies as needed to achieve long-term sustainability.

2.3 Managing Information and Knowledge

- Implement a centralised digital knowledge management system to organise and share information across departments
- Establish protocols for documenting best practices, lessons learnt, and historical data for easy access and continuity
- Conduct regular training sessions for staff on utilising information systems effectively.

2.4 Strengthening Safety and Risk Management

- Develop comprehensive safety protocols and guidelines for employees and volunteers, including emergency response plan
- Conduct regular safety assessments of physical spaces and equipment, and address any identified risks promptly
- Provide training to staff on risk assessment, mitigation and reporting procedures.

STRENGTHEN INTERNAL CAPACITY

Staff, Programs, Systems and Process

2.5 Improving Customer Service

- Establish a customer feedback mechanism to gather input on service quality and areas for improvement
- Implement customer service training programs to enhance communication skills and responsiveness
- Monitor customer satisfaction levels and address concerns in a timely and effective manner.

2.6 Fostering a High-Performance Work Environment

- Provide professional development opportunities to enhance staff skills and keep up with industry trends
- Implement a performance management system that includes regular reviews, goal setting, and recognition of achievements
- Foster a culture of adaptability by encouraging cross-training and skill diversification among employees.

2.7 Enhancing Leadership and Governance

- Offer leadership development programs for managers and team leaders to improve their management and communication skills
- Establish transparent decision-making processes that involve staff input, fostering a sense of ownership
- Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the governance structure and make adjustments as needed.







SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

Land, Site and Facilities

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3.1 Creating Community-Centric Spaces

- Collaborate with community members to identify and design facilities and programs that address their well-being and engagement needs.
- Conduct regular surveys and focus group discussions to gather feedback on the effectiveness of existing spaces and programs
- Implement new programs and events based on community input, promoting inclusivity and active participation.

3.2 Ensuring Safe and Secure Participation

- Establish safety protocols and guidelines for all activities, ensuring participants can engage in a secure and risk-free environment
- Regularly review and update safety measures in line with best practice and involving community needs
- Provide training sessions to staff and volunteers on emergency response and ensuring participant safety.

3.3 Developing Comprehensive Repair and Maintenance Plans

- Develop annual repair and maintenance plans, outlining necessary works for facilities and site improvements
- Implement regular site inspections to identify repair and maintenance needs, prioritising projects based on urgency and impact
- Monitor progress against repair and maintenance plans, ensuring timely completion of tasks.

3.4 Ensuring Clean and Well-Maintained Public Spaces

- Establish a regular cleaning schedule for public areas, ensuring they remain clean and inviting throughout the year.
- Implement waste management strategies that promote recycling and reduce environmental impact
- Engage community members in volunteer clean-up events to foster a sense of ownership and care for public spaces.

SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

Land, Site and Facilities

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BUILD & STRENGTHEN PROGRAMS

Humanitarian, Arts & Culture, and Environmental

Recognising the interconnectedness of issues, our programs are designed and implemented to ensure people actively participate and become agents of their own change.

4.1 Empowering Vulnerable and Disadvantaged Individuals

- Develop tailored support programs targeting vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals, offering resources for skill-building and community engagement
- Collaborate with local organisations to identify specific needs and gaps, ensuring the programs are impactful and relevant
- Regularly assess the participation and satisfaction levels of vulnerable participants in community programs.

4.2 Providing Inclusive Facilities, Programs and Activities

- Create an accessibility plan for all facilities, ensuring they are inclusive and accommodating to diverse needs
- Offer a wide range of programs and activities that reflect the interests and preferences of community, fostering collaboration and respect
- Monitor participation rates across different demographics to ensure diversity and inclusivity.

4.3 Supporting Local Artists and Cultivating Cultural Spaces

- Develop and manage affordable production and exhibition spaces for artists, offering opportunities for showcasing their work
- Organise regular art exhibitions, workshops and cultural events that promote ARCO as a vibrant arts and culture hub
- Collaborate with local art associations and galleries to foster a strong creative community

4.4 Implementing Energy-Saving and Renewable Energy Projects

- Conduct energy audits to identify areas for energy-saving improvements across the site
- Implement energy efficient technologies and practices, such as LED lighting, smart energy monitoring systems, and HVAC optimisation.

BUILD & STRENGTHEN PROGRAMS

Humanitarian, Arts & Culture, and Environmental

4.5 Working Towards Net Zero Emissions and Environmental Leadership

- Develop a comprehensive sustainability plan outlining strategies to achieve net zero emissions on-site
- Introduce carbon reduction initiatives such as waste reduction programs, sustainable transportation options, and green procurement practices.
- Promote ARCO's sustainability efforts through educational campaigns, community engagement and partnerships with environmental organisations.

4.6 Cultivating Community Engagement and Collaboration

- Organise regular community forums, workshops and panel discussions on humanitarian, arts, culture and environmental topics
- Establish partnerships with local schools, universities and community groups to expand the reach and impact of programs
- Celebrate successful initiatives and milestones through public events that showcase the community's achievements

4.7 Monitoring and Reporting Progress

- Establish partnerships with local schools, universities, and community groups to expand the reach and impact of programs.

4.8 Continuous Improvement and Adaptation

- Celebrate successful initiatives and milestones through public events that showcase the community's achievements.







