



MEDIA ALERT: FOR RELEASE ON THURSDAY 8 October 2026

Metro Arts strengthens Board with four new appointments

Metro Arts, long-standing incubator and launchpad for Queensland's contemporary independent artists, has welcomed four new Directors to its Board, bringing significant experience across arts and cultural leadership, finance, governance, strategy, philanthropy and organisational transformation.

Katherine Hoepper, Sarah Neal, Wendy Peard and Naomi White joined the Board on 1 October, following a highly competitive recruitment process that attracted an exceptional field of candidates from across the arts, corporate and not-for-profit sectors.

Metro Arts Board Chair Tara Hastings said the appointments marked an important point in the organisation's continued renewal.

"We were genuinely overwhelmed by the calibre of people who put themselves forward to join the Metro Arts Board. For me, that speaks volumes about the regard people have for Metro Arts and the confidence in where the organisation is heading."

"Katherine, Sarah, Wendy and Naomi each bring very different skills, experience and perspectives to the Board. Collectively, they strengthen our capability across the arts, finance, strategy, philanthropy and organisational leadership, while sharing a genuine commitment to Metro Arts and the artists we exist to support."

"It is an exciting time for Metro Arts. We have done a lot of work over the past year to strengthen the organisation and support its long-term sustainability, and these appointments are another important step in that work."

The Board renewal comes as Metro Arts continues a broader organisational reset led by CEO Kieran Swann, focused on financial sustainability, strengthening operations and partnerships, and ensuring Metro Arts can continue to invest in its core purpose of supporting artists to develop, experiment and create new work.

Swann said the strengthened Board comes at an important time for Metro Arts. "Metro Arts has always played a particular role in Queensland's independent arts sector, backing artists to take risks, develop ideas and create new work. As we strengthen the organisation for its next chapter, having a Board with this breadth of experience and such a strong belief in what Metro Arts does is incredibly valuable."

The four new Directors join Chair Tara Hastings and Directors Paul Bowker, Natano Fa'anana and Dr Naomi Blacklock, creating a Board that combines continuity and experience with new skills and perspectives.



New Board members

Katherine Hoepper

Katherine Hoepper brings extensive arts and cultural management experience working with performing arts companies, festivals, independent artists and venues, and is currently Director, Activation at State Library of Queensland. She has led work to build audiences, develop partnerships and deliver organisational strategic priorities for Brisbane Powerhouse, La Boite Theatre Company, The Little Red Company and Queensland Theatre Company. Her governance experience includes supporting the growth and sustainability of indelarts, the Creative Brisbane Collab. and Dead Puppet Society.

Sarah Neal

Sarah Neal is a creative industries leader and practitioner with more than 22 years' experience in film and the performing arts, including 10 years as Co-CEO and Executive Producer of Malthouse Theatre and seven years as Head of Programming at Brisbane Powerhouse. Her work spans festival curation, placemaking, national and international commissioning, programming and touring. She is also a filmmaker and published author and editor. Her industry and governance experience includes Hothouse Theatre, the Australia Council for the Arts Theatre Board and the Cannes Film Festival Queer Palm jury.

Wendy Peard

Wendy Peard is a Fellow CPA and MBA-qualified finance executive with 30 years' experience supporting boards, executive teams and stakeholders across Australia, the UK, Singapore and the US. She brings expertise in financial stewardship, governance, risk management and strategic decision-making, combining commercial experience with disciplined accountability. Wendy has experience securing government grant funding, supporting capital raising initiatives and working with organisations through growth, transformation and change.

Naomi White

Naomi White is an executive advisor with more than 25 years' experience in organisational strategy, leadership, culture and performance. She brings experience in philanthropy, sponsorship, strategic partnerships, financial oversight and risk management. Her governance experience includes Board-level committees at Suncorp and Netball Queensland and the Queensland Firebirds. Through her membership of the Community-led, Bindi Bindi Place Steering Committee, she has contributed community leadership and philanthropic fundraising to a First Nations co-designed early intervention initiative, embedding First Nations voices in governance and practice.

More information now available via <https://metroarts.com.au/discover-metro-arts/about-us/>

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Images available

Get in touch:

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About Metro Arts

Metro Arts centres Australian artists and experimentation.

In 2026-27, Metro Arts is embarking on a deliberate “rewiring” of our operations, programming and partnerships. This transformational process is strengthening internal systems, deepening philanthropic relationships, embedding entrepreneurial and sustainable practices, and refining strategy to better support artists and future-focused practice. These efforts lay the foundation for the organisation’s next chapter as we approach our 50th anniversary and Brisbane’s Cultural Olympiad for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

With a profound 47 year legacy, Metro Arts is at the forefront of nurturing Australian creative talent, serving as an incubator and launchpad for some of the country’s finest artists. Metro Arts is equipped with state-of-the-art galleries, artist studios and theatre facilities, all located along the old Peters Ice-cream Factory Lane, within the thriving West Village precinct in West End. Their workshop facility at Norman Park provides vital space for visual artists to create, build and experiment supported by Brisbane City Council.



Dedicated to a better Brisbane

Metro Arts Program is supported by the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its funding and advisory body. Metro Arts is supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland and the Visual Art, Craft and Design Framework, an initiative of the Australian, state and territory governments. The Metro Arts Creative Development Program and Artist in Residence Program is proudly supported by Brisbane City Council. Metro Arts Visual Arts (MAVA) Substation is assisted by Brisbane City Council.