

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 Dharug peoples to Baramada Ngurra and Iyora.

→ For Funders

Parramatta Artists Studios (PAS) is proud to launch *PAS International: From Western Sydney to the World*, a commitment to building reciprocal, long-term relationships and partnerships across the Asia Pacific and beyond.

It is a plan that creates real pathways for Western Sydney artists to build international careers and connections, while contributing to Parramatta's cultural leadership and supporting Australia's cultural connections internationally.

→ The opportunity

International cultural exchange is both an artistic and a civic act. Through this work, PAS strives to strengthen Parramatta's cultural identity, deepen intercultural dialogue, build local capability, and foster relationships across arts, education, community development, tourism and cultural diplomacy.

PAS is uniquely placed to lead this work, based in one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse regions in Australia. Western Sydney is home to more than 2.7 million people, with more than half of its residents born overseas or with at least one parent born overseas, and more than 180 languages spoken across its communities. These are not incidental demographics. They describe a lived condition of plurality, transnational belonging and cultural exchange that already shapes the artists and communities PAS works with. Asia Pacific engagement is not a symbolic gesture for this community. It is a grounded extension of who Western Sydney already is.

This work also has significance at a national level. 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, opening pathways for trade, mobility and tourism. 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 annually and more than 24,000 jobs. While PAS's role is not primarily economic, international cultural exchange contributes to the broader ecosystem that supports this growth.

→ What we will deliver

PAS will deliver a sustained program of international residencies, partnerships, hosting, artist support and exchange, built around four clear priorities. They reflect both the ambition of this work and the rigour required to do it well.

Grounded Hosting and International Visibility: PAS will actively build the international profile of Western Sydney artists through residencies, exhibitions, co-commissions and research opportunities, while hosting visiting artists, curators and cultural workers here in Western Sydney in ways that are meaningful, reciprocal and grounded in place.

Reciprocal and Context-led Exchange: PAS will prioritise exchange that creates genuine mutual benefit, supporting artists to undertake fieldwork, build relationships with local peers and communities, and develop work that can move from research to presentation, publication or longer-term collaboration.

Connected Communities of Practice: PAS will invest in building lasting networks across the Asia Pacific through alumni activation, peer exchange, curatorial introductions and practical artist support, recognising that international careers are built on trust and long-term relationships as much as formal opportunities.

Accountability: PAS will ensure this program is properly resourced to be accessible and environmentally responsible, budgeting for visa costs, translation, cultural safety, family responsibilities and duty of care from the outset.

→ Track record and existing relationships

PAS is not starting from scratch. The organisation already has established connections to Asia Pacific-facing artistic networks and initiatives, including the Kyoto Art Center Residency Exchange, through which PAS hosted Japanese artist Kenichi Ishiguro; the Semblance of Order cross-cultural residency with Pakistani artists Roohi Shafiq Ahmed, Adeel-uz-Zafar and diaspora artist-curator Abdullah M. I. Syed; and its support for New Delhi-based artist-curator Vidisha Fadescha's Parramatta/Western Sydney project *Burn All The Books That Call You The Unknown*. PAS alumni including Owen Leong, Serwah Attafuah, Kirtika Kain and Ramesh Mario Nithiyendran have built significant international careers with connections across the region, demonstrating both the demand for this work and the calibre of artists PAS works with.

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 strengthen the infrastructure for collaboration, hosting and exchange, particularly with institutions and artists across the Asia Pacific.

→ Strategic and policy alignment

The PAS International plan aligns with a strong and complementary set of national, state and local policy priorities, positioning this work for broad strategic support.

At a national and state level, it aligns with the Revive National Cultural Policy and the NSW Government Plan for Western Sydney Arts, Culture and Creative Industries. Locally, it is embedded within the long-term visions set out in the City of Parramatta First Nations Strategy, Parramatta 2050 and Creative Parramatta, which together position Parramatta as a global centre for cultural leadership and creative exchange.

→ Support this work

PAS is committed to international engagement as an ongoing program, not a one-off project. Your support makes it possible to build the kind of sustained, reciprocal relationships that generate real and lasting value for artists, for Western Sydney, and for Australia's cultural relationships across the Asia Pacific and beyond. We would love to talk about how you might be involved.

To find out more, contact Director Sidney McMahon at smcmahon@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au.

For general enquiries, email studios@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au.

The full version of *PAS International: From Western Sydney to the World* is available to view online on the Parramatta Artists Studios website.