



A Better Future, Shaped by Creative Children

Strategic Plan 2027 - 2031

A future blueprint to make creativity available to every child so children can access, belong, build wellbeing and grow the creative, social and emotional capabilities they need for life.

Our Public Promise

Every child should have the opportunity to imagine, create and belong.

Why This Plan, Why Now

Barking Gecko Arts stands at a defining moment. The merger of Barking Gecko Theatre Company and AWESOME Arts created the opportunity to build a new kind of organisation for Western Australia: one that places imagination, access, belonging and creative capability at the centre of childhood.

Children are growing up in a world shaped by anxiety, social disconnection, financial pressure, climate concern, digital saturation, uneven access to creativity and increasing recognition of diverse sensory, social and communication needs.

In this context, creativity is not decoration. It is infrastructure. It builds empathy, confidence, emotional literacy and adaptability. It gives children a way to make sense of themselves, their communities and their futures.

The strategic heart

Access. Belonging. Wellbeing. Capability.



The Future We Are Working Toward

A better future, shaped by creative children.

This vision is deliberately simple. It says that children are not just future workers, future audiences or future citizens. They are creative people now.

When children are supported to imagine, express, collaborate and belong, they build the capabilities they need to shape their own lives and contribute to a more compassionate, connected and inventive world.

By 2031, Barking Gecko Arts will be Western Australia's leading creativity organisation for children and families: making outstanding work, building a broad Creative Families community, removing barriers, strengthening creative places and capabilities, and helping shape a stronger statewide system around children.

What Children Need

- Safe, joyful and inclusive opportunities to build confidence, belonging, identity, connection and future capability.
- Adults who listen, stories that respect their intelligence, and creative experiences that help them name big feelings and see themselves as capable.
- Access not only to the arts, but to imagination.
- Systems, places and adults designed to support their inclusion, participation and imagination.
- Recognition that children have ideas, rights, feelings and agency now.



Our role

BGA's distinctive role is creative, relational and preventative: creating safe, joyful and high-quality creative experiences that strengthen connection, expression, confidence, belonging and participation.

The Five Engines Of Barking Gecko Arts

The plan moves BGA toward organising around the conditions children need to imagine, participate, belong and thrive. The five engines describe the value BGA must create for children.

Engine	What it makes possible
Imagination Engine	Creative learning, future skills, teacher development, child voice, co-design, research, artist pathways and sector capability.
Place Engine	AWESOME Festival, regional and outer-metro hubs, mini-hubs, local partnerships, digital access and creative places close to children.
Story Engine	Outstanding creative experiences, new work, WA stories, theatre, festival, participatory formats and creative worlds for children.
Belonging Engine	Access by design, Access & Inspire, a Creative Equity Fund, culturally safe and disability-inclusive practice, and child/community impact evidence.
Stewardship Engine	Partnerships, philanthropy, evidence, governance, people, sustainability, brand, revenue and the systems that make ambition durable.

What We Will Build By 2031

- A statewide Access & Inspire platform that removes practical barriers to participation.
- A Creative Learning and Future Skills Framework for children, teachers, schools and families.
- A connected network of creative precincts, hubs, mini-hubs and place-based relationships.
- A stronger pipeline of Western Australian stories, artists and creative worlds for children.
- A Creative Equity Fund to support tickets, transport, residencies, access and regional participation.
- A stronger child and community impact framework with reliable evidence and reporting systems.
- A broad and connected Creative Families community.
- A more regenerative organisation that gives back to children, communities, artists, staff, partners and the planet.

How This Will Feel In Real Life

For children	More chances to imagine, make, play, participate, belong, express feelings, build confidence and see themselves as creative people.
For families	Clearer, easier and more welcoming pathways into creative experiences, including families who have not previously found BGA.
For schools and teachers	Practical learning resources, professional development, school pathways, transport/subsidy support and creative approaches that support classrooms.
For communities	More repeat relationships with local venues, councils, schools, libraries and community partners, especially in regional and outer-metro places.
For artists and the sector	More support for creating high-quality work for children and stronger sector capability around safety, imagination, inclusion and child-centred practice.

How We Will Grow Without Losing Ourselves

The plan is ambitious, but growth must serve children rather than the organisation's size for its own sake. BGA will pursue purpose-led growth where it increases access, equity, wellbeing, reach, capability, quality and long-term resilience for children, young people, families and communities.

We will protect child safety, safeguarding, cultural safety, artistic and educational quality, staff wellbeing, financial integrity, public trust and the dignity and agency of children.



The core test

Will this help more children access creativity, belonging, wellbeing and future capability and can BGA do it safely, sustainably and well?

How We Will Know It Is Working

BGA will measure progress through a mix of reach, depth, quality, equity, wellbeing, capability, sustainability and system strength. These indicators are strategic signals, not a substitute for listening to children, families, teachers, artists and communities.



By 2031, we will look for progress in...	Public-facing success signal
Access	10,000-12,000 children and young people supported annually through ticket and/or transport subsidy.
Place	18-24 WA communities reached annually through touring, hubs, residencies or festival mini-hubs.
Learning	20 active Creative Learning online resources available.
Belonging	80%+ of participants reporting connection to others and a safe, welcoming space.
Schools	55-60% returning schools year-on-year.
Capability	80%+ of children identifying creativity, confidence or collaboration growth.
Sustainability	A more diversified income base, healthy reserves and stronger evidence systems.

The Public Purpose

BGA's work sits naturally alongside public and community priorities in prevention, early intervention, wellbeing, education, access, inclusion, regional equity and sector sustainability.

Prevention and wellbeing	Safe, creative, non-clinical experiences that build confidence, emotional literacy, social connection and self-expression.
Education and future skills	Creative learning that builds creativity, collaboration, communication, problem-solving, resilience, curiosity and teacher capability.
Regional and outer-metro equity	Hub, touring, residency and festival models that reduce postcode-based barriers and bring creativity closer to children.
Disability inclusion and cultural safety	Inclusive design, accessible venues, supported participation, culturally responsive practice and stronger community relationships.
Sector sustainability	Training, shared resources, evaluation tools, partnerships and support for the wider children and young people's creative sector.

A Shared Invitation

This plan cannot be delivered by BGA alone. It depends on children, families, teachers, artists, schools, venues, local governments, funders, philanthropists, corporate partners, community organisations and civic leaders who believe creativity belongs in every child's life.

If you want to help more children imagine, create and belong, we invite you to start a conversation with us.

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