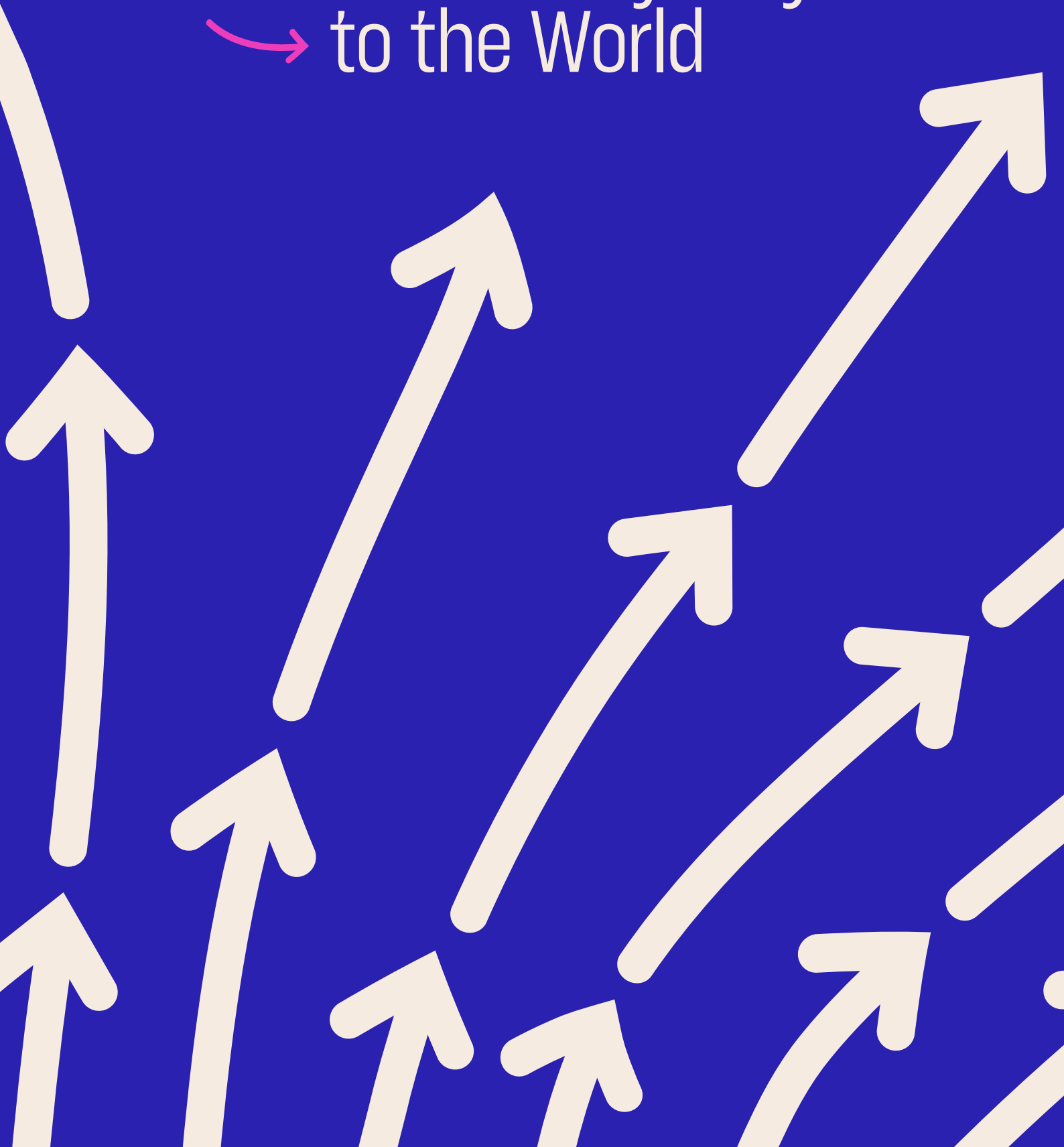
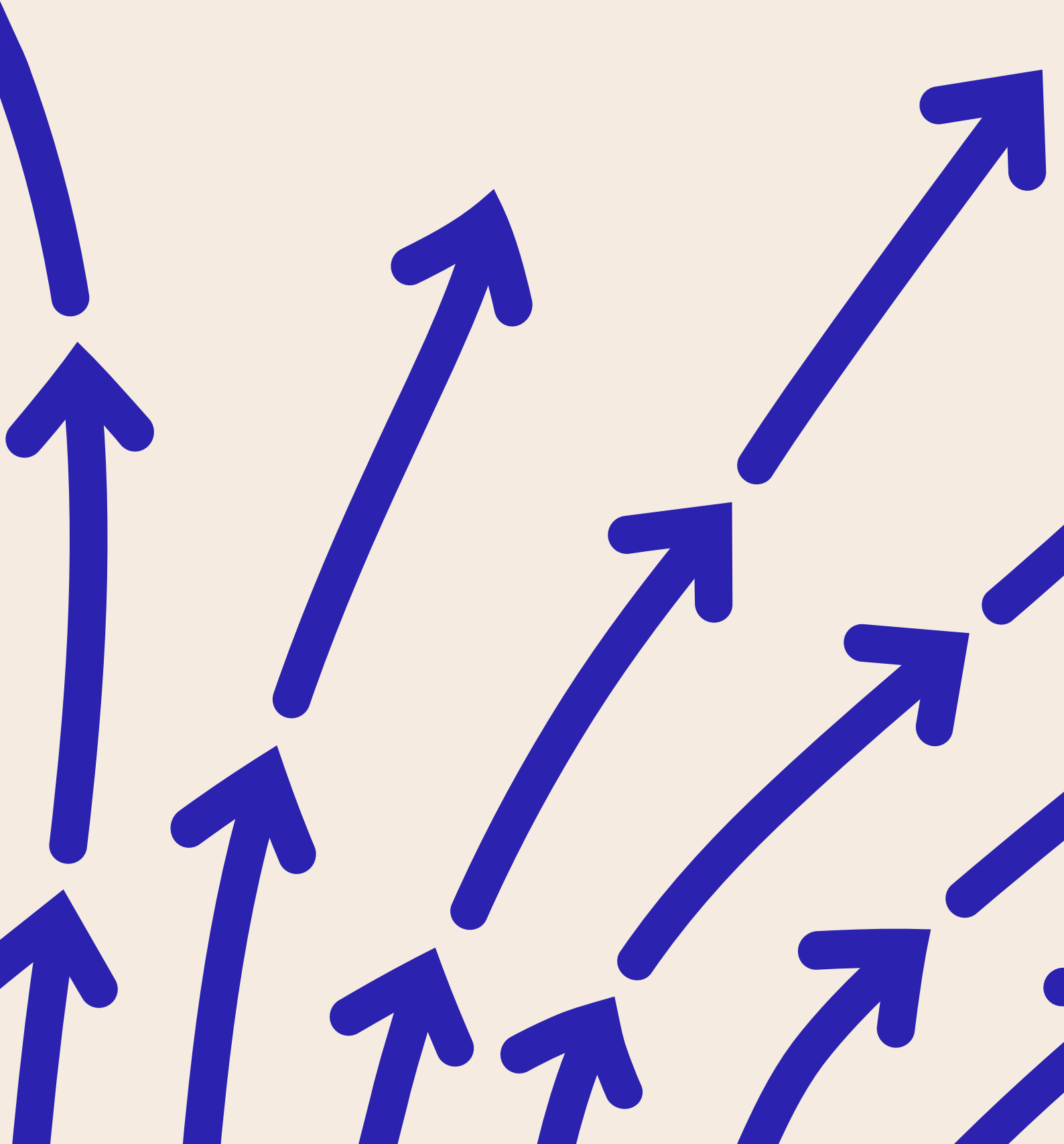


PAS International: From Western Sydney → to the World



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge the Baramadagal as the Continuing Custodians / Traditional Owners of Baramada Ngurra, since the first sunrise. We pay respect to this land now also known as the City of Parramatta, and the ongoing kinship connections of other Darug peoples to Baramada Ngurra and Iyora.



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→ 1 Executive Summary

PAS International: From Western Sydney to the World is Parramatta Artists Studios' first comprehensive articulation of our approach, strategic context, priorities, mechanisms and values for working internationally, with a particular focus on the Asia Pacific region.

It establishes a clear foundation for how PAS will undertake this work in ways that are artist-centred, locally grounded and regionally resonant, while positioning the City of Parramatta as a distinctive local government leader in artist-led international engagement.

International engagement is understood as an extension of place, rather than a departure from it. This work begins with accountability to the Baramadagal lands of the Darug nation, to the communities that shape Parramatta, and to artists whose practices already move across multiple geographies, languages, histories and publics.

The case for this work is both artistic and civic. For artists, it creates pathways for research, exchange, commissioning, profile, income streams and long-term collaboration. For Parramatta, it contributes to cultural leadership, strengthens intercultural dialogue, builds capability, and supports relationships across arts, education, community development, tourism and cultural diplomacy.

The plan proposes four strategic priorities:

- Grounded Hosting and International Visibility; recognising that outward profile and inward hospitality are mutually reinforcing.
- Reciprocal and Context-led Exchange; prioritising fieldwork, mutuality and iterative development over transactional models.
- Connected Communities of Practice; acknowledging that trusted networks, peer exchange, recommendation and alumni engagement are central to how practice is sustained across borders.
- Accountability; naming the responsibility, access, stewardship, environmental accountability and organisational readiness required to undertake this work with integrity.

These priorities are supported by a flexible delivery model. Rather than prescribe a single form of exchange, the plan combines clear strategic direction with an adaptive approach to delivery. Shaped through consultation with staff, the Baramadagal Family Network, current PAS artists across the Granville and Rydalmere studios, select PAS alumni, and industry advice from curator and cultural strategist Mikala Tai, this plan positions PAS not only as a site of cultural production, but as a site of hospitality, exchange and long-term international relationship building.

→ 2 Purpose and Scope

This plan provides a strategic foundation for how Parramatta Artists Studios approaches international work across its curatorial, artist development, partnership and public programming activity. It sets out the rationale, strategic context, values, priorities and mechanisms that guide PAS in international settings, with a particular focus on the Asia Pacific region.

The plan is intended to support decision-making, partnership development, program design, resourcing and evaluation. It provides a clear but flexible structure through which future opportunities can be assessed, shaped and delivered with consistency.

→ 3 Introduction

***PAS International: From Western Sydney to the World* articulates Parramatta Artists Studios' commitment to international exchange, creative collaboration and showcasing Western Sydney to the world. It sits alongside the City of Parramatta's First Nations Strategy and is nested within the strategic vision of Parramatta 2050, the Creative Parramatta Cultural Strategy, and the PAS Strategic Plan 2025–2028.**

This work enables PAS to support artists to build relationships, develop work, exchange knowledge and participate in conversations beyond the local context. It expands the conditions in which Western Sydney artists can be seen, supported and challenged, while also bringing new perspectives, practices and voices into Parramatta. Done well, international engagement can strengthen Parramatta's cultural identity, deepen intercultural dialogue, build local capability, and foster relationships across arts, education, community development, tourism and cultural diplomacy.

This work is shaped by a wider policy and funding environment. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade identifies the creative industries as important tools of cultural diplomacy across South Asia, Southeast Asia and the Pacific. Under the *Revive National Cultural Policy 2023–2028*, Creative Australia has strengthened its regional focus, including through initiatives such as the Asia Pacific Arts Awards. At a state level, the NSW Government's *Plan for Western Sydney Arts, Culture and Creative Industries 2025–2028* also prioritises global engagement, with a strong emphasis on Asia Pacific cultural exchange.

Western Sydney's creative industries are at a significant moment. Research from Western Sydney Creative and the Centre for Western Sydney suggests the region's creative industries could quadruple, generating an additional \$6.4 billion in economic output annually and more than 24,000 jobs. While PAS's role is not primarily economic, international cultural exchange contributes directly to the ecosystem that supports this growth, building profile, opportunity and creative capability across the region and strengthening relationships across arts, education, community development, tourism and cultural diplomacy.

The plan is grounded in the cultural, demographic and geographic realities of Western Sydney, a region home to more than 2.7 million people and one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse populations in Australia. More than half of the area's residents are born overseas or have at least one parent born overseas, and more than 180 languages are spoken across its communities. This reflects a lived condition of plurality, transnational belonging and cultural exchange that already shapes the artists, communities and conversations PAS works with. Western Sydney is also home to a growing number of artists, collectives and cultural organisations whose practices are reshaping contemporary Australian culture, while raising important questions about representation, authorship and who gets to speak for the region internationally.

Parramatta, known as the Central River City, sits at the geographic heart of Greater Sydney. As outlined in *Parramatta 2050*, the city is emerging as a global centre defined by cultural leadership, creative enterprise and a commitment to equity and sustainability. It is home to major cultural infrastructure including Powerhouse Parramatta, PHIVE, Parramatta Town Hall / Ngurra Gunya, Riverside Theatres and Parramatta Artists Studios, and is positioned as the epicentre of culture and creativity in Western Sydney. The city's long-term vision includes becoming a world leader in First Nations partnerships, a hub for international collaboration and a leader in cultural and creative excellence.

PAS already has strong international foundations to build on. The organisation is connected to Asia Pacific-facing artistic networks and initiatives, including relationships linked to the Asia Pacific Triennial and Asia TOPA, and has hosted artists from Japan, China, India, and Fiji. PAS alumni including Owen Leong, Kirtika Kain and Ramesh Mario Nithiyendran have built significant international careers with connections across the region. Parramatta's cultural infrastructure is also expanding. The opening of Powerhouse Parramatta, the redevelopment of Riverside Theatres, and PAS's own transition into the Parramatta Cultural Hub strengthens the conditions for collaboration, hosting and exchange, particularly with institutions and artists across the Asia Pacific.

PAS understands international engagement as an extension of place. This work begins with accountability to the Baramadagal lands of the Darug nation, to the communities that shape Parramatta, and to artists whose practices already move across multiple geographies, languages, histories and publics. It reflects PAS's distinctive role as a studio-based organisation invested in the full life of artistic practice: research, development, experimentation, dialogue, visibility and continuity.

→ 4 Strategic Alignment

This plan contributes to and is informed by the following strategic contexts.

City of Parramatta First Nations Strategy 2024–2029

Ensures that this work is grounded in Baramadagal-led and Indigenous knowledges and does not operate separately from PAS's obligations to Country and First Nations cultural leadership.

Parramatta 2050

Aligns with the Game Changers "The Epicentre of Culture and Creativity" and "A World Leader in First Nations Partnerships", positioning Parramatta as a city that is locally grounded and internationally connected.

Creative Parramatta 2025–2034

Supports Priority 5: Cultural and Creative Leadership, advancing Parramatta's profile as a place of creative exchange, artistic ambition and global cultural relevance.

PAS Strategic Plan 2025–2028

Operationalises this work across PAS's curatorial, programming, artist development and community engagement initiatives.

→ 5 Consultations

PAS International: From Western Sydney to the World has been shaped through consultation across Parramatta Artists Studios' immediate and extended communities. Input was drawn from staff across PAS and City of Parramatta, the Baramadagal Family Network, current PAS artists working across the Granville and Rydalmere studios, select PAS alumni, peer organisations in Parramatta, and industry advice from curator and cultural strategist Mikala Tai.

Compiled with independent cultural consultants M&K, the plan brings together organisational priorities, artist perspectives and external strategic insight to articulate an approach that is grounded in place, responsive to artists and aligned with PAS's long-term vision.

→ 6 Why International Engagement Matters

This work enables PAS to support artists to build relationships, develop work, exchange knowledge and participate in conversations beyond the local context. It expands the conditions in which Western Sydney artists can be seen, supported and challenged, while also bringing new perspectives, practices and interlocutors into Parramatta.

Its value extends beyond individual mobility or institutional profile. Done well, international engagement can strengthen Parramatta's cultural identity, deepen intercultural dialogue, support research and learning, build local capability, and foster relationships across arts, education, community development, tourism and cultural diplomacy. For PAS, these wider benefits matter, but they remain accountable to the organisation's core artistic purpose. This work is both artistic and civic: a means of supporting artists and contributing to a more connected and culturally confident city.

→ 7 Why Asia Pacific?

The Asia Pacific is the primary geographic focus of this plan. It reflects Western Sydney's communities, the relationships PAS has built and is building, and the policy settings shaping cultural exchange in Australia. It is also the region through which PAS can most meaningfully connect its local artistic life to wider transnational conversations.

Political and diplomatic significance

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade identifies the creative industries as important tools of cultural diplomacy across South Asia, Southeast Asia and the Pacific, projecting a contemporary image of Australia while opening pathways for trade, mobility and tourism. Under the *Revive National Cultural Policy 2023–2028*, Creative Australia has also strengthened its regional focus, including through the Asia Pacific Arts Awards, which celebrate region-wide exchange and elevate artists working across Asia Pacific contexts.

For PAS, this policy environment strengthens the case for sustained engagement in the region as a meaningful contributor to broader cultural and civic relationships, particularly as the region recalibrates old assumptions about European and North American economic stability.

Geographic and cultural proximity

Western Sydney is home to one of the most culturally diverse populations in Australia, with strong diasporic ties across Asia Pacific countries. This makes regional engagement a grounded extension of PAS's commitment to diaspora-driven exchange and cultural responsiveness, rather than a symbolic international gesture.

Engaging with the Asia Pacific through artistic exchange amplifies diasporic voices, strengthens inclusion, and supports the principle of taking our creativity to the world and bringing the world to our stories.

Strategic alignment and opportunity

Parramatta 2050 positions Parramatta as a global creative city and the epicentre of culture and creativity by 2050. Asia Pacific engagement is a key lever in realising this ambition. Through reciprocal partnerships, artistic exchange and international showcasing, PAS can contribute directly to the city's broader cultural and civic vision.

PAS has a history of engagement with Asia Pacific-facing artistic networks and international exchange. This includes the Kyoto Art Center Residency Exchange, through which PAS hosted Japanese artist Kenichi Ishiguro; cross-cultural residencies such as *Semblance of Order* developed with Pakistani artists Roohi Shafiq Ahmed and Adeel-uz-Zafar alongside artist-curator Abdullah M. I. Syed (in collaboration with Cicada Press); and earlier international and diasporic residencies presented through Parramasala and allied partnerships. PAS has also supported projects such as New Delhi-based artist-curator Vidisha Fadescha's Parramatta/Western Sydney project *Burn All The Books That Call You The Unknown*. Collectively, these initiatives provide a strong foundation on which to build a more intentional and strategic international engagement framework.

The NSW Government's *Plan for Western Sydney Arts, Culture and Creative Industries 2025–2028* and the federal *Revue* cultural policy both prioritise global engagement, with a strong emphasis on Asia Pacific cultural exchange. This plan aligns PAS with those policies and strengthens the organisation's ability to access funding, partnerships and strategic support for international initiatives.

There is also clear artist and alumni demand for deeper engagement with the Asia Pacific. PAS alumni including Tom Polo, Owen Leong, Serwah Attafuah, Kirtika Kain and Ramesh Mario Nithiyendran have built significant international careers with connections across the region. The plan responds to this demand by creating pathways for reciprocal residencies, curatorial visits, artistic exchange and international showcasing.

→ 8 Guiding Values

All work led by PAS in international contexts should be shaped by a values-based approach that ensures artistic ambition remains inseparable from accountability to our local context and community. These values are practical decision-making tools that inform program design, partnership choices, budgeting, risk assessment and evaluation.

Groundedness

This work should remain accountable to the Baramadagal lands of the Darug nation, to Western Sydney communities and to PAS's local mandate. Global connection should deepen, not dilute, local relevance.

Reciprocity

Exchange should create mutual value. PAS will prioritise partnerships and processes that recognise the knowledge, labour and context of all participants, and that generate benefit across artistic, civic and community settings.

Artist-centric

The plan prioritises the support artists need to build meaningful practice across borders rather than relying on generic mobility metrics. Support should be responsive to different practices, career stages and ways of working.

Access and responsibility

Access, cultural safety, communication, family responsibilities, pacing and wellbeing are fundamental to the integrity of this work. They are not secondary considerations, but core conditions of participation and organisational responsibility.

Planetary entanglement

PAS recognises that this work takes place within an interconnected ecological, cultural and political world where movement, exchange and partnership carry environmental consequences as well as relational responsibilities. The plan supports approaches that are environmentally conscious, attentive to interdependence, and capable of holding local and international accountability at the same time.

→ 9 Strategic Approach

PAS must operate within a changing artistic, political and ecological landscape. The most useful strategic approach is one that combines clarity with adaptability. Clarity provides coherence, accountability and a shared sense of purpose. Adaptability makes it possible to respond to changing artist needs, geopolitical conditions, partner availability and relationship-led opportunities as they emerge.

This plan is grounded in values, a geographic focus and clear priorities, while allowing the precise form of exchange to remain responsive to circumstance.

This adaptive approach is especially important where opportunity is often shaped by timing, trust, mobility conditions, funding environments and the uneven realities of cultural infrastructure across different places. PAS's role is to remain intentional without becoming rigid: to hold a clear and consistent approach while allowing partnerships, programs and pathways to develop in ways that are relational, context-specific and artist-led.

→ 10 Strategic Priorities

Priority One: Grounded Hosting and International Visibility

PAS will strengthen the international visibility of Western Sydney artists while treating hosting as a core part of its approach. Outward profile and inward hospitality are mutually reinforcing. This priority recognises Parramatta as both a point of departure and a site of encounter, exchange and cultural specificity.

This may include:

- positioning PAS artists and alumni on international platforms through residencies, labs, exhibitions, festivals, commissions, publications and research opportunities
- strengthening artist discoverability through digital documentation, strategic introductions and curatorial brokerage
- developing thoughtful hosting approaches for incoming artists, curators and partners, including Indigenous-led hosting protocol, local orientation, access planning, minimum local engagement expectations and contextual connection to place and industry
- ensuring inbound visits generate meaningful local dialogue, sector connection and civic value rather than prestige without relationship

Priority Two: Reciprocal and Context-led Exchange

PAS will prioritise models that are reciprocal, context-responsive and shaped by mutual contribution. This priority values fieldwork, dialogue and iterative development, and recognises that meaningful exchange often unfolds over time rather than through immediate outcomes alone.

This may include:

- supporting research, fieldwork and contextual immersion as legitimate stages of practice for artists, curators and producers
- prioritising partnerships that connect artists to local peers, organisations and communities
- building pathways that can move from research to development to presentation, publication or longer-term collaboration
- favouring models that generate shared learning and leave value in both artistic and community contexts, rather than symbolic reciprocity

Priority Three: Connected Communities of Practice

PAS will invest in communities of practice across the Asia Pacific through alumni engagement, peer exchange, curatorial introductions and artist advocacy. This priority recognises that practice across borders is often sustained through trust, recommendation and repeated contact as much as through formal opportunity structures.

This may include:

- activating alumni as mentors, interlocutors, hosts and returning contributors
- creating opportunities for artists to build relationships with curators, writers, producers and peers across the region through digital and hybrid formats
- providing practical support where needed, including contextual framing and translation, fee advocacy, contract negotiation and travel advice
- building structures that allow relationships to accumulate over time rather than reset with each project

Priority Four: Accountability

PAS will resource the conditions that allow this work to be ethically-grounded, accessible and durable. This priority acknowledges that exchange depends not only on artistic ambition, but on responsibility, stewardship, environmental accountability and organisational readiness.

This may include:

- budgeting for the full ecology of exchange, including access, translation, visa support and visa costs, freight, documentation, duty of care and contingency
- embedding cultural safety, family responsibilities and communication support into program design from the outset
- assessing travel in relation to environmental impact, depth of exchange and long-term value
- strengthening internal capability in hosting, partnership management, artist support and evaluation

→ 11 Delivery Mechanisms

The following mechanisms translate the plan into practice. PAS's support is designed to be responsive to the specific needs of different artists, places and partnerships, prioritising the support needed to build meaningful international engagement over time. This may include practical elements that often go unsupported: fee advocacy, contract negotiation, contextual framing and translation support.

Short term support may include:

- curatorial introductions and strategic profile building
- advice for international engagement including scoping opportunities, funding applications and contract negotiation
- residencies, studio exchanges and artist or curator labs
- alumni mentoring, talks, workshops and advisory connections

Long term support may include:

- potential pathways that can move from research to development to presentation, publication or longer-term collaboration
- co-commissions and collaborative developments with organisations across the Asia Pacific
- peer network building with curators, writers, producers and artists across the region
- digital exchange as a complement to in-person engagement

→ 12 Resourcing and Implementation Considerations

Meaningful international engagement requires investment in finances, people, infrastructure and relationships. *PAS International: From Western Sydney to the World* should therefore be understood as scalable. Its ambition remains constant, but its delivery should be phased according to available resourcing, organisational capacity and the need to retain continuity and institutional knowledge over time.

In the short term, implementation should focus on laying the groundwork: mapping existing relationships, improving artist documentation and discoverability, developing hosting protocols, and identifying a small number of high-alignment partners.

In the medium term, the focus should shift to more structured reciprocal pathways, strengthening artist support around logistics and contracting, engaging alumni networks more actively, developing cross-sector understanding where useful, and embedding this work more visibly across curatorial and public programming.

In the longer term, the plan may support multi-year partnerships, co-commissions, stronger inbound and outbound pathways, and a more established profile for PAS as a host and location for exchange within the Asia Pacific.

The plan set forward is designed to be refined over time, and responsive to what proves most meaningful for artists and communities. Reporting and reflection processes should be designed with care, so that artists are not burdened with unreasonable unpaid administrative work.

13 Risks and Responsibilities

As PAS expands its international approach, risk and responsibility should be treated as dynamic rather than static. Core principles remain consistent, but their application must respond to the specific conditions of each place, partnership and project. The following risks are expressly articulated to ensure the aims of *PAS International: From Western Sydney to the World* are achieved in alignment with the plan's Guiding Values.

Key considerations include:

Anti-extractive practice

Programs should be designed with close attention to uneven power relations between visiting and host contexts. PAS should avoid models that instrumentalise artists, local communities or partner organisations for prestige without mutual benefit.

Mobility and geopolitical risk

Travel and partnerships must be considered in light of visa restrictions, political instability, public health conditions and participant safety.

Cultural and intellectual property

First Nations, diasporic and community-held knowledges must be engaged with rigour, attribution and consent. Exchange should not collapse important distinctions around authorship, stewardship or responsibility.

Equity and inclusion

Access, translation, family responsibilities, financial precarity and cultural safety must be considered from the outset rather than managed belatedly.

Environmental accountability

Travel should be weighed against the likely depth, duration and value of outcomes. Where appropriate, PAS should consider trip clustering, slower timelines and lower-impact alternatives.

Hosting and duty of care

Incoming artist and partner experiences should be held with hospitality, sensitivity and responsibility. Hosting must be properly resourced, context-specific and attentive to practical, cultural, access and interpersonal needs.

→ 14 Evaluation and Impact

Evaluation should reflect both the measurable and less tangible outcomes of this work. Success cannot be assessed solely by the number of trips taken or partnerships announced. It must also be understood through the depth of relationships built, the quality of artistic exchange, the impact on artists' careers, the value created for local and international communities, and the ways opportunities continue to unfold over time.

PAS will use a mixed-method approach that combines quantitative indicators with qualitative and reflective measures. Evaluation will begin from the outset of each activity and should function not only as a reporting tool, but as a learning tool that informs future program design, partner selection, artist support, public communication and resourcing.

PAS will track outcomes across a range of areas, including artist opportunity and experience, the quality and reciprocity of partnerships, local relevance and community benefit, environmental accountability and long-term impact on artistic careers and networks. Specific indicators and methods will be adapted to the scale, context and type of each activity, drawing on program records, artist and partner feedback and reflective practice across the team.

In practice, this might look like:

- artist reflections, debriefs and surveys on the quality and usefulness of support and access
- program records tracking residencies, commissions, invitations and publishing outcomes
- partner feedback on the depth, reciprocity and continuity of relationships
- community-facing outcomes including public programs, workshops and studio visits
- evidence of access measures, translation support, cultural safety and family or care support provided
- longitudinal check-ins tracking repeat collaborations, expanded networks and long-term artistic development
- administrative records including MOUs, budgets, access plans, travel records and contracts

Evaluation principles

Evaluation should be guided by the following principles:

- measure depth, not only volume
- track outcomes over time
- include artist and partner voice without offloading disproportionate unpaid administrative labour onto artists
- use evaluation as a design tool
- balance accountability with learning

Evaluation framework

Priority One: Grounded Hosting and International Visibility			
Area of evaluation	What PAS will assess	Possible indicators	Method /source
Artist opportunity and reach	The extent to which artists access meaningful opportunities	Number of residencies, commissions, presentations, invitations, research opportunities, publishing outcomes or partnerships generated	Program records, artist reporting, invitations, contracts, partner confirmation
Quality of artist experience	Whether artists feel supported, prepared and meaningfully connected	Artist reflections on usefulness of support, quality of introductions, confidence navigating international contexts, administrative burden and longer-term value	Debriefs, surveys, interviews, reflective acquittals
Hosting quality	The effectiveness and responsibility of PAS' hosting model for inbound artists, curators and partners	Visitor feedback, quality of local introductions, evidence of contextual understanding, follow-up engagement after the visit	Visitor feedback forms, staff reflection, follow-up correspondence

Priority Two: Reciprocal and Context-led Exchange			
Area of evaluation	What PAS will assess	Possible indicators	Method /source
Reciprocity and mutual value	Whether exchange generates meaningful benefit across all participating contexts	Evidence of shared learning, co-authored outcomes, benefits to host communities or partners, non-extractive forms of engagement	Partner feedback, artist reflection project review
Strength of partnerships	The depth, reciprocity and continuity of institutional and curatorial relationships	Repeat invitations, co-investment, return visits, co-developed projects, ongoing dialogue, future planning activity	MOUs, partner meetings, email correspondence, project tracking

Priority Three: Connected Communities of Practice			
Area of evaluation	What PAS will assess	Possible indicators	Method /source
Community of practice	The extent to which this work builds durable peer and alumni networks	Alumni re-engagement, mentoring activity, peer exchange, referrals, introductions, recurring participation across programs	Alumni tracking, event participation, network mapping
Local relevance and benefit	Whether this work creates value for artists, audiences and communities in Parramatta and Western Sydney	Public programs, workshops, studio visits, artist talks, informal knowledge exchange, community-facing outcomes linked to international activity	Program documentation, attendance records, narrative case studies

Priority Four: Accountability			
Area of evaluation	What PAS will assess	Possible indicators	Method / source
Access and responsibility	Whether activity has been designed and delivered in ways that are accessible, safe and responsive	Access measures provided, translation support, family or care support, artist feedback on cultural safety and communication	Budgets, access plans, debriefs, internal review
Environmental accountability	How travel and exchange decisions respond to ecological responsibility	Trip clustering, duration of visits, use of lower-impact alternatives where appropriate, relationship between travel and long-tail outcomes	Travel records, planning documents, program review
Long-term impact	The degree to which opportunities continue beyond the initial exchange and can be clearly communicated to stakeholders	Repeat collaborations, invitations to return, expanded networks, future commissions, deepened artistic development, strategic visibility and public-facing articulation of value	Longitudinal artist check-ins, case studies, partner follow-up

Evaluation cycle

Timing	Focus	Example questions
Immediate	Delivery and experience	Was the activity well supported? Were access, hosting and communication needs met? Did it achieve its immediate aims?
Short-term	Relationship and opportunity	Did it lead to new conversations, invitations, partnerships or artistic developments in the months following?
Long-term	Enduring value and sector impact	Did it contribute to sustained collaboration, artistic growth, increased visibility, or stronger regional networks over time?

This approach recognises that some of the most important outcomes emerge gradually. Repeat invitations, returning collaborators, expanded peer networks, stronger confidence, curatorial recognition and more durable artistic relationships are often among the most meaningful indicators of success. It also asks PAS to communicate this value clearly to internal stakeholders and, where appropriate, to the public.

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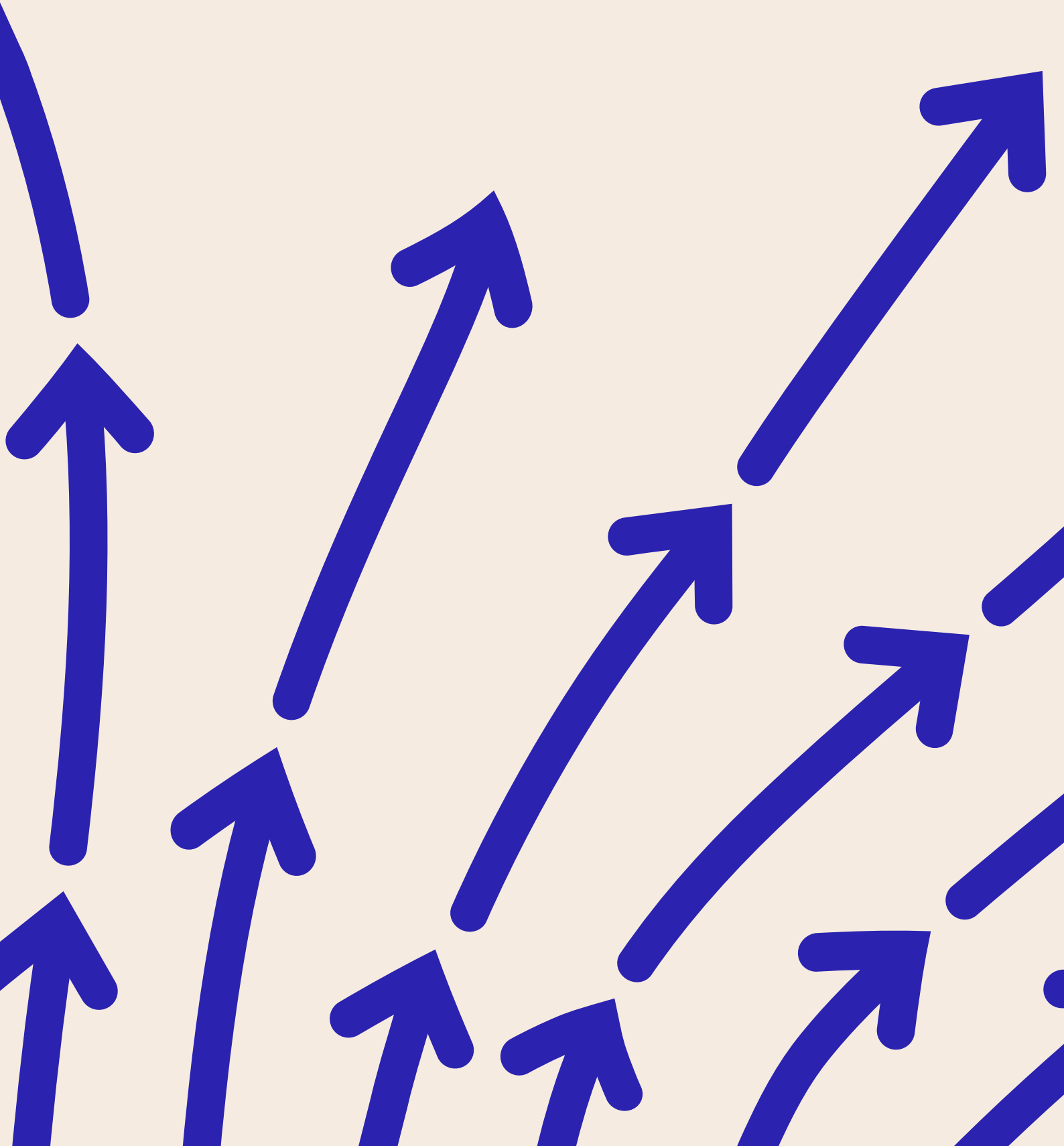
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16 Credits

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