COMMUNITY MUSIC: PERCEPTIONS, EXPECTATIONS AND CONDITIONS IN NON-METROPOLITAN AUSTRALIA

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Sydney Conservatorium of Music
University of Sydney
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I declare that the research presented here is my own original work and has not been submitted to any other institution for the award of a degree.

Signed: [Signature]

Date: 27 September 2016
Abstract

Sociocultural enrichment as an outcome of community arts activity is a phenomenon that has been increasingly observed, and documented, since the 1960s. Benefits derived from participation in community music activity in particular have not received the same level of attention. Notwithstanding this disparity, inclusive group music activity continues to gain traction internationally as a vehicle for affinity-based community wellbeing, an intervention for social change, and as a platform for informal and nonformal education.

While recognizing that community music activity can be studied in many ways, utilizing strategies such as single group, traditional geographical location, ethnicity or faith-based community case studies, this thesis presents a multiple case study ethnographic investigation. Its focus is perspectives and experiences, perceptions and expectations, of community music group participants involved in six regional New South Wales (Australia) communities, marginalised by a variety of factors. One North American music community also participated in the research by way of international comparison.

The research used two principal research questions: (1) What aspects of social and cultural development result directly from community group music programs?, and (2) How are the sociocultural benefits that are identified as resulting from participation in community music activity best effected?. Analysis of interview, questionnaire and associated data revealed that aspects of socio-cultural development identified by group members distil into nine themes; and those identified by the group leaders, into a subset of six. Emerging from cross-cohort data that addressed the second question, how such development is best effected, are six defining dimensions of successful community music. The thesis proposes that the three-level template used to interrogate group member perspective, leader perspective and environmental context, is viable as an approach for examining the sociocultural impacts and benefits of community music activity.
Acknowledgements

The completion of this thesis marks the end of a journey that commenced almost ten years ago. It has been an enormous and enduring event across both my life, and that of my family. When it occurred to me, a few years after relocating from Sydney to a rural community, that my education focus had become regional, non-metropolitan community music making and the benefits it carries and demonstrates, the prospective venture laid itself out before me. The support, perspective and wisdom needed to facilitate and feed such a venture, however, could not be assumed. Looking back, it needs to be said that such support and perspective was indeed forthcoming, and it has certainly not been taken for granted. This note of acknowledgement will be brief, and in equal measure, focused and heartfelt. It is impractical to attempt to thank everyone who has facilitated my research over what has been a necessarily protracted period, and to those many individuals of whom I do not make personal mention in these pages, my gratitude is no less sincere.

My parents, Bill and Moira, must be acknowledged for always accepting and supporting my personal and professional proclivities, and in this way facilitating the path to, and through, my PhD candidature. My beautiful, tolerant and patient family - Angela, Jay, Sean, Gemma and Bella - have demonstrated unflinching understanding, and belief in my capacity to achieve, along with unquestioning appreciation of the importance to me of taking this path. The demands on my immediate family have been enormous. Of that I deeply aware, and for their love and support I am profoundly grateful.

Partners in the PhD journey and conference navigation, Dr Wendy Brooks and Michele Benn, have provided much needed perspective, collegiate counsel, and humour along the way; and Peter Carter, long-time confidant and partner in Saturday morning café-philosophising deserves my gratitude. To Stephen O’Connell and Hamish Tait, very dear and sustaining professional and personal amigos; my current employers, the Board of Mitchell Conservatorium; and Chris Thompson and Laretta Goodacre, great supporters of my work in the area of equitable provision of music education and activity for marginalised youth; I say thank you. Their moral support throughout the last two and a half years in particular has been invaluable.
I must also acknowledge the supportive parts played by Associate Professors Kathryn Marsh and Jennifer Rowley, esteemed academics and friends from Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

Finally, I thank my supervisor, Dr Peter Dunbar-Hall. Your unswerving interest and enthusiasm for the topic, your extraordinary perspective and generosity, and your enduring calm and confidence in my capacity for the task, have genuinely made this journey and its outcome possible. Since our first meeting, all those years ago, I have counted myself extremely fortunate to have had you as my guide, my mentor and my friend.
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<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>Australian Broadcasting Corporation (Commission from 1932 – 1983)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>Australian Bureau of Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACFTA</td>
<td>Australia Council for the Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACPMR</td>
<td>Australian Centre for Population and Migration Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AETT</td>
<td>Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AI</td>
<td>Ability Inclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARIA</td>
<td>Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARY</td>
<td>At-Risk Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASGC</td>
<td>Australian Standard Geographical Classification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASME</td>
<td>Australian Society for Music Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austl</td>
<td>Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AZ</td>
<td>Arizona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>British Broadcasting Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>California</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEMA</td>
<td>Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMAC</td>
<td>Community Music Activity Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRANA</td>
<td>Council of Remote Area Nurses Associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEC</td>
<td>Department of Education and Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DET</td>
<td>Department of Education and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIRD</td>
<td>Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DLG</td>
<td>Division of Local Government, Department of Premier and Cabinet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOCA</td>
<td>Department of Communications and the Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOFT</td>
<td>Department of Fair Trading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DoLG</td>
<td>Department of Local Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DP&amp;C</td>
<td>Department of Premier and Cabinet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESM</td>
<td>Eastman School of Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWAHS</td>
<td>Greater Western Area Health Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAC</td>
<td>Industries Assistance Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISME</td>
<td>International Society for Music Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LG&SA…………….. Local Government and Shires Association of New South Wales
LGA……………….. Local Government Area
LGNSW……………. Local Government New South Wales
MFTA……………… Ministry for the Arts
MHC………………. Mental Health Community
MHD&AS………… Mental Health Drug and Alcohol Services
MHPPU……………. Mental Health Promotion and Prevention Unit
NASAA……………. National Assembly of State Arts Agencies
NH…………………. New Horizons
NHIMA……………. New Horizons International Music Association
NSW……………… New South Wales
NT………………….. Northern Territory
NY…………………. New York
ON…………………. Ontario
QLD………………. Queensland
RHWC…………….. Remote Health Worker Choir
SC………………….. Seniors’ Choir
Tas. ………………… Tasmania
Vic. ……………….. Victoria
W.A. ………………. Western Australia
WA…………………. Washington
WW………………… West Wyalong
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Chapter 1: The context of the thesis

Introduction
This thesis is about group music activity. In particular, it explores the perceptions, experiences and expectations of those who participate in the activity, whether as group members - those who make music within the group setting - or as group leaders – those who conduct, facilitate, organise, administer, arrange, or advocate for these activities. There is a third group of participants, or at least another subset spanning both group member and leader cohorts: a group that comprises participants who move fluidly between, or simply embody, the first two. Group members with a temporary or ongoing leadership role, or indeed leaders who occasionally or frequently join in as music maker, are not uncommon in group music communities. Definitionally, this is an investigation of what is generally referred to as community music.

The defining parameter of the research presented in this thesis is that it investigates community music activity in non-metropolitan Australia, with a particular focus on the state of New South Wales (NSW). It is important to establish this fact at the outset of this thesis because the non-metropolitan nature of the research could produce findings that differ from those of community music in other contexts. Research relating to community music activity in metropolitan environments (Oreck, Baum, & McCartney 1999; Silverman 2009, 2012; Lashua 2013; Joseph & Southcott 2013; Regional Arts NSW 2015; Southcott & Joseph 2015a, 2015b) reveals both differences and similarities in experiences and conditions for metropolitan and non-metropolitan activities; but the geographic context, encompassing factors such as population size, remoteness, and limited access to, and choice of, resources raises issues of its own. Such issues are discussed later in this chapter.

Over the last twenty years there has been a noticeable growth in awareness of the social, cultural and emotional benefits to be derived from arts activity:

Engagement in the arts - whether the visual arts, dance, music, theatre or other disciplines – nurtures the development of cognitive, social, and personal competencies…Students learning in and through the arts become their own toughest critics… these learners develop the capacity to experience ‘flow’, self-regulation, identity, and resilience qualities regularly associated with

As the director of regional music education organisations since 2001, the author has had professional involvement in community music, and broader arts-based, programs for several years, with direct and indirect connections to metropolitan and non-metropolitan communities and organisations, communities of practice (Wenger 1998), arts-based affinity groups (Veblen & Olsson 2002), and government and non-government arts and education bodies across the state of New South Wales. Orientated by over a decade of community music education design, facilitation and advocacy in non-metropolitan NSW, the author embarked on research based on personal observations and anecdotal evidence relating to non-musical benefits ascribed by community musicians, their families and associated community members, to participation in group music activities. The author’s own experiences as a leader of community music groups, and as a manager of other practitioners working with groups in various small to medium-sized communities, strongly supported informal data. In formulating the nature of the enquiry, and commencing a review of literature dealing with social and cultural benefits that relate to arts and music activity, it became apparent that the locus of this research is in the practice, environment and contexts of community music activity. Professional group music activity, no matter how great a focus is placed on satisfying the aesthetics of the art form and its creators, and to what degree its participants practise their art for love, devotion, creative drive and personal satisfaction, is at least
partially motivated by financial return - the element of industrial pressures and limitations such as satisfying scheduled paid hours, and performing roles that may vary little in ensemble function and repertoire, colour non-financial elements and considerations. Having identified community music as the relevant field of enquiry, this thesis presents a challenge that requires addressing before the discussion of research questions, design or process is undertaken. That challenge is: what is community music?

An increasing number of practitioners, facilitators and academics around the world engage in the facilitation, observation of, and research into community music activity, as evidenced by the establishment of the Community Music Activity Commission (CMAC) under the auspices of the International Society for Music Education (ISME), in 1982 (McCarthy 2007). The following quote, an account of the development of the CMAC, alludes to both the enthusiasm for such a focus for practitioners, leaders and academics, and the diversity of associations, connotations and conceptualisations held in relation to the term community music:

From the early years of the Society, music in community life, lifelong learning in music and education of the amateur were central to its mission. These dimensions came together in a commission that started out in 1974, titled, ‘Education of the Amateur, Adult Education’...The commission title was changed in 1976 to ‘Out of School Activities’...it was replaced by a new commission in 1982 called Community Music Activity (CMA). It was chaired by Norwegian music educator, Einar Solbu who was the key figure in establishing the group and who remained as chair until 1988. In a statement he wrote for the first issue of the International Journal of Music Education in 1983, Solbu presented a compelling agenda for the commission, in which he situated all music activity in the context of community…

(McCarthy 2007: 39-40)

In the above, abridged excerpt from an article that was published in the first edition of the Journal of community music education, it is apparent that in the 1970s and 1980s community music variously connoted adult education, amateur education, informal and nonformal (‘out of school activities’) education/activity, and all music that takes place in the community. This
observation is not to be taken as a criticism, as it is neither the case to recognise that to this day, there is no universal definition. The term remains contested:

Given that the topic of community music is broad and varied in different countries and cultural contexts, the commission did not adopt any strict definition but rather based its work on a set of beliefs about the nature and role of music in community life.

(McCarthy 2007: 42-43)

General parameters are, however agreed, with some consistencies and commonality recognised internationally:

Even as the commission became more global in its concerns and constitution, the underlying assumption that community music is inclusive, intended for all peoples, regardless of economic status, geographic location or social stratum, remained at the core.

(McCarthy 2007: 44)

While this thesis does not, at any point, suggest a universal definition of community music, it offers a rationale for qualifying the activity and the sample included in the research as such. The thesis suggests models, strategies and processes for effective study of community music activity and its contexts, contributing to the discourse around community music as a field of academic, pedagogical, sociological and political interest. This first chapter of the thesis introduces the research protocol, describes its rationale and researcher motivation, and discusses issues that pertain to certain key definitions. It examines the breadth and depth of relevant literature, and from the literature presents a context of currency to substantiate the terms used and meanings applied. The contention that surrounds the use of the term community music is comprehensively explored, by way of historical and cultural perspectives that form parameters within which this thesis, its procedures and its findings, are situated.

The broad research context of the opening paragraph above is detailed within this chapter, providing background to the development of the two principal research questions of the study, and the methodology constructed to effectively address them. The questions are explained, situated and supported by relevant literature. Consideration is given to the
development of strategies for the enquiry, the procedures used for data collection and analysis, and the issue of balancing the total cohort similarities with disparities in nature, type and community-specific characteristics of the seven case studies selected for the research. The chapter goes on to explain the selection process and rationale for the sample, the development and relevance of the chosen research strategy and data collection instruments, and explores the issue and challenges of balancing the benefits of participant observation with the inherent vulnerability to the research integrity posed by the potential for prejudiced outcomes or findings; recognising impact and mitigating risk. The process of carrying out the research is described, with the refinements and adjustments made necessary by emerging observations and the interplay of the ‘inductive deductive’ process (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison 2007: 6) highlighted and discussed.

This chapter describes each case-study community within the sample and details both the challenges experienced and solutions found. The data collection instruments are presented and discussed, as are the data analysis processes, with consideration given to the autoethnographic element of the research and its impact on and ramifications for the process. The chapter closes with a discussion of the emergent meta-theme of the research. This meta-theme, constituting an overarching three-tiered analytical structure, arose as a result of inductive reasoning and observation. It offers potential value as a robust analytical model for broad application by researchers in the future study of community music activity.

**Research context and questions**

The focus of this thesis is an investigation and analysis of social and cultural development observed in the context of an ethnographic multi-case research project involving community music activity situated in a variety of settings. Each of the participating case-study cohorts is marginalised by one or more of the following descriptors:

- geographic remoteness,
- age parameters,
- social and/or physical capacity,
- mental health considerations, or
- resilience.
The research was motivated by several years of informal observation by the researcher, from the standpoint of community music interventions in a range of environments, with community music activity in regional, non-metropolitan community settings. Informal observation and anecdotal experience indicated the following socio-cultural phenomena as benefits derived from group music activity:

- increased pride and self-esteem of community music group participants,
- community pride in, and esteem of, participants,
- increased social capability for participants, and
- increased community acceptance of stigmatized social sectors represented in community music programs and activities.

The indicative, beneficial, social aspects listed above suggested that powerful non-musical impacts were and could be gained through ongoing involvement in community music activity. It was unlikely that the anecdotal evidence and informal observation was presenting a comprehensive schedule of benefits, one in which trends across differing demographics were being faithfully represented, and this incomplete picture prompted the first of the two principal research questions identified below. The environmental consideration of what it takes to provide for the consistent and reliable facilitation of this, as yet incomplete, untested, and uninterrogated list of sociocultural benefits, prompted the second.

The two principal research questions that orientate the research and inform the thesis are:

1. What aspects of social and cultural development result directly from community group music programs?, and
2. How are the sociocultural benefits that are identified as resulting from participation in community music activity best effected?

The principal research questions were formulated through a process of inductive reasoning, based on anecdotal evidence presenting in the professional practice of the researcher. This evidence was supported by investigations into non arts-specific effects of creative arts programs, most notably those of Olseng and Burley (1987); Catterall, Chapleau, and Iwagama (1999); Everitt (1997); and Abeles et al. (2002). Olseng and Burley (1987) identify...
a link between arts activity, particularly music, and benefits to personal growth and satisfaction for adults: ‘therefore, to make music educators aware of the enormous benefits adults can derive from having the opportunity to get a “second chance” to learn to express themselves through music’ (Olseng & Burley 1987: 27). They continue:

We believe that learning experiences involving the arts will be especially valuable in our mechanized, de-personalized and isolated society, because the arts help us develop symbolic skills…Happiness is no automatic consequence of living a pleasurable life, free from anxieties, problems and pain. To be happy you have to feel that you are continually changing, growing and improving, and this is by definition a process of learning in a wide sense. If people cannot experience this feeling of growth through their work, then they must be given that opportunity in their leisure time…having meaningful leisure activities is essential for a feeling of life satisfaction…

(Olseng & Burley 1987: 27)

Everitt’s ‘Joining in: an investigation into participatory music’ (Everitt 1997) reports on a survey of community music participation in the UK, and offers the following support for the non-musical benefits of such activity:

The value of creativity has received remarkable support from a completely different quarter. Scientific research into music and the brain and psychological studies of the value of music in education have made great advances in recent years. They demonstrate that music-making is interlinked with a range of mental activities and can foster personal and intellectual development.

(Everitt 1997: 21)

Studies such as Champions of change (Fiske 1999) found substantial and significant behavioral, attitudinal and achievement-based differences between school-aged students involved in arts-based activities and those who were not:

We used a definition of ‘involvement in the arts’ that gave students credit for taking arts-related classes in or out of school as well as involvement and leadership in school activities such as theater, band, orchestra, chorus, dance,
and the visual arts. Our analyses found substantial and significant differences in achievement and in important attitudes and behaviors between youth highly involved in the arts on the one hand, and those with little or no arts engagement on the other hand.

(Catterall et al. 1999: 3)

In The evaluation of arts partnerships and learning in and through the arts, Abeles, Hafeli, Horowitz and Burton (2002) present the following table, placing potential outcomes of arts experiences into three categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognitive Capacities</th>
<th>Sociocultural Capacities</th>
<th>Personal Learning Capacities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expressions of ideas and feelings</td>
<td>Cooperative learning</td>
<td>Risk-taking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focused perception</td>
<td>Compassion and empathy</td>
<td>Confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make connections</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Layered relationships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructing and organising meaning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple or alternative vantage points</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagining new possibilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensory learning</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Abeles, Hafeli, Horowitz & Burton’s Potential outcomes of arts experiences (Abeles et al. 2002: 933).

A third research question emerged during the analysis of the community music group leaders’ data, arising as an unanticipated focus on the underlying reasons for the sociocultural benefits that the leaders observed. That question is: Why do the identified aspects of social and cultural development result from group music programs? This question presents as a secondary research question, contingent on the first: What aspects of social and cultural development result directly from community group music programs?, and providing a conduit to the second: How are the sociocultural benefits that are identified as resulting from participation in community music activity best effected?

Methodology

The research design is that of a multiple-case study, with a qualitative research design framework involving a series of ethnographies, utilising a naturalistic (Lincoln & Guba 1985), grounded theory approach, generating and revising theory from observation of real world situations and experiences (Burns 2000; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison 2007;
Denscombe 2007). Through grounded theory principals, similarities that emerged from the disparate case studies became reconcilable, indicated trends and points of reference that strengthened the consistency of the data and its implications across the scope of the research. In the introduction to her chapter *Grounded theory in the 21st century* in *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*, Charmaz (2005) identifies contemporary parameters of grounded theory, with particular reference to social justice applications, and suggests benefits that are consistent with this thesis and the research it substantiates:

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Essentially, grounded theory methods are a set of flexible analytic guidelines that enable researchers to focus their data collection and to build inductive middle-range theories though successive levels of data analysis and conceptual development… A grounded theory approach encourages researchers to remain close to their studied worlds and to develop an integrated set of theoretical concepts from their empirical materials that not only synthesize and interpret them but also show processual relationships.

(Charmaz 2005: 507-508)
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Strategies of participant observation, semi-structured interviews and questionnaires were utilised in the data collection, with field notes and audio and video recordings constituting the data collection tools. These are introduced and explained below.

**The sample**

The sample for the research consists of the members of seven case studies, detailed as follows: A total of 152 individuals, comprising 122 community music group members, 12 group leaders, 4 community leaders directly involved with the case study communities (local government officers), 12 community music school Heads of Agency (or CEOs), and 2 funding policy officers. The participating community music group members range in age from 5 years-old to 85 years-old, comprising both males and females, and constitute existing groups with no membership or exclusion criteria imposed by the researcher. The case study format was chosen as the most appropriate strategy for exploring the research questions, and building theory therefrom, due to its following characteristics:

- depth of study rather than breadth of study,
• the particular rather than the general,
• relationships/processes rather than outcomes and end-products,
• holistic view rather than isolated factors,
• natural settings rather than artificial situations, and
• multiple sources rather than one research method.

(Denscombe 2007: 37)

The research focus lends itself to a methodology that accommodates the following structural elements of the investigation, expressed by Stake (2005) as ‘major conceptual responsibilities of the qualitative case researcher’:

• bounding the case, conceptualizing the object of study,
• selecting phenomena, themes or issues (i.e., the research questions to emphasize),
• seeking patterns of data to develop the issues,
• triangulating key observations and bases for interpretation,
• selecting alternative interpretations to pursue, and
• developing assertions or generalizations about the case.

(Stake 2005: 459-460)

Charmaz (2005) proposes that a constructivist, revisioned grounded theory model, one that references and is built on prior knowledge, relationships, and environmental involvement, is a valid and contemporarily relevant one. The positivist, mid-20th Century grounded theorist interpretations of ‘objectivity’, ‘reality’, and data as something separate from the researcher and his or her interpretation, as promulgated by Glaser and Strauss (1967), Glaser (2002), and Corbin and Strauss (2008), have been reshaped into a contemporary approach that ‘does not assume that data simply await discovery in an external world... that impartial researchers enter the research scene without an interpretative frame of reference…’ (Charmaz 2005: 509). She goes on to state:

All analyses come from particular standpoints, including those emerging in the research process. Grounded theory studies emerge from wrestling with data, making comparisons, developing categories, engaging in theoretical sampling,
and integrating an analysis. But how we conduct all these activities does not occur in a social vacuum. Rather, the entire research process is interactive…

(Charmaz 2005: 510)

This re-visioned form of grounded theory applies as a practical approach to inductive research in established participant observer directed community music environments such as those selected for the research this thesis discusses. The research generated data from seven participating case-study communities - six of which are Australian and one of which is North American. Four of the six Australian case-study communities were physically located across two population centres in regional NSW, Orange and West Wyalong (Map 1.); the fifth operated as a virtual community, comprising members who live and work in regional, rural and/or remote locations across Australia (Map 2) and for whom participation in the activity, and membership of the community, was enacted via digital audio-visual technology for all except the final three days of the six-month program. The sixth case-study community existed as an ephemeral one, it comprised eight professional musicians living with a permanent mild to medium physical and/or developmental disability, and five professional musicians living without an identified disability. The musicians living with a disability were recruited from various locations across Australia, while those not living with an identifiable disability were chosen from regional NSW (Map 3).

The case-study communities are as follows:

1. **West Wyalong** – a small town in western NSW (town population 3,300, sample size of 35 participants).

The case study community comprised:

a. the town band, with a membership at the time of the study of 12, four members were present at the rehearsal attended by the researcher (18 May 2010). Two members were interviewed.

b. the string & wind School, operating annually from 2005 - 2012, aged 5 to 75. Average total number of members is 35, 22 of whom participated in the data collection.

c. A busking project, with a cohort of 10 disadvantaged youths aged 12-25 and 1 youth development officer. All eleven members participated.
Map 1: Principal case study locations in relation to Sydney (NSW).

Map 2: Home locations of Remote Health Worker Choir (RHWC) participants and Orange.
The West Wyalong case study operated as the pilot for the research. Through this pilot study, data collection instruments were refined through the research process, although very little alteration to them was needed. Burns (2000) talks about the necessity for a pilot study to be predicated on a case that ‘is representative in at least some ways to others’ (Burns 2000: 460). The West Wyalong community presented a broad, inclusive age range (5-70 years) and as the only discrete, small geographic community participating in the research, it provided the advantage of being bounded (Burns 2000) and cohesive, with the greatest number of marginality qualifying factors (geographic isolation, issues around social capacity and resilience, and extremes of age parameters). It presented as the most broadly representative cohort of the seven, and lent itself to the subsequent development of grounded theory across all the case study communities.

2. **Mental Health Community** (consumers, staff and carers, sample size of 4)

This case study community comprised mental health community members participating in a music, health and well-being project at a major regional Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol (MHD&A) facility in central western NSW. Members of the community were MHD&A service consumers (hospital-resident and community-based), clinical and allied
health staff, family and supporters. The program had been running since 2007, and comprised:

- a mental health community choir (40 participants),
- drumming group (5 participants), and
- rock band (5 participants).

There was a moderate degree of multiple group membership in this community, with some members of the drumming group attending choir and others also having membership in the rock band. Some individuals were, at one time or another, members of all three. The majority of the observational data comes from the choir, of which the researcher was the conductor (see the section on the autoethnographic element of this study later in this chapter). Due to the mental health considerations that apply to the majority of the mental health cohort, interview data was collected from 4 participants only, each of whom functioned as both community leader and group member. Observation of the choir took place weekly over 40 weeks of each year from 2008 till the end of 2011. Observation of the drumming and rock groups took place on four occasions for each group, at annual mental health week concerts, and the final rehearsal for each, in October of 2008 and 2009. From the inception of the music, health and well-being project, in which the researcher played a professional leadership role, anecdotal evidence of increased pride, self-esteem, and levels of social capability of mental health consumers emerged. This informal data, and the researcher’s own observations of group members’ improving focus during rehearsals, and developing inter- and intra- cohort communication, provided rationale for inclusion in the study.

3. **Seniors’ Choir**, with a sample of 25 participants was initiated by Musica Viva Australia as: ‘a positive ageing program that enhances seniors’ wellbeing through participation in community-based singing’ (Musica Viva 2010: np) in September 2010. It rehearses weekly during (NSW school) term time for two-hour sessions in central Orange, with a morning tea punctuating the two-hour rehearsal session. Observation was fortnightly over nine 10-week periods (aligning with NSW school terms), until the end of 2012. The researcher operated as one of three conductor/leaders collaborating on a workshop format with this group, so the autoethnographic discussion below also relates to research with this
group. The group averaged 20-25 members during this time. The participant group providing the raw data comprised nineteen group members and six leaders.

4. **At Risk Youth.** This group comprised two cohorts of adolescents, identified as ‘at-risk (of disengaging from school)’, engaged in the *Shed Ed - Links to Learning* program in Orange. The program runs weekly during NSW school terms, with a focus on resilience and personal and social capability skills, providing activities for twelve to fifteen year olds in an informal learning setting (OCTEC nd). As part of the *links to learning* program, the researcher facilitated two, weekly, one-hour music workshops - one hour each with the male and female cohorts - since April 2009. The sessions take an informal, student-centred approach oriented by the participants’ interest in and desire to play contemporary rock or pop songs. The majority of students typically present at the commencement session of a six-month program with little or no experience in playing guitar, drums, bass guitar or keyboard, and with little or no confidence in singing in front of their peers. The participating cohort(s) totaled twenty-eight adolescents, approximately 50% male and 50% female, and two leaders (youth workers facilitating the overall links to learning program).

5. The **Ability Inclusive** cohort. Participants in a six-day, intensive music creativity residency in central Orange, comprising a total sample of 13 professional musicians recruited from a range of musical genres and disciplines, comprising eight professional musicians living with a permanent (mild to moderate) disability, selected by a third-party advocacy organization, from across Australia, and five professional musicians not living with an identified disability. The five musicians not identifying as living with a disability were recruited from regional NSW, and had established professional relationships with the host organization (the Orange Regional Conservatorium). The researcher was facilitator of the project and participated in the residency as a musician (trombonist). Observation took place for all sessions throughout the six days and third-party interview data was gained from all except one of the participants. This was due to disability-specific difficulties limiting the capacity for a verbal interview in that case. The researcher was motivated to include this cohort in the study during the introductory discussion session on day one of the residency. During this session it became apparent that the group shared a sense of marginalisation, had common needs including frustration with limited high level performance opportunities and impeded access to mainstream venues and performer
networks, and demonstrated an immediate willingness to collaborate, share experiences and experience, and jam, regardless of their individual genre or stylistic specialisation.

6. **Remote Health Worker Choir**, operating for six months leading up to a performance at the national Council of Remote Area Nurses Associations (CRANA) conference held at the end of September 2013 (CRANAplus 2014). The group comprised twelve group members and one leader (the organiser), with all group members providing data either through a focus group interview (all members participated) or through focus group and questionnaire (four members completed the questionnaire). The leader/organiser contributed to the data through an individual semi-structured interview carried out by telephone. Observation took place during each session of the project, which included fortnightly (averaged) individual or two-share singing lessons over domestic video call technology (Skype or Apple face-time) for each of the group members over the six-month period (April – September 2013), three, one-hour, face-to-face rehearsals and a performance. The face-to-face sessions took place over the three days of the conference. Participants ranged in age from 35 – 70 years, with one male and eleven female members, and their individual prior experiences included:

- having always wanted to sing, but having been told as a child and/or young adult that they couldn’t,
- singing semi-professionally (one participant),
- active in community music circles (one participant), and
- having sung in choirs in their youth, but having no opportunity currently.

7. A network of nine adult learner communities belonging to the **New Horizons** International Music Association, from ten North American locations (Map 4.): London and Peterborough (Ontario); Rochester, Kenmore and Fredonia (New York); Olympia, Tacoma and Spokane (Washington); Mesa (Phoenix, Arizona) and Carlsbad (California). Observed groups included wind bands, swing, dance and Dixieland bands, an orchestra, a choir, various small ensembles, a klezmer band and a bluegrass program. Communities in which the programs are situated ranged in population from the tens of thousands (Fredonia NY) to millions (Phoenix); with some programs run independently by boards
or committees, others as University community programs, and others as initiatives of retail organisations.

Map 4: North America showing locations of New Horizons programs and participants in the non-Australian case study.

Although this case study was not a part of the original research design, the opportunity for the researcher to take up a five-week fellowship in North America led to the inclusion of this case study, initially as a comparison to the Australian Seniors’ Choir (case study 3). While the number of group members involved in observational data was 400, interview participants numbered fourteen.

From this point in the thesis, abbreviated case study identifiers are used (Table 2). Participants quoted across the three data presentation chapters in this thesis are identified alpha-numerically with reference to their case study, their status as a leader within that case study community where relevant, and the order in which they contributed to the questionnaire, interview or third party documentary data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Study number</th>
<th>Case Study</th>
<th>Identifier</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>West Wyalong</td>
<td>WW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Mental Health Community</td>
<td>MHC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Seniors’ Choir</td>
<td>SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>At-Risk Youth</td>
<td>ARY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ability Inclusive group</td>
<td>AI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Remote Health Worker choir</td>
<td>RHWC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>New Horizons North American adult learner community</td>
<td>NH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Case study abbreviated identifiers.
For example, WW 1 indicates West Wyalong group member 1, MHC L2 indicates mental health community leader 2. AI 7 indicates ability inclusive group member 7; RHWC L2 indicates remote health worker choir leader 2; ARY 10 indicates at-risk youth group member 10, NH L5 indicates New Horizons North American adult learner community leader 5.

Due to the nature of the research, as a qualitative exploration of specific community types with specific characteristics, the researcher chose a mixture of purposive and convenience sampling (Burns 2000; Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007). Case-study communities were selected on the following criteria:

- they were to be distinct and identifiable; discrete, each a ‘bounded system, and entity in itself’ (Burns, 2000: 460), differentiated from each other by the nature of participant association,
- there was to be a thread of commonality; physically situated in, or convened and facilitated from, rural NSW,
- each, to some degree, was to be marginalised, and
- they were to be accessible and convenient for the researcher, presenting a combination of purposive and convenience sampling.

The six Australian case study communities being located within smaller population centres allowed the researcher more accurately to observe socio-cultural development on two levels; within the group community - the community of practice itself (Lave and Wenger 1991; Wenger 1998), and as it effects the broader community within which it exists and operates. While there are positives for the researcher in this heightened state of sociocultural transparency, it is important to note at the same time that issues faced by regional, non-metropolitan, communities are not the same as those in metropolitan areas; with levels of infrastructure, financial and physical resourcing, and choice of activities often disproportionately restricted for regional, or non-metropolitan, community music groups:
A number of regional problems have surfaced over recent decades that have demanded the attention of policy makers and generated calls by regional interests for ameliorative action by governments. These problems include the sudden economic shocks caused by downturns in “one industry towns” as a result of economic restructuring; the continued emptying of the inland; the ongoing (and increasing) domination of State economies by their capital cities as a result of the processes of globalisation; increasing disparities within and between regions across a wide range of social and economic indicators; and environmental pressures and high unemployment in rapidly growing coastal regions.

(Collits 2000: np)

The selection of cases for inclusion in the research was a function of the range of community-based group music activities being facilitated by the researcher at the time of planning. Through his work as a regional music educator and director of a major community owned and operated music education organisation in central west NSW, the researcher was affiliated with a number of groups that would qualify as representative of separate, bounded, cohorts within the broader non-metropolitan population. In six of the case studies, recruitment of participants within the groups was self-selecting - in keeping with each individual group’s ethos and self-governance. In the case of the Ability Inclusive group (AI), recruitment of the eight professional musicians living with a permanent disability was effected using project-specific selection criteria developed by Accessible Arts, the disability advocacy organisation that partnered with the Orange Regional Conservatorium on the project (Accessible Arts 2015). Table 3 lists the case-study communities and identifies the sample size and marginalising factors for each. It also identifies the Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA) Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) Remoteness Area level – the official Australian Government measure of regionality and remoteness - for each. (Australian Centre for Population and Migration Research [ACPMR] 2015).
Table 3: The seven case-study communities with sample size of each, marginalising factors and Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA) Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) Remoteness Area levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case study</th>
<th>Marginalising factor(s)</th>
<th>ARIA/ASGC classification</th>
<th>Other factors</th>
<th>Total mbrship</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>West Wyalong (WW)</td>
<td>geographic remoteness (all) disadvantaged youth (busking project)</td>
<td>outer regional</td>
<td>town band, etring &amp; wind school, busking project</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health Community (MHC)</td>
<td>regionality, mental health considerations</td>
<td>inner regional</td>
<td>choir, drum group, rock band</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors’ Choir (SC)</td>
<td>regionality, age</td>
<td>inner regional</td>
<td>19 group members, 6 leaders</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Risk Youth (ARY)</td>
<td>regionality, social ability, resilience</td>
<td>inner regional</td>
<td>28 youths, 2 leaders</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability Inclusive (AI)</td>
<td>regionality (majority), physical ability (majority)</td>
<td>inner regional (6)</td>
<td>8 professional musicians with disability, 5 regional professional musicians from general community</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote Health Workers Choir (RHWC)</td>
<td>geographic remoteness, resilience</td>
<td>very remote (3)</td>
<td>12 group members, 1 leader also participating musically in final phase of project</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Horizons adult learner community (NH)</td>
<td>age</td>
<td>not applicable, situated in North America</td>
<td>31 groups over 9 North American locations observed</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data collection

The following strategies were used in the collection of research materials:

- group member questionnaire, formulated in two versions:
  - version 1. For group members 12 years and under (Appendix 1), and
  - version 2. For group members over 12 years (Appendix 2),
- semi-structured interviews for community music group members based on six questions (Appendix 3),
- semi-structured interviews for ensemble and community leaders based on six questions (Appendix 4),
- field notes,
unsolicited testimonials,

third party written, audio and video documentation relating directly to the case studies and broader programs that articulate with them,

reports from partner organisations involved in variously supporting the community music groups that constitute the aggregated participant cohort,

historical and current government documents, including policy statements and parliamentary records and reports, and

reports by statutory authorities, including funding and advisory bodies.

The participant questionnaires comprised twenty-three Likert scale statements and a set of seven free-answer questions. Responses to the twenty-three statements provide a broad thematic orientation, and a hierarchy of consideration, for aspects of sociocultural benefit experienced, and reported, by members of the participating case study cohorts. The data produced by the responses to the seven free-answer questions reinforce and validate the trends demonstrated by the responses to the first (Likert scale) part, and extricate more nuanced reflections on the benefits of group music activity than the Likert scale questions allow. This testing and reinforcing process is an inherent and key element of the grounded theory strategy underpinning the research design. While only three of the seven case study cohorts engaged in the participant questionnaire, the nine themes that emerged from coding of 40 sets of Likert scale data and 236 long-answer question responses were validated by data collected through the other instruments. That data largely addressed the first of the two principal research questions - what aspects of social and cultural development result directly from community group music programs? - with a focus on group members’ perspectives. Individual and focus group interviews, unsolicited testimonials and third-party reports and documentation (audio, video and print), provided 135 thematically-coded responses and comments from group leaders that tested and rebalanced the group member perspective on the what aspects question, and 619 cross-sample data contributions to the second of the two principal research questions - how are the sociocultural benefits that are identified as resulting from participation in community music activity best effected? The data management strategy employed in the research accommodated the complexity of the sample; a complexity borne of the variety of demographic, social and emotional capacity, and physical and mental

1 While the sample group comprises 152 contributing interviewees and questionnaire respondents, the total number of community music group members observed throughout the research activity 400.
health factors that provide for the broad range of participant cohorts required for a meaningful ethnographic study of this type.

Through the ongoing analysis process - coding and recoding as theories were tested and revised through triangulation of leader and group member perspectives - a three-tiered analytical model emerged. The template, comprising the three lenses of community music group member perspective, leader perspective and environmental context, emerged as viable, robust and productive in examining the sociocultural impacts and benefits of the community music activities participating in the research. Through the grounded theory findings of the multiple case study qualitative research process, this thesis demonstrates and validates the approach as a practical and formalised analytical method. This thesis proposes that as a template, the method presents as viable and practical for application in future projects and enquiry, positioning itself and the research in the discourse of current and future community music study. The emergence of the three-level model offers a duality of application. It first serves to recognise, with clarity, three differentiated perspectives from two constituent cohorts; cohorts that operate in the community music environment with what appears to be, and is accepted as, a significant degree of operational and philosophical unity. In this way it organises the data for analysis and presentation in a logical, defensible and broadly meaningful format. Second, at a meta-level, it presents a robust and versatile method of analysis for application to other community music environmental studies and projects.

Data analysis and coding

Raw data was prepared for analysis in the form of collated written questionnaire responses, statements and interview transcripts, then coded and categorised using a system of response frequency and commonly mentioned words, phrases and expressions. Observing a grounded theory approach, open coding was utilised: ‘the aim of open coding is to discover, name and categorize phenomena; also to develop categories in terms of their properties and dimensions’ (Strauss & Corbin 1990 :181). Themes emerged from the categorisation and coding, and relationships between the emergent themes and the research questions developed. In this way, while continuing to gather and organise data from the field, the analysis of emergent themes and developing concepts maintained an iterative quality, ensuring that the cross-referencing characteristics of the data analysis spiral (Creswell 2013) were facilitated:
The processes of data collection, data analysis, and report writing are not distinct steps in the process… Undeniably, qualitative researchers preserve the unusual and serendipitous, and writers craft studies differently, using analytic procedures that often evolve while they are in the field. Despite this uniqueness, I believe that the analysis process conforms to a general contour. The contour is best represented in a spiral image, a data analysis spiral… To analyse qualitative data, the researcher engages in the process of moving in analytic circles rather than using a fixed linear approach.

(Creswell 2013: 182)

This approach resulted in the emergence of a third, research question - why do such sociocultural benefits result from community music activity? - and the open coding process itself, again grounded wholly in the data-based evidence, fed the inductive development of the over-arching three-part analytical model that emerged from the analysis process. By prioritising the data according to clarity of meaning rather than quality or qualities, the process of analysis became clearer. The distillation of themes and categories facilitated avoidance of ambiguity and unnecessary overlap, thus enabling the researcher to arrive at generalised conclusions across the sample. This resulted in the identification of a set of nine coherent themes of observable sociocultural benefit, and six dimensions of consideration, resourcing and support, necessary for the provision of a successful community music environment.

The data collection strategy, and the research model itself, served to confirm the developing trends, theories and concepts through triangulation: multiple data collection instruments applied to a range of communities with diverse bases of affiliation. While it is acknowledged that the qualitative, or naturalistic, nature of the research does not allow for claims of broad-based generalisability, the sample’s demographic breadth and variety of data collection methods reinforce the research findings’ potential for transferability (Lincoln & Guba 1985) within the Australian community music sector. Lincoln and Guba (1985) identify transferability as one of four evaluative criteria for establishing trustworthiness of naturalistic research:

The four terms ‘credibility’, ‘transferability’, ‘dependability’, and ‘confirmability’ are, then, the naturalist’s equivalent for the conventionalist...
terms ‘internal validity’, ‘external validity’, ‘reliability’, and ‘objectivity’. These terms are introduced not to add to naturalism’s mystique or to provide it with its fair share of arcane concepts, but to make clear the inappropriateness of the conventional terms when applied to naturalism and to provide alternatives that stand in a more logical and derivative relation to the naturalistic axioms.

(Lincoln & Guba 1985: 300-301)

Another consideration set in play by the qualitative basis of the research, and the researcher’s status of participant observer in six of the seven case-study cohorts, is that of the objectivity of the researcher:

At a fundamental level, it needs to be recognised straight away that no research is ever free from the influence of those who conduct it. Qualitative data… are always the product of a process of interpretation. The data do not exist ‘out there’ waiting to be discovered… but are produced by the way they are interpreted and used by researchers. This has consequences for the prospects of objectivity. First it raises questions about the involvement of the researcher’s ‘self’ in the interpretation of the data and, second, it raises questions about the prospects of keeping an open mind and being willing to consider alternative and competing explanations of the data.

(Denscombe 2007: 300)

While the researcher’s ‘identity, values and beliefs cannot be entirely eliminated from the process of analysing qualitative data…’ (Denscombe 2007: 300), conscious and deliberate attempts were made by the researcher to distance himself from normal everyday beliefs and judgements.

Once the data was collected, it was separated into five sets, identified as follows:

1. responses from the Likert scale section of the participant questionnaire,
2. responses from the long-answer section of the participant questionnaire,
3. responses and comments from the semi-structured participant interviews, unsolicited testimonials and third-party documentation, relating to observed and/or experienced sociocultural benefits and development,
4. responses and comments from community music activity leaders, sourced through semi-structured interviews, unsolicited testimonials and third-party documentation, relating to observed and/or experienced sociocultural benefits and development, and
5. comments relating to facilities and conditions, considerations and provisions either in place or desirable as necessities for a successful community music environment. This data relates to the second principal research question: How are the sociocultural benefits that are identified as resulting from participation in community music activity best effected? Also emerging from semi-formal interviews, unsolicited testimonials and third-party documentation, this data presented from both music group members and leaders.

The five data sets identified above were analysed and coded in the order in which they are listed (1-5), as a generative analytical process, enabling a constructivist grounded theory framework (Glaser 2002; Charmaz 2005; Corbin & Strauss 2008) to enable the research momentum. Below is a discussion of each set, the analysis undertaken on each and the progressive function each satisfies in maintaining a productive through-line to the next, without limiting the analytical process to a simplistic, linear, one.

**Data set 1.** Responses to the prescribed Likert Scale statements were coded according to response frequency within each category (strongly agree, agree, not decided, disagree, strongly disagree) and tabulated in order of lowest percentage of agree or strongly agree to highest. Trends were then identified as indicative degrees of response prominence, aligning with degrees of perceived importance. This analysis indicated that ten of the twenty-three statements rated with more than 70 per cent of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing, and those ten statements relate to either musical, social, or well-being considerations. From this analysis, in line with the principals of grounded theory, emerged three leading community music participation values, presenting as central to the community music activity experiences observed: development of musical ability; social engagement; and well-being. These leading community music participation values then provide a broad thematic
orientation, and hierarchy of consideration, for the aspects of sociocultural benefit experienced by members of the participating case study cohorts.

**Data set 2.** Responses from the long-answer section of the participant questionnaire were coded according to words or phrases that occurred across the three contributing case study communities. Recurrent words or phrases were identified thematically, using the following test:

- a. are there more than two occurrences of participant comment that have a clear commonality of meaning and intent?
- b. are those comments made by more than one participant?
- c. are those comments more meaningfully grouped under a discrete thematic descriptor (meeting criteria a. and b.) than another identified theme?

If the thematic grouping of response comments passed this three-part test, then the theme stood. This process resulted in the emergence of nine themes.

The distribution of responses into identified thematic categories was validated by one or more of the following criteria:

- Is the comment, or does the comment include
  - a literal reference (to the theme), or
  - key words (from the theme), or
  - a euphemism (for the key words), and/or
- contains an emphasis
  - on keywords, or
  - euphemisms for keywords, and/or
- vernacular indicates meanings
  - cultural, or
  - personal, and/or
- context indicates meanings
  - cultural, or
  - personal.
The thematically coded comments were then collated across the sample and expressed in both number and percentage of the whole. In this way, the nine themes, an expansion of the three leading community music participation values theorized from Data set 1., were graded from lowest frequency to highest.

**Data set 3.** This set comprised responses and comments from the semi-structured participant interviews, collected and collated as group member data. The comments and responses, relating to aspects of sociocultural benefit, as experienced and/or anticipated by community music group members, were coded and validated using the same process as that outlined under Data set 2. The coded data was then synthesized and collated with the data bank articulating with the nine themes.

**Data set 4.** This data set comprised responses and comments from community music activity leaders, gathered via semi-structured leader interviews, unsolicited testimonials and third-party documentation, collected and collated as group leader data. The comments and responses relating to aspects of sociocultural benefit, as experienced and observed, were coded and validated using the same process as that outlined under Data sets 2 and 3. The coded data was then synthesized and collated with the data bank articulating with the nine themes. As discussed in Chapter Four, the leader-sourced data tested, reinforced and broadened the theorized nine themes. This data proffered some perspectives outside of the planned two principal research question focus. While the two principal questions focus on the *what* and *how* of successful community music activity, the interview, testimonial and documentary leader data offered perspective on a third aspect of the equation, that of *why*. While the thesis does not explore that aspect in depth for its own sake, it does recognise that *why* group music activity is socioculturally beneficial provides somewhat of an evidential segue into the territory of the second (how) question.

**Data set 5.** That collated set of comments relating to facilities and conditions, considerations and provisions either in place or desirable as necessary for a successful community music environment. This data relates to the second principal research question: *How are the sociocultural benefits that are identified as resulting from participation in community music activity best effected?* Also emerging from semi-formal interviews, unsolicited testimonials and third-party documentation, the data is drawn from the total sample, comprising both music group members and group and community leaders. In the case of environmental
considerations, a set of six dimensions emerged as an equivalent structure to the nine themes that address the question of what aspects of social and cultural development result directly from community group music programs?

Data management, analysis and coding presented challenges in three elements of the research. The first of these challenging data management factors was achieving a balanced volume of data across the group member and leader cohorts, in relation to meaningful data that addresses both of the principal research questions. There was a disparity of respondent numbers and case-study cohorts that engaged in the questionnaire instrument (40 participants and three case-study communities) compared to the semi-structured interviews (135 participants and seven case-study communities). Second, the coding of data from Data sets 2, 3 & 4 presented a challenge in the distribution of thematically-qualifying comments. The three-part thematic validity test and the coding matrix were applied strictly and uniformly across data from the sets, providing a robust solution to this challenge. This two-stage process was effected by first identifying common words and expressions across the data set and grouping them in discrete thematic groups, then testing the validity of those thematically-grouped comments against the data coding matrix (Appendix 7). Third, determining the most accurate representation of the comparative significance of both the nine themes of sociocultural benefit, as perceived (observed, experienced and anticipated) by community music activity group members and leaders, and the six dimensions of successful community music environments. This challenge relates to there being three possible methods for determining the significance rankings of both the nine themes, and the six dimensions. The three methods are:

1. Ranking the themes and the dimensions on raw, cumulative numbers.
   example: all dimension-qualifying comments across the total sample for each of the six dimensions ranks Well-being as the most significant dimension and Membership as the second most significant,

2. Averaging the rankings of the nine themes, or six dimensions, across the cohorts, and comparing that averaged rank to that of the other themes or dimensions
   example: Well-being is ranked in the following positions across the seven cohort-specific prominence rankings: 3, 2, 3, 3, 1, 1, 1.
Averaging those rankings, positions Social engagement in second place. By the same method, Membership takes first place, and

3. Averaging the percentages that each individual theme, or dimension, represents within each individual cohort, then ranking those averaged percentages.

example: Well-being coded responses as a percentage of all responses within each case study cohort, averaged, is 24.9 per cent. With Membership at 22.9 per cent, Well-being ranks as the highest rated.

The resolution to this challenge was to report the rankings, in the few places where they caused a discrepancy, in each way. Importantly, the researcher recognises that as a qualitative research design, it is not the business or purpose of the research to conclude nor prove statistical validity as credible findings. It is worthwhile noting that using and comparing the results of the three methods produced only one difference in the rankings, that is Well-being and Membership reversing rankings, with a minimal differential, in one of the three measures.

The analytical model, having emerged in concert with the thematic characteristics of the coded cross-cohort data, aligns a practical way to study community music with the study’s community music data itself. With this consideration in place, the thesis’ overarching progression becomes:

1. The establishment of nine emergent themes of sociocultural development as defined through the analysis of community music group member data (Chapter Three), in response to the research project participant questionnaire,

2. The observations and considerations of the community music leaders connected to the case-study communities, reflecting on the nine themes and providing insight as to their sociocultural importance, sourced through semi-structured leaders’ interviews, informal testimonials and related third party interviews and reports (Chapter Four), and

3. The compilation of a set of defining dimensions of successful community music activity (Chapter Five), formulated and prioritised as requisite
environmental provisions, through the analysis and coding of data collected from across the sample through a range of qualitative data collection instruments including interviews, testimonials and reports.

Community music activity typically operates as a not-for-profit cultural recreation activity, involving nonprofessional community members and group leaders or facilitators with some degree of professional or semiprofessional music industry experience - either in performance, education or both (Cahill 1998). With either function, agenda, or result of such activity being the development of social cohesion and community cultural capital (Turino 2008), a parameter of this study is the establishment of Australian government policies and practices relating to community music activity as a substantial and visible public engagement phenomenon. For this reason, a separate research method of Australian government document analysis was required. This historical research, covering the development of arts and cultural policy at all three levels of Australian government from 1901 to the present is discussed in Chapter Two.

Other issues relevant to the study
Having discussed the research questions, the research design, and the sample, data collection and analysis, it is necessary at this point to explore a number of other issues relevant to the research and the thesis. These issues are: regionality; terminology relating to community music; ethical considerations; and the element of autoethnography. After these issues have been discussed, an outline of the thesis concludes the chapter.

Regionality is a key concept for consideration in identifying this thesis’ research locus as non-metropolitan Australia. In using the term ‘non-metropolitan’, it alludes to a sample and activities residing and/or operating outside of major metropolitan centres. The term is useful as a general, universal descriptor to clarify and differentiate for an international context. The vernacular within Australia, particularly within Australian arts and education bodies and policy frameworks, utilises the terms regions and regional, as stated by Gibson in his investigation of community music activity on the far north coast of New South Wales:

‘Region’ is a word used to describe areas both large and small, from a sub-national or sub-state area (but usually larger than ‘the local’) through to the multinational (e.g. the ‘southeast Asian region’). In Australia, the ‘region’
often, but not always, refers to a sub-state level geographical area containing patchworks of towns, villages, rural and ‘wilderness’ areas – often conjoined with ‘rural’ (as in ‘rural and regional areas’). There are official boundary definitions for Australian regions in statistical and regional economic discourses (bounded by rivers, catchments, or major conurbations).

(Gibson 2009: 61)

Therefore the thesis uses both terms, *regional* and *non-metropolitan*, advisedly and inclusively for the purpose of serving both considerations.

Regionality impacts profoundly on five of the Australian case-study communities: West Wyalong, the Mental Health Community, the At Risk Youth community, the Remote Health Worker Choir, and the Seniors’ Choir. To a lesser, though still significant degree, it also impacts on the sixth, the Ability Inclusive group. Regionality, being remotely located from major cities and urban population centres, qualifies all of the communities other than the New Horizons adult learning community network as marginalised; this qualification applies regardless of cohort-specific considerations or complications (Table 3). Australian governments’ official identification of regionality, for funding and other administrative purposes, is determined according to the Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA) and the Australian Statistical Geographical Classification\(^2\) (ASGC), utilising the Australian Bureau of Statistics remoteness structure:

**Remoteness Structure**

The Remoteness Areas (RAs) divide Australia into broad geographic regions that share common characteristics of remoteness for statistical purposes. The Remoteness Structure divides each state and territory into several regions on the basis of their relative access to services. There are six classes of RA in the Remoteness Structure: Major Cities of Australia, Inner Regional Australia, Outer Regional Australia, Remote Australia, Very Remote Australia and Migratory. RAs are based on the Accessibility and Remoteness Index of

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\(^2\) In 2011 the Australian Bureau of Statistics statistical geographical framework changed from the ASGC to the Australian Statistical Geographical Standard (ASGS), although current arts funding bodies still refer to the ASGC model.
The ARIA measure is used nationally across government departments and policy areas and with multiple applications. Although it identifies six classes of relative remoteness, the decisive differentiation for its application to arts activity and support is that between major cities (alternately referred to as metropolitan areas) and the other five classes (inner and outer regional, remote and very remote, and migratory):

ARIA (Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia)

ARIA and its successors ARIA+ and ARIA++, are indexes of remoteness derived from measures of road distances between populated localities and Service Centres. These road distance measures are then used to generate a remoteness score for any location in Australia. ARIA+ is the standard Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) endorsed measure of remoteness. ARIA+ forms the basis for the ABS "Remoteness Structure" component of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification and continues to be utilised for the "Remoteness Structure" component of the Australian Statistical Geography Standard… ARIA+, like its predecessor ARIA, is an unambiguously geographical approach to defining remoteness… As a comparable index of remoteness that covers the whole of Australia, ARIA provides a measure of remoteness that is suitable for a broad range of applications including assisting in service planning, demographic analysis and resource allocation.

(ACPMR 2015: np)

The Australian Ministry for the Arts outlines the purpose and application of its Regional Arts Fund, identifying classifications of regional and remote, in the following excerpt from its web site:

Remoteness areas

A principal objective of the regional arts programs is to support cultural activities in and tours to regional and remote Australia.
The Department of Health provides a searchable map of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification Remoteness Areas which can help … identify the regional and remote location of your activity…

This map is administered by the Department of Health.

(Department of Communications and the Arts [DOCA] 2015: np)

In most cases the five identifiers are abbreviated to regional and remote, rural and remote, or simply regional. Every Australian state and territory Regional Arts Fund disbursement agency complies with the federal eligibility guidelines, as identified in the Regional Arts NSW Regional Arts Fund program guidelines:

The words 'region', 'remote' and 'very remote/isolated' are interpreted in these guidelines as follows: Region means an area with common geographic, economic, statistical, social or cultural identifiers. It may include a regional centre, town or rural area crossing one or more local government area(s). The term regional excludes areas that are part of the dormitory catchment of major capital cities, high density coastal developments and major industrial cities close to the capital and population centres of greater than 100,000.

(Regional Arts NSW [RANSW] 2015: np)

The exception to the case study commonality of NSW regionality is the North American New Horizons network, comprising practice-based music learning groups for seniors. This community, or network of communities, was initially selected to provide international comparison, particularly in relation to the Australian adult case-study cohorts. The opportunity and invitation to observe the organisational, musical and educational aspects of the network of North American adult ensembles arose during the research period and offered a comparative environment for observation. While a number of cultural differences are apparent between the Australian and North American communities, most notably in relation to community attitudes and the historical significance of group music activity in the formal education system, there are many consistencies in the reported (musical and non-musical) benefits that community music activity offer to demographically similar groups from both continents. None of the data from the North American environments challenges or defies the validity of the coding structure that developed through analysis of the Australian data. Therefore, the comparative North American data reinforces that from the Australian cases
and strengthens the validity and applicability - outside of this specific research - of the overarching three-tiered analytical structure introduced in the closing paragraph of the introduction to this chapter, and discussed toward this chapter’s end.

**Terminology relating to Community Music**, including some of the key terms and definitions used in this thesis, are contested and context-reliant. Terms such as ‘community’, ‘community music’, ‘formal’, ‘nonformal’ and ‘informal education’ require context-specific definitions that give meaning and significance to the research model, data analysis and emergent theories. The next section defines the terms as the thesis uses them and reflects on comparative definitions and usage in the relevant, related, literature.

For the purpose of this thesis, ‘community’ is defined as a cohesive group of individuals, socially related by virtue of identity with a common interest or condition. The commonality may be geographical, spiritual, ethnic, religious, vocational, recreational, societal, employment or health-based. In *Community music: in theory and in practice*, Higgins (2012) suggests that: ‘communities can be based on many things, including ethnicity, religion, class, gender or politics. They can be located in villages, towns, cities, or cyberspace. Communities can be large or small, local or global, traditional, modern or post-modern’ (Higgins 2012: 142).

In considering the various historical and contemporary uses of the term, Williams (1985) states that:

> Community can be the warmly persuasive word to describe an existing set of relationships, or the warmly persuasive word to describe an alternative set of relationships. What is most important, perhaps, is that unlike all other terms of social organisation (state, nation, society etc.) it seems never to be used unfavourably, and never to be given any positive opposing or distinguishing term.’

(Williams 1985: np)
Dewey (1916) suggests that ‘men live in a community in virtue of the things which they have in common’ (Dewey 1916: 4), and Veblen states that:

…most people in the field of CM will inevitably grapple with many challenging details surrounding the meaning of “community,” whether these details concern community-as-: geographically situated, culturally based, artistically concerned, re-created, virtual, imagined, or otherwise. Indeed, many contemporary music scholars are heavily involved in documenting how musical cultures embody (mirror, reflect, and shape) social cultures, and vice-versa…

(Veblen 2008: 8)

In his essay on the meaning(s) of community as interactive dynamic and porous, Bowman (2009) makes the connection between a deconstructed notion of community and the question of community music. He connects considerations of place, people, attitude and social negotiation to educational and musical imperatives:

An understanding of “community music” requires careful thought about what community means, how it is created and sustained, the kinds of community we wish to create and sustain and why, and how music and education relate to such considerations. Communities are fluid, porous, negotiated affairs: dynamic patterns of human interaction. To understand communities we need to understand the practices that stitch and weave them together. To ask ‘What community?’ is also to ask ‘What kind of practice?’, ‘What kind of people are deemed capable of engaging in it?’, ‘What kinds of attitudes, beliefs, and actions does it exist to sustain?’, and ‘What kinds of attitudes, beliefs, and actions are necessary to sustain and nourish it?’ Communities are not just places where we engage in musically educational practices: they are also creations of those practices. It is thus imperative that we consider both the kind of community we presume to serve and the kinds of community that predominate the music(s) we endorse as educational vehicles.

(Bowman 2009: 109)
‘Community music’ is a term that has been interpreted in a variety of ways since its earliest documented usages, and it continues to be controversial. In his 1916 article, *The spread of the community music idea*, Dykema observes that:

> Community music is a term that has obtained great vogue the past three years and yet so far as I know it has never been defined… First of all, it may be said that community music is not the name of a new type of music nor even of musical endeavor. It does not include any particular kind of music or any particular kind of performer. It is not so much the designation of a new thing as a new point of view… Stated positively and concretely, community music is socialized music; music, to use Lincoln's phrase, for the people, of the people, and by the people.

(Dykema 1916: 218)

Veblen has been involved in the ISME Commission for Community Music Activity initiative to formulate a working definition for the term ‘community music’ since 1994 (Veblen, 2008). In her 2008 article entitled *The many ways of community music*, she suggests that community music encompasses both informal and formal contexts of music activity and that it is best considered in relation to:

1. the kinds of music and music making involved in a community music programme;
2. the intentions of the leaders or participants in a programme;
3. the characteristics of the participants;
4. the interactions among teaching-learning aims, knowledge and strategies; and
5. interplays between informal and formal social-educational-cultural contexts.

(Veblen 2008: 6)

In 2002, the Commission for Community Music Activity, ‘perhaps the most influential force in community music over the past twenty years’ (Veblen 2008: 5), approached the definition of ‘community music’ with a caveat:

Music in community centres, prisons and retirement homes; extra-curricular projects for school children and youth; public music schools; community bands, orchestras and choirs; musical projects with asylum seekers; marching bands for street children. All this – and more – comes under the heading of community
music. One of the central features of all these activities is that the starting point are always the competencies and ambitions of the participants, rather than the teacher or leader. But a single definition of community music is yet to be found. (International Society for Music Education 2002: np)

In their introduction to the chapter on Community Music in the New handbook on research in music teaching and learning (2002), Veblen and Olsson recognise that there are international differences impacting on the question of definition, however ‘all definitions concur that community music concerns people making music’ (Veblen & Olsson 2002: 730). They observe that:

Musical communities take many forms. While music-making groups may crystallize into unique structures, there are certain characteristics that facilitate positive group dynamics. Procedures and structures don't seem to be fixed determinants. There may be a conductor, people may take turns leading and following, or there may be a collective.

(Veblen & Olsson 2002: 730-731)

Veblen and Olsson (2002) list fourteen characteristics of community music activities. Eight of these resonate particularly with the seven case-study communities involved in the research for this thesis. They are:

- multiple learner/teacher relationships and processes,
- commitment to lifelong musical learning and access to all members of the community,
- awareness of the need to include disenfranchised and disadvantaged individuals or groups,
- recognition that participants’ social and personal growth are as important as their musical growth,
- belief in the value and use of music to foster intercultural acceptance and understanding,
- fostering of personal delight and confidence in individual creativity,
- flexible teaching, learning, and facilitation modes (oral, notational, holistic,
experiential, analytic), and

- excellence/quality in both the processes and products of music making relative to individual goals of participants

(Veblen & Olsson 2002: 731)

Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts, and Schippers (2009) suggest that while the term ‘community music’ carries with it a broad range of associations, it is widely acknowledged to be ‘a group activity where people join together to actively participate in the music making process’ (Bartleet et al. 2009: 21). The United Kingdom’s Sound Sense (Sound Sense 2006) is a professional association formed to support community music workers and participants and promote community music activity. In their *A Career in Community Music* information sheet, they eschew the issue of a formal community music definition, instead posing a three-part ‘test’:

What is community music?

Arguments about what community music is have abounded for years. Sound Sense has put together, not so much a formal definition, but a three part ‘test’ to help people to understand the elements that are important to this way of working with people:

1. community music involves musicians from any musical discipline working with groups of people to enable them to develop active and creative participation in music,
2. community music is concerned with putting equal opportunities into practice, and
3. community music can happen in all types of community, whether based on place, institution, interest, age or gender group, and reflects the context in which it takes place.

(Sound Sense 2006: np)

And in the second edition of *Music matters: a philosophy of music education* (Elliott & Silverman 2015), Elliott and Silverman suggest that the term has developed the following broad and inclusive meaning:
An increasing number of teachers and scholars view CM as a wide range of music learning situations that depend on the aims (musical, social, cultural, etc.) of the people involved. These aims include but are not limited to amateur music making for health and well-being; music making for musical-cultural preservation; and music making for a variety of other values, including peace and reconciliation, social justice, personal recreation, local economic renewal (e.g., income generated from local music festivals), social capital (e.g., using musical activities to create social networks that generate various human “goods”), and so forth.

(Elliott & Silverman 2015: 7)

For this thesis, ‘community music’ refers to music occurring in the community, being practised and/or performed by non-professional musicians – or groups or ensembles formed with social and emotional well-being rather than income generation as their primary aim. The latter scenario applies to the Ability Inclusive (AI) creativity residency project (case study No. 5) that involved professional musicians and operated as a government-funded advocacy project rather than a conventional professional engagement. The six-day creative process involved original creative input from all participants, most of whom had not met until day one of the residential. The musicians, chosen because of their disparate stylistic and instrumental disciplines had no influence over each other’s recruitment, and the project resulted in over two hours of new repertoire and a public performance outcome. The final public performance element of the project was not presented as a commitment to be served by the thirty hours of rehearsal, rather it was provided as an opportunity, free of any programming or duration specifications, to share and celebrate the results of the six-day creative process.

The focus of this thesis and the research informing it, in keeping with Dykema’s definition of community music, is communities of ‘socialised’ music making (Dykema 1916); by, in and for (a or) the community.

Much of the literature dealing with community music as an educational intervention, including contributions by Green (2008) and Veblen and Olsson (2002), raises differentiation between formal, semi-formal, nonformal and informal learning practices as significant to the definition of community music. Veblen and Olsson (2002) talk about Community Music
Education representing a less rigid teaching and learning relationship than that of school or tertiary-based education, and of the greater significance of (community music education) means over (formal music education) end – the process, the experience of community music versus the commercial or qualification result of formal music education.

Formal/nonformal/informal delineation - in relation to what may or may not qualify as community music - is challenged in New South Wales (NSW) by the growth of school/community music organisation partnerships. Not only have such partnerships increased in number since the beginning of the millennium, but community music organisation partners, such as NSW Regional Conservatoriums, have taken greater responsibility within those partnerships to provide curriculum support, and even curriculum content as part of state-mandated syllabus requirements (Department of Education and Communities [DEC] 2013). This is particularly the case in relation to non-metropolitan government primary schools, in which specialist music teachers are not part of the core teaching staff. Many government and non-government school music programs in Australia, most notably in regional NSW (Reeder 2006; Klopper & Power 2012; Schippers & Bartleet 2013) draw on the leadership and guidance of music educator/practitioners from such community organisations.

In discussing the difficulties of defining the term community music, Higgins (2012) identifies three broad perspectives of community music, and alludes to the types of partnerships and cross-strata relationships that encompass the Australian experience identified above:

I want community music, in the broadest sense, to influence what I have to say, but I also want to be specific about my particular use of the term. From the outset, then, I suggest three broad perspectives of community music: (1) music of a community, (2) communal music making, and (3) an active intervention between a music leader or facilitator and participants.

It is with the third perspective of community music that I am chiefly concerned. In short, my focus is on the music-making interactions outside of ‘formal’ music institutions, as well as on partnerships between the formal, nonformal and the informal musical education settings.

(Higgins 2012: 3)
Definitions of formal, nonformal, and informal music education relate in turn to curriculum-based; loose-curriculum (broad-outcome related but without prescribed assessable developmental stages), and largely self-directed; experience-based rather than achievement-based:

Formal learning can be defined as: learning within an organized and structured context that is explicitly designated as learning and may lead to a formal recognition. Learning is primarily intentional. Knowledge is mainly explicit. Formal learning takes place in the Conservatoire. Nonformal learning or education can be defined as any organized educational activity outside the established formal system (think of projects, workshops, lessons at the public music school etc.). Informal learning refers to acquiring musical skills and knowledge outside formal educational settings. Learning experiences can include interactions with other musicians who do not act as teachers as such or by development of self-teaching techniques. Links between formal, nonformal and informal education and learning are critical for a conceptual framework of Lifelong Learning.

(Hanze University of Applied Sciences 2014: np)

Green (2002) differentiates between formal and informal music learning as follows:

By ‘informal music learning’ I mean a variety of approaches to acquiring musical skills and knowledge outside formal educational settings… informal music learning as a set of ‘practices’ rather than ‘methods’… they include encountering unsought learning experiences through enculturation in the musical environment; learning through interaction with others…and developing independent learning methods through self-teaching techniques. I will use the expression ‘formal education’ to refer to instrumental and classroom music teachers’ practices of teaching, training; and to pupils’ and students’ experiences of learning and of being taught, educated and trained in a formal educational setting…

(Green 2002:16)
This thesis accepts the definition of formal music education as relating to an established and state-recognised curriculum; nonformal music education in terms of a loose, outcome-orientated curriculum or learning program, delivered outside of a formal (state-recognised) educational institution; and informal in relation to learning that results from self- or peer-facilitated activity without an identified curriculum, syllabus, or structured learning program. However, it goes one step further in describing levels of formality in music education delivery, by identifying the approach taken by a state-wide network of community owned and operated music education organisations. Regional Conservatoriums, eighteen in total, are located across the greater part of the state of NSW (Map 5). They coordinate, administer and resource individual and group music activities for approximately to 30,000 students. The music education model demonstrated by Regional Conservatoriums is best described as semiformal.

Regional Conservatoriums developed in various locations throughout NSW, mainly during the 1980s and 1990s, as community owned and operated music schools, responding primarily to the demand for individual and group instrumental and vocal tuition and ensemble activities (Cahill 1998; Reeder 2006). Up until the early part of this century, Regional Conservatoriums’ contribution to the music education landscape could justifiably be identified as nonformal, in keeping with the definitions given above. This is in no way intended to demean the historical or current programs of these organisations, nor to suggest any lack of commitment to quality music education or individual organisational or educational aspirations or rigour; it is simply a recognition that until the current functions of support of state curriculum in schools (all Regional Conservatoriums), delivering vocational courses and partnering with universities in the delivery of select elements of university courses (some), these organisations were operating without formal recognition as educational facilities, providing organised instrumental and vocal training outside of a formal curriculum structure.
Since the early 2000s, funding guidelines and individual RC initiatives in school partnerships coalesced to formalise an in-school curriculum support role for RCs which by the mid-2010s sees such a function as part of the criteria for inclusion in the state government’s Regional Conservatorium Grants Program, the program that provides substantial funding support to Regional Conservatoriums on a triennial basis (DEC 2013):

Regional conservatoriums deliver individual and group instrumental music and vocal training and other music services to their communities. This includes assisting school-aged students to achieve quality music education outcomes.

(DEC 2013: 1)

In 2016, Regional Conservatoriums not only support curriculum in schools, but increasingly align instrumental and vocal tuition with the state curriculum, provide curriculum in schools that lack in-house specialist music resources, and are developing their own curriculum frameworks that articulate directly with state school curriculum. Regional Conservatoriums also deliver or co-deliver vocational training, partner with universities to deliver courses, and have become professional learning hubs for generalist school teachers. Although at this time they do not have formal educational institution status, the formal school curriculum articulation, curriculum development, university and vocational recognition and state accreditation as providers of professional learning for in-service teachers positions them
outside of the nonformal category. Given the developed functions outlined in this paragraph, the assertion here is that the contemporary NSW Regional Conservatorium provides *semiformal* music education.

Cahill, in *The community music handbook* (1998) sums up her approach to defining community music by observing that: ‘Perhaps a central aspect of any definition is that the development is controlled by the community rather than, for instance, by a commercial organisation or a government agency’ (Cahill 1998: 4). Cahill’s emphasis on the self-directed aspect of community music as a qualifying criterion provides another practical consideration that is not inconsistent with this thesis. The membership of the group, its personality and characteristics, are germane to the shape, nature and purpose of the music community and its activity:

> We probably can say that community music activity is always ‘not-for-profit’, meaning that any income its activities produce is not distributed to shareholders but used to support future activities. Community music development typically involves amateurs and volunteers, but equally typically utilises professional musicians as teachers or leaders… In a loose and open way, we can say that community music activity is controlled by the community, engages with the community and is of benefit to more people than the participants.

(Cahill 1998: 6)

One additional term that arises through the data analysis process outlined in Chapter Three of the thesis, and one that resonates with the definitions of ‘community’ and ‘community music’ discussed above, is ‘musicking’. Introduced by Small in *Musicking: the meanings of performance and listening* (Small 1998), the term is borne of Small’s recognition that ‘music is not a thing at all but an activity’ (Small 1998; 2). He proposes that although ‘…the word *musicking* does not appear in any English dictionary… it is too useful a conceptual tool to lie unused. It is the present participle, or gerund, of the verb *to music*’ (Small 1998; 9). The term refers not only to the act of making music, but also includes listening, preparing for, organising; even cleaning up the rehearsal or performance space after an event. ‘…to pay attention in any way to a musical performance…whether actively or passively’ (Small 1998;
9). The term’s particular relevance to community and the relationships community embodies is expressed as follows:

The act of musicking establishes in the place where it is happening a set of relationships, and it is in those relationships that the meaning of the act lies. They are to be found not only between those organised sounds conventionally thought of as being the stuff of musical meaning but also between the people who are taking part, in whatever capacity, in the performance; and they model, or stand as metaphor for, ideal relationships as the participants in the performance imagine them to be: between person and person, between individual and society, between humanity and the natural world, and even perhaps the supernatural world.

(Small 1998; 13)

The section above dealt with the necessary matter of settling meanings of, and context for, the use of a number of critical terms that define the locus of the thesis and situate the research in its current and future field of relevance. As discussed above, the terms ‘community’, ‘community music’, ‘formal’, ‘informal’ and ‘nonformal’ carry a variety of understandings and connotations that require clarification for the purpose of the thesis, as does the term ‘musicking’, which becomes relevant from Chapter Three on. Through a discussion of the relevant literature, with examples dating back to the earliest documented applications, definitions were explored and utilised to construct a meaningful and relevant set of descriptive parameters within with the thesis explores and distils its observations and findings. The operational purpose and functions of NSW Regional Conservatoriums were outlined in a distilled case study, illustrating an example of a contemporary, environmentally relevant, NSW regional community music activity. Having now contextualised the key cultural terminology that defines the community music landscape within which the thesis situates, the next section of the chapter will discuss considerations raised for the researcher in his relationship to the participating group music communities as a participant observer; first the ethical considerations, and then those relating to the element of autoethnography.

**Ethical considerations**

Inherent in the sampling strategies used, both purposive and convenience sampling are some ethical considerations that were compounded by the researcher’s participant observer role in
the majority of the cases recruited. Issues faced by the researcher included the development of appropriate data collection tools for participants under the age of 18. Although the research was not designed to generate generalizable data or findings outside of the sample, the integrity and cross-referential value of a multiple case study required a coherence and consistency of data within the bounds of the total sample. This consideration required that simplified (participants under 12 years of age) questionnaire and interview questions retained the qualities and meaning of the non-simplified (12 years and over) instruments.

Examples of the simplified and non-simplified instruments are:

Participant questionnaire for group members over 12 years (Appendix 2)

Likert statements -

4. I see some members of the ensemble socially, but only at occasions that are directly related to official ensemble activities, such as suppers, working bees etc.,

11. if the membership of the ensemble were to change dramatically I would reconsider my own membership, and

21. my ensemble plays a part in defining/identifying my cultural identity,

differentiating from the following equivalent statements in:

Participant questionnaire for group members 12 years and under (Appendix 1)

4. I see some members of the ensemble outside of rehearsals and performances, but only at occasions that have to do with the ensemble,

11. if the people in my ensemble were to change to a different group of people, I would have to think again about being a member myself, and

21. being in my ensemble is a part of who I am and where I have come from.

Another area of ethical consideration was in developing appropriate protocols for engaging with participants constituting the sample. This required clearance from the University of Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee (Appendix 5), and in relation specifically to the
involvement of mental health consumers on the grounds of a mental health facility, clearance from the Greater Western Area Health Service Human Research Ethics Committee (Appendix 6). The greater part of the data collection for the Mental Health Community occurred through interviews with staff members and the ethnographic element, comprising researcher perspective and perceptions. Akin to this consideration is that regarding flexible and respectful procedures and protocols for data collection involving people living with physical and/or developmental disability. In these cases, recorded verbal interviews and field notes (again from the researcher as project manager, activity leader and facilitator) provided the greater part of the data. Other ethical considerations relate directly to the researcher status of leader/facilitator of the group music activity within and without the research parameters. These relate to the maintenance of transparency and full disclosure with each case study community in relation to any perceived benefit the researcher could receive by virtue of his dual role in all but one case of paid group facilitator and researcher; maintaining transparency and full disclosure with each case study community in relation to any perceived benefit, including favoured treatment or consideration, that participants could receive by virtue of their dual role of research participant and paying member of any other group or activity under the aegis of the researcher or his employer. In the case of the North American (New Horizons) adult learning communities, the one case in which the researcher did not have an employment-based connection to the community, being clear that there would not be any expectation from the fellowship-granting body (New Horizons International Music Association) of endorsement or promotion of the network in return for the awarding of the fellowship.

**Autoethnographic element**

In six of this study’s seven case-study communities, the researcher functioned as participant observer, due to his pre-existing roles with each of the respective community music groups, as music director or advisor. Only in the case of the North American network of adult learning communities was the researcher’s role exclusively that of an observer. The North American cohort of participants was included in the study with the intended purpose of providing comparison to the otherwise exclusively regional, Australian, communities. It presented the opportunity to collect, then compare and contrast, data from a network of demographically comparable community music communities outside of Australia, with particular relevance to the Seniors’ Choir case study already included in the research design.
As outlined above, the study’s six Australian sample communities were chosen on the basis of convenience (their accessibility to the researcher as a practising music educator in regional Australia) and their relevance to the research focus, as communities of learning and developing communities of practice (Lave & Wenger 1991; Wenger 1998,) in which non-musical sociocultural benefits were being discussed, observed and informally reported. They represent diverse, discrete and active community music cohorts whose participants are marginalised by one or more of a variety of descriptors – age, physical or mental health, geographic isolation, social isolation and mobility. The researcher’s role as both participant and investigator necessitated, in this case, the inclusion of an autoethnographic element in the study. The researcher’s established group-pedagogical approach involves participant empowerment and community development with well-being, social harmony and peer-supported achievement as goals. This approach inextricably weaves the researcher as leader/facilitator/educator into the community, giving particular validity to his position of informed stakeholder and privileged observer - creating a situation whereby exclusion of personal observations would be a distortion of the ethnographic data itself. Holman Jones (2005) describes as autoethnography as:

A balancing act... Autoethnography works to hold self and culture together, albeit not in equilibrium or stasis. Autoethnography writes a world in flux and movement – between story and context, writer and reader, crisis and denouement. It creates charged moments of clarity, connection, and change.

(Jones 2005: 764)

Autoethnography describes and validates the consideration and analysis of self-generated data as an element of research design. In her chapter entitled The observation of participation and the emergence of public ethnography, in The Sage handbook of qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln 2005), Tedlock identifies autoethnography as an evolutionary development following the creation of participant observation in the late 19th century; the latter’s objective lens in opposition to autobiography’s as a subjective one, and its modification in more recent times to a reflective practice of critical engagement with the researcher’s own participation, ‘within the ethnographic frame’ (Tedlock 2005: 467). She describes the emergence of autoethnography and its function as follows:
A new genre, known as “autoethnography” emerged from this practice. Authors working in the genre attempt to heal the split between public and private realms by connecting the autobiographical impulse (the gaze inward) with the ethnographic impulse (the gaze outward). Autoethnography at its best is a cultural performance that transcends self-referentiality by engaging with cultural forms that are directly involved in the creation of culture. The issue becomes not so much distance and, objectivity, and neutrality, as closeness, subjectivity and engagement.

(Tedlock 2005: 467)

In the case of this research, the inclusion of an autoethnographic element is necessary for the following reason. In each of the six Australian case studies, the author is either the musical/artistic leader of the ensemble, is linked as a musical consultant to the group, or an initiator and project manager. In the majority of the constituent groups, the researcher’s role at the time of the data collection was that of artistic director and conductor. In the case of the Ability Inclusive residency, he was the initiator and project manager, participated in the activity and chief executive officer of the host organisation. Given the artistic, educational and organisational leadership roles served by the researcher across the six Australian case studies, it would be disingenuous to suggest that the Leaders’ perspective data, as presented and investigated in Chapter Four, would be complete without the inclusion of his own observational data. The factor of potential distortion of data due to a researcher’s impact on a case study through participation in the observed activity is recognised by the author. That vulnerability is mitigated in this study by the following research design safeguards:

- the community music groups, their activities and membership, were initiated and operated separately, and regardless of, the study. No individual participants – group members or leaders - were recruited or selected for participation in the community music activities for the purpose of participating in the study,
- in five of the six communities in which the researcher functioned as active artistic leader, access to the activities was entirely open, with no qualifying criteria in place other than capacity to attend and participate in the activity. Participation in the Remote Health Worker Choir (one of those five) was restricted to members of a national remote health workers’ association, a
criterion imposed by that association, which was funding the program as an activity for its members. Participation in the Ability Inclusive activity, in which the researcher did not take a prominent artistic lead, was restricted by criteria determined by the host organisation and the disability arts agency with a view to ensuring participation by members of the target group, professional musicians living with a permanent disability,

- none of the groups, or any of the specific activities, was established or formulated for the purpose of generating data for the study. They were not structured in any way to align with the research questions or the time frame of the study, and

- the researcher’s professional role as an artistic director and prominent community music educator in the region meant that the six Australian case communities, discrete and bounded as they were at the time of the study, included the researcher in his routine capacity, and as an operational and environmental norm.

During the data collection and analysis stages of the study, while acknowledging his status as participant observer, the researcher imposed no preconceptions on the research design, data collection or analysis. Data collection instruments including participant questionnaires and interview questions (Appendices 1 - 4) evidence unbiased data collection practices, and the data coding matrix (Appendix 7) indicates a prejudice-free approach to validation and analysis. The principles of ethnography as a qualitative research strategy, articulated below by Hoey (2014), were observed and maintained at all times throughout the study:

Thus, ethnography may be defined as both a qualitative research process or method (one conducts an ethnography) and product (the outcome of this process is an ethnography) whose aim is cultural interpretation. The ethnographer goes beyond reporting events and details of experience. Specifically, he or she attempts to explain how these represent… the cultural constructions… in which we live.

Ethnographers generate understandings of culture through representation of … an emic perspective… the insider's point of view. The emphasis in this representation is thus on allowing critical categories and meanings to emerge
from the ethnographic encounter rather than imposing these from existing models. An etic perspective, by contrast, refers to a more distant, analytical orientation to experience. An ethnographic understanding is developed through close exploration of several sources of data. Using these data sources as a foundation, the ethnographer relies on a cultural frame of analysis.

Long-term engagement in the field setting or place where the ethnography takes place, is called participant observation. This is perhaps the primary source of ethnographic data. The term represents the dual role of the ethnographer. To develop an understanding of what it is like to live in a setting, the researcher must both become a participant in the life of the setting while also maintaining the stance of an observer, someone who can describes the experience with a measure of … detachment.

(Hoey 2014: 1-2)

Table 4 summarises the researcher’s participatory roles in the case-study communities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case-study</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Researcher’s role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>West Wyalong (WW)</td>
<td>string &amp; wind workshop busking project</td>
<td>conductor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>town band</td>
<td>workshop facilitator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>observer and guest player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health Community (MHC)</td>
<td>consumer choir</td>
<td>conductor &amp; ptnt org. CEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>drumming group</td>
<td>partner org. CEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rock band</td>
<td>partner org. CEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors’ Choir (SC)</td>
<td>choir</td>
<td>conductor &amp; ptnt org. CEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Risk Youth (ARY)</td>
<td>rock music workshops</td>
<td>workshop facilitator/trainer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote Health Worker Choir (RHWC)</td>
<td>choir</td>
<td>conductor &amp; project manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability Inclusive (AI)</td>
<td>6-day creativity residency</td>
<td>trombonist &amp; project manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Horizons adult learning</td>
<td>various ensembles including</td>
<td>recipient of NHIMA fellowship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community (NH)</td>
<td>concert bands, orchestra, choir, small</td>
<td>(official observer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ensembles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Researcher’s roles in the case-study communities

The researcher’s autoethnographic perspective is detailed in the opening section to the final chapter of the thesis.
Outline of the thesis
The purpose of this opening chapter has been to introduce the research context and focus, its
genesis and development; to state the research questions; discuss methodology, including the
sample, data collection and analytical strategy; and to consider issues relevant to the study -
including the meaning and significance of regionality as it relates to the non-metropolitan
focus of the thesis, key terms as they operate within the context of the thesis, ethical
considerations, and the element of autoethnography. In presenting these structural
considerations, the chapter reflects on and engages with relevant literature, supporting the
methodology with an underpinning and justification in the developing community music
research context. Consideration is given to ‘the concepts and theories which underlie the
methods’, alluding to the underlying methodological concepts. (University of Manchester
2016).

Subsequent chapters of this thesis are organised in the following way. Chapter Two
commences with an exploration of public support structures for community music activity in
Australia. It reviews current and historical government policies, supported by associated
literature. It observes that community music in Australia is situated within a local
government jurisdiction, and that responsibilities and administrative functions of local
governments are determined by state government legislation. Recent federal government
cultural policy developments, along with moves to increase collaboration in arts policy
development and implementation across the three tiers of Australian government (local, state
and federal) are discussed, with a concluding focus given to the degree to which current
government policy is linked across tiers, and the reality of polity and policy in Australia as it
supports, or otherwise, community music activity. This chapter is necessary as it provides
official, structural context for the consideration of community music activity in non-
metropolitan NSW, and more broadly, in Australia.

Chapter Three presents and explores the data collected from the first of the two participant
groups contributing to the study, the music group members. The chapter provides insight that
addresses the first of the two principal research questions: What aspects of social and
cultural development result directly from community group music programs? The chapter
distils data collected from forty community music group members, across three cohorts, into
nine themes.
Chapter Four follows on from the discussion of group members’ perspectives with those of the leaders - conductors, administrators, project managers and planners. This data reinforces the themes established in the previous chapter, albeit with different emphases, and provides an extra layer to the grounded theory, introducing considerations of why such beneficial aspects of community music activity may be emerging as observed, experienced and perceived by both sets of participants.

Chapter Five interrogates the consolidated, cross-sample, data that produces analytical traction with the second principal research question: How are the sociocultural benefits that are identified as resulting from participation in community music activity best effected? The six dimensions that emerge to address the question develop through the inductive deductive process of coding and subcoding and propose a comprehensive conceptual structure for the successful community music environment.

The final chapter opens with an autoethnographic account of the researcher’s position and observations as participant observer. It then recounts the relevance of Chapter Two’s focus on government policy and the particular civic connections of local government to non-metropolitan community music activity. It proceeds with a discussion of structural and organisational factors that have a greater impact on non-metropolitan, regional community music organisations and activities than on those operating in metropolitan settings, and follows this with a final discussion of the three-tiered analytical model that developed as the overarching research approach for the study. The chapter, and thesis, close with a concluding statement of the four main research findings, the fourth of which proposes the emergent three-tiered analytical model as a practical option for broad application in the field of community music enquiry.
Chapter 2: Community music in the Australian polity

Introduction

This chapter investigates and discusses the current arts and culture policy environment across the two New South Wales (NSW) Local Government Areas in whose jurisdiction sit the six Australian case-study communities that constitute the principal data sample for the project. The policy environment is viewed as it relates to influence on, and facilitation of, community-based group music activity in these marginalised communities. It is necessary to provide this government policy context as it is the officially expressed position on the arts (of which in this thesis community music is seen to be one) in Australia. Without this explanation, the issues raised by community music participants, leaders, and others, would remain contextless.

In Australia there are three levels of government - federal, state and local. The local government tier, usually referred to as ‘local council’, is not recognised in the national constitution, and is legislated by acts of the second tier of government, that is, state government:

The six states and the Northern Territory have established one further level of government. Local governments (also known as local councils) handle community needs like waste collection, public recreation facilities and town planning. The states and the Northern Territory each have many local governments within their borders. The state or territory government defines the powers of the local governments, and decides what geographical areas those governments are responsible for.

The naming conventions for local governments vary across Australia. They can be called cities, shires, towns, or municipalities, but they are still controlled by the state or territory government above them.

(Australian Government 2013a: np)

For the purposes of this chapter, and by extension, this thesis, the term ‘policy’ is taken as meaning: published and or documented intentions or plans referred to explicitly as ‘policy’; intentions or statements published in government documents
outlining plans, including aims, objectives, mission or vision statements; key result areas and or key performance indicators; and activity indicative of an overarching approach or philosophy. Such a definition sits sympathetically with conventional contemporary usage, such as that given in the current Oxford dictionaries: ‘A course or principle of action adopted or proposed by an organization or individual’ (Oxford dictionaries 2014: np).

Government approaches to, and philosophical positions on, the function and application of arts and cultural activity within communities, as articulated through official policy and less formalised political gesture, provide the socio-political bedding that can underpin and support such activity (Fiske 1999; Oreck, Baum & McCartney 1999; Stevenson 2000; Abeles, Hafeli, Horowitz & Burton 2002; Putnam, Feldstein & Cohen 2003; Craik 2007; Kenny 2011; Local Government New South Wales [LGNSW] 2013b; National Assembly of State Arts Agencies [NASAA] 2014). Community–based group music activities can thrive under sympathetic, and at best case pro-active, cultural policies (Breen 1994; Finnegan 2007; Dunbar-Hall & Bartleet 2009; National Endowment for the Arts [NEA] 2016), particularly when supporting or responding to articulated policy objectives and/or key result areas (Department of Premier and Cabinet [DP&C] 2011: np). Importantly, with the majority of arts funding in Australia deriving from government sources (Throsby 2001), policy drives the availability of financial and in-kind support for music activity, including community-based programs - although the majority of accessible funding sources for community music activity does tend to be short-lived, and for one-off projects rather than ongoing programs (Australia Council for the Arts [ACFTA] 2013; Arts NSW 2013).

The rationale for inclusion of policy discussion at this point of the thesis is to identify and detail the socio-political environment within which community group music activity operates. This is in preparation for the next three chapters, in which the emergent themes and case-study communities themselves are detailed and discussed. This chapter identifies and discusses Australian federal, NSW state, and local government attitudes to, and appreciation of, artistic and cultural pursuit, with a particular focus on group music activity in marginalised communities (Wenger 1998; Higgins 2012). It investigates the significance and impact of government agenda, its
demonstrated sense of responsibility and ownership, and the transmission and communication of government arts agenda at various stages along that pathway. This chapter investigates and compares the end cultural environments, along with recent historical developments, within those local communities in which community music education and activity sits and operates, thrives, stagnates or struggles.

While the two upper levels of Australian government guide, assess, communicate, and to a significant degree fund the broader public agenda in relation to cultural pursuits, artistic agenda and community wellbeing, it is more directly the local government attitudes, mechanisms and responsibility that effect the level of support and public facilitation of community-based music activity. This responsibility is set out in chapter 6 of the New South Wales Local Government Act 1993 (What are the service functions of council?):

…the provision, management or operation of:
- cultural, educational and information services and facilities, and
- sporting, recreational and entertainment services and facilities.

(Local Government Act 1993: np)

Literature supporting this chapter and its findings includes formal government policy documents, statements and speeches; semi-formal interview data from state and local government officers; parliamentary advisory papers; funding body guidelines and reports; annual reports for not-for-profit arts organisations; newspaper reports; social commentary and social theory treatises; information portals; research project and statistical reports; historical accounts; and political memoirs.

This chapter serves to explain the structure of Australian government and to describe and define inter-governmental connections specific to arts and cultural policy. From that definition follows an exploration of the resultant effects and influence that those connections have on the growth of, and capacity for, social-cultural development through group music activity in marginalised communities - as identified by the author, community and program leaders and the group members themselves. The chapter is set out in four sections, the first providing a civic context for community music activity through a typically localised presence and premise, and its
jurisdictional, legislative connection to local government polity. By connecting community music activity to civic administrative and cultural infrastructure, the section introduces the relevance of government policy to community music activity in Australia, and the effects and ramifications of connected policy approaches across government tiers. The second section of this chapter presents an historical overview of arts and cultural policy development in Australia - the identification, positioning and traction of artistic and cultural pursuit, as a matter of publicly supported interest by successive Australian governments since the first decade of the 20th century. The third section outlines the current Australian arts and culture policy landscape at the federal, NSW state, and local government levels - with an investigation of policy-related responsibilities, function, jurisdiction and interplay of the three levels. The fourth and final section guides the chapter back to community connection to policy, with an analysis of arts and cultural policy as it functions at the local government level, identifying explicit and implicit support mechanisms for community-based music activity. Such mechanisms include financial and in-kind support for local organisations and reciprocity and recognition in terms of the part such activity plays in satisfying local councils’ social planning criteria or legislative compliance requirements.

**Community music: a civic context**

Community music activity in Australia functions within the broad local government jurisdiction. Although the nature and quality of connections between community music organisations and organisers, and councilors and council officers vary widely, there is a commonality of identification, usually relating to geographical boundaries, that provides, as a minimum, an aligned sense of localism and community identification. From that alignment and localised identification comes the potential for support. Such potential is borne of, or attributable to, the element of the identified local concern or venture; a shared responsibility for amenity and opportunity. Here it is important to distinguish *community* from *society*:

Society is now clear in two main senses: as our most general term for the body of institutions and relationships within which a relatively large group of people live; and as our most abstract term for the condition in which such institutions and relationships are formed.
Local government support may be provided through low-cost or fee-free rehearsal or performance space, access to community grants, public performance opportunities, advice and information on funding opportunities from other sources, access to administrative and governance resources, and/or promotions through print or electronic community guides and the like. Whether community music organisations do or do not receive tangible financial or in-kind council support, community music activities typically align with the local level of public administration. In most cases, local (physical) communities have a mechanism for consulting on policies and priorities to be adopted by local government bodies, and many community music organisations benefit by direct advocacy at the local level (Division of Local Government [DLG] 2013).

In 2013, heads of arts ministries from the federal government, all eight of the state and territory governments, and the president of the peak body for local governments across the country, signed a national cultural accord with a view to:

- clarify the roles and responsibilities of all governments in supporting Australia’s arts, cultural heritage and creative industries; and
- provide a framework to enhance collaboration in areas of national interest and shared responsibility and work productively on specific issues through an agreed triennial work plan.

(Australian Government 2013b: 3)

This accord articulates the principle of complementary, cross-tier effort to support and grow the development of the arts in Australian society and to promote the arts’ value to social engagement. It also identifies the specific roles and responsibilities of each of the three tiers. The accord gives the following outline of the responsibilities of local government in this interaction:
Local governments and councils have a particularly important role in infrastructure development, renewal and maintenance of cultural support and encouraging Australians to participate in arts and cultural activity. Through the recently established National Local Government Cultural Forum, local governments will work to set long-term objectives for local government cultural planning and the arts, with a view to sharing knowledge and ideas that can strengthen communities, and improve community health and well-being through the arts. Local governments invest in local arts, heritage and cultural development activities and resources, and have key responsibility for supporting local institutions such as libraries and galleries.

(Australian Government 2013b: 7)

As legal responsibility for determining the jurisdiction and administrative powers of local government bodies in Australia is invested in state government legislation, an examination of the NSW Government’s approach to the arts, articulated through its policy settings and arts funding program, is salient. So too, with a view to a thorough representation of the Australian arts policy landscape, the overarching federal government positioning of music and the arts is outlined as part of its social policy outlook. Historical perspective is offered by mapping the development of, and approach to, Australian arts and culture policy since its inception as an area of identifiable national consideration approximately 100 years ago (Stevenson 2000). Consideration is given below to the question of articulation or connection in arts policy and practice, including funding programs and priorities, of the three levels of Australian government. This is with a view to identifying and describing a relationship or thread of awareness, intent and support, by which to clearly communicate the qualities of environment to community music practitioners, participants and community leaders.

Local government environments, particularly those of smaller, non-metropolitan centres, can facilitate a greater degree of responsiveness to constituents, and higher level of overt and direct accountability to community, than other levels of government. Unlike state and federal members of parliament, local government councillors in Australia are part-time politicians, commonly maintaining careers
amongst, and as part of, the general community; thereby being more accessible for, and accountable to, general community members and constituents’ desires and priorities. They are met with a similar challenge to balance attention to identified community needs and desires with leadership and decision-making for the greater good as that of their state and federal counterparts, but are arguably more sensitive and politically vulnerable as local community members themselves. While state and federal policy makers are more routinely the relevant focus for professional arts advocates and representative bodies, local government councillors are more commonly perceived, and accessed, as the practical conduits to funding possibilities, and to support mechanisms for residents’ associations, individual community members, and in-community arts and recreational activity groups such as those that practise community music.

As the chapter progresses, it interrogates the direct questions of whether there is specific policy that explicitly relates to community music activity; what the policy framework, whether explicit or implicit, is; whether there is a structural or philosophical thread of intent from federal to state to local levels; and what the government/community reciprocal considerations are; that is, how policy expectations relate to actual activity in communities, and what expectations community music groups have of government support. An understanding of how the current status of regional, non-metropolitan, community music activity has developed requires a discussion of the history of arts and cultural policy in Australian polity.

**Historical overview of arts and culture policy development in Australia**

A review of the history of arts policy in Australia shows how this area of government thinking has moved from position to position, often without any apparent coherence. In *The uses of art: constructing Australian identities*, Gibson (2001) states that: ‘It would be misleading to describe the development of federal government arts subsidy as a linear, coherent progression of cultural policy’ (Gibson 2001: 74). This statement resonates with reported approaches and documented requirements of state and local government tiers, as confirmed by interviews with three local government officers and one funding body representative (LG 1, LG 2, LG 3, RAFM) participating in the research between 2010 and 2013.
Overt attention to cultural pursuit and artistic activity as a significant consideration by Australian government was given its first focal point in 1908, with the formation of the Commonwealth Literary Fund. This fund was established to provide pensions for needy writers and their families, then broadened its function to support writers more generally through grants and fellowships. In 1912 the Commonwealth Art Advisory Board was created with a brief to establish a national art collection that would focus on portraits of key Australian government figures, painted by Australian artists. This board was replaced in 1973 by the Australian National Gallery Acquisitions Committee. The most significant music-orientated government initiative took place during 1929/1930, with the formation of the Australian Broadcasting Company (ABC), a single company given license to run all the subsidised Australian public radio stations, which had previously operated as individual organisations\(^1\) (Inglis 1983). Set up as a non-government organisation, the company was taken over by the federal government in 1932, and renamed the Australian Broadcasting Commission\(^2\). A significant radio, and later television and now internet, broadcaster, the majority of its content was music; initially generated by gramophone recordings, and then, significantly, by live orchestras and ensembles. To meet this need for live content, the ABC network of studio orchestras was developed soon after: ‘Indeed, the biggest single stimulus for music in Australia’ (Seares 2011: 8), with the NSW State Symphony Orchestra, performing sometimes under the name ABC Symphony Orchestra, being formed by the ABC in 1934. One of the ABC’s aims, as expressed in the Broadcasting and Television Act 1942, was to:

> …endeavour to establish and utilise, in such manner as it thinks desirable in order to confer the greatest benefit on broadcasting, groups of musicians for the rendition of orchestral, choral and band music of high quality.  

(Broadcasting and Television Act 1942: 84)

Between 1946 and 1950, full-time symphony orchestras were established in all six

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\(^1\) These stations were designated as *A class* stations, receiving a portion of the government-collected listener license fees. This allowed them to operate largely free of advertising income. *B class* stations received no such financial support, thus becoming fully commercial.

\(^2\) It was subsequently renamed the Australian Broadcasting Corporation in 1983.
Australian states, starting with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in NSW. The orchestras’ schedules comprised both live concert and broadcast performances, and recordings. As discussed by Inglis (1983), Stevenson (2000), Throsby (2001), Craik (2007), Gardiner-Garden (2009), and Seares (2011), it was during the 1940s that broad-ranging public support for the arts in Australia was embedded. The establishment of the six professional orchestras, spanning the country, represents one of three powerful cultural progenitors for the arts and cultural policy environment today. The two other major music developments of the period were the establishment of the (Australian) Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA), and the founding of the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust (AETT).

CEMA’s establishment in New South Wales in 1943 followed that of an organisation of the same name in Britain three years earlier. Both were forerunners of their respective country’s arts councils, with the Australian CEMA reconstituting in 1946 as the Arts Council of Australia (NSW Division). This transformation was funded with a grant of £600 from the NSW Department of Education. The CEMA in Australia was a private body, whose:

…central purpose…as of its namesake in Britain, (was) to bring art in all its forms to the people; to encourage them, not only to cultivate an appreciation of all that is beautiful in music, painting, sculpture, drama, ballet, and so forth, but also to express themselves in some on or other of the arts and crafts.

CEMA is based on the belief that art, in the widest sense of the word, is not a luxury for the few, but a necessity for all…

(Garran 1947: 3)

Divisions were subsequently formed in other states, with the Federal Arts Council established in 1964. Funding for the Arts Council was received through the state education departments, and significantly, it had an identified focus on decentralisation of the arts to country centres and schools. This body was renamed Regional Arts Australia in 1998 (http://regionalarts.com.au).
The not-for-profit Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust was set up in September 1954; named to commemorate the extensive (58-day) Australian tour of the newly crowned Queen Elizabeth II, made earlier that year. With a majority of the funds coming from private donations (75 per cent), it has been described by Rowse in his review of Gibson’s *The uses of art* (Rowse 2001: np) as ‘the outstanding example of private-public partnership in Australian cultural policy history’. An early example of successful arts philanthropic activity in Australia, it supported performing arts companies, national training schools for dance and drama, and touring productions. Current companies, Opera Australia, The Australian Ballet, and both the Sydney Theatre Company and Melbourne Theatre Company, had their origins in the AETT. Within a decade of its establishment the federal government gave the AETT the extra responsibility of distributing general arts grants on behalf of government, although this function was assumed by the Arts Council of Australia in 1968.

In his same 2001 critique of Gibson’s cultural history, Rowse points to the significant advocacy context within which the AETT developed to satisfy a default federal policy function:

> When Coombs established the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust in 1954, he built on that tradition of bourgeois leadership and extended it by fostering the evolution of the performing arts to semi-professional and later professional status. He persistently lobbied the Menzies government for financial support, so successfully that, by 1964, the Trust was being called to account as a 'public' arts patronage body.

(Rowse 2001: np)

The AETT website (2014a) describes the organisation’s establishment and development as follows:

> The Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust was founded in September 1954 as a non-profit public company with the aim of establishing national drama, opera and ballet companies employing local artists.
It was named to commemorate the recent visit to Australia of Queen Elizabeth II. Its founders, H.C. Coombs, Sir Charles Moses and John Douglas Pringle, had raised £100,000 through a public appeal…The Trust also established in 1956 the Elizabethan Theatre Trust Opera Company, followed by the Australian Ballet School and in 1967 the Elizabethan Trust Orchestra, divided into Sydney and Melbourne ensembles. Its musical and ballet activities were gradually divested when the Australian Opera and Australian Ballet Foundations were set up in 1970. Its role as a funding body also came to an end with the establishment of the Australian Council for the Arts (later the Australia Council) in 1968. By the 1980s the Trust had greatly reduced funding. It continued entrepreneurial activities, such as importing drama and puppet companies. It began supporting artists, administering awards and establishing promotional facilities, and administered a tax-deductible donation scheme for the performing arts. In the 1990s its operations were scaled down further and it became essentially a Sydney arts organisation, operating a ticketing agency and organising theatre parties.

(Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust [AETT] 2014a: np)

In its 2013 Annual financial report, the AETT Board of Directors outlines the Trust’s greatly reduced short- and long-term objectives as:

- administration of a scholarship program,
- facilitate performance opportunities including for talented singers, musicians and conductors, and
- satisfactory delivery of members’ services including by offering a range of performances.

(AETT 2014b: 3)

The Committee for Assistance to Australian Composers was set up by the federal government in 1967 to work closely with the ABC in the promotion of Australian composers and compositions through publication, broadcast and performance. In
1968, the Australian Council for the Arts was established; again with Britain providing the model. In December 1972, with the election of the Labor Party to federal government, Gough Whitlam became Prime Minister. Distinguishing Whitlam’s political philosophy was his commitment to the arts as an unashamed priority:

In any civilised community the arts and associated amenities must occupy a central place. Their enjoyment should not be seen as something remote from everyday life. Of all the objectives of my government none had a higher priority than the encouragement of the arts, the preservation and enrichment of our cultural and intellectual heritage. Indeed I would argue that all the other objectives of a Labor Government – social reform, justice and equity in the provision of welfare services and educational opportunities – have as their goal the creation of a society in which the arts and the appreciation of spiritual and intellectual values can flourish. Our other objectives are all means to an end; then enjoyment of the arts is an end in itself.

(Whitlam 1985: 553)

On 26 January 1973, Australia Day (the official national day of Australia), Whitlam announced the formation of a new interim arts council, a decisive move to consolidate all existing arts support initiatives by establishing a statutory body whose function would be to create a coherent framework for the arts in Australia. When that council presented the Whitlam-commissioned report on the structure of a permanent arts advisory and administration body in 1974, the Australia Council was established. This landmark action by the new government was given legislative underpinning by virtue of the Australia Council Act 1975 (Austl.), as a statutory authority under the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (Gardiner-Garden 2009). Notwithstanding a major restructure in 2005 (Craik 2007) and a review of the act in 2013, the Australia Council has to this day retained its arms-length, peer assessment, structure:
This Act continues the existence of the Australia Council established by the *Australia Council Act 1975*. The Council has functions relating to supporting and promoting the arts.

(1) The Council has the following functions:

(a) to support Australian arts practice that is recognised for excellence,

(b) to foster excellence in Australian arts practice by supporting a diverse range of activities,

(ba) to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts practice,

(bb) to support Australian arts practice that reflects the diversity of Australia,

(bc) to uphold and promote freedom of expression in the arts,

(bd) to promote community participation in the arts,

(c) to recognise and reward significant contributions made by artists and other persons to the arts in Australia,

(d) to promote the appreciation, knowledge and understanding of the arts,

(e) to support and promote the development of markets and audiences for the arts,

(f) to provide information and advice to the Commonwealth Government on matters connected with the arts or the performance of the Council’s functions,

(g) to conduct and commission research into, and publish information about, the arts,

(h) to evaluate, and publish information about, the impact of the support the Council provides,

(i) to undertake any other function conferred on it by this Act or any other law of the Commonwealth, and

(j) to do anything incidental or conducive to the performance of any of the above functions.

(*Australia Council Act 2013*: np)
The original, 1975, *Australia Council Act* sets out its functions as follows:

(a) to formulate and carry out policies designed:
   (i) to promote excellence in the arts,
   (ii) to provide, and encourage the provision of, opportunities for persons to practise the arts,
   (iii) to promote the appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of the arts,
   (iv) to promote the general application of the arts in the community,
   (v) to foster the expression of a national identity by means of the arts,
   (vi) to uphold and promote the right of persons to freedom in the practice of the arts,
   (vii) to promote the knowledge and appreciation of Australian arts by persons in other countries,
   (viii) to promote incentives for, and recognition of, achievement in the practice of the arts, and
   (ix) to encourage the support of the arts by the States, local governing bodies and other persons and organizations.

(b) to furnish advice to the Government of the Commonwealth, either of its own motion or upon request made to it by the Minister, on matters connected with the promotion of the arts or otherwise relating to the performance of its functions; and

(c) to do anything incidental or conducive to the performance of any of the foregoing functions…

*(Australia Council Act 1975: np)*

Notable differences between the two acts are: the explicit recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts practice (1 ba) and diversity (1 bb) in the 2013 act; and the specific mention of *encouraging state and local government support for the arts* (a ix) in the original, 1975 act.
The current Australia Council website does mention cross-tier support in its About/Community Partnerships section:

Community Partnerships will invest proactively in long-term sustainable outcomes for communities through the arts and will continue to build on the Australia Council’s leadership role in facilitating partnerships supporting arts and culture involving local, state, territory and federal agencies and the private sector.

(ACFTA 2014b: np)

The repositioning of this sentiment in the information hierarchy, however, from inclusion in the wording of the 1975 act (Australia Council Act 1975) to the outline of one artform panel on its public information website (ACFTA 2014b), is noteworthy. This gesture of deprioritisation diminishes the publically stated importance of nationally-led cross-tier collaboration and articulation in the support of community arts, and by extension, community music activity.

In over viewing the historical development of cultural policy in Australia, Throsby (2001), a renowned cultural economist, identifies three significant periods leading up to the end of the twentieth century: 1900-68, 1968-90, and 1990 - 2000. Radbourne (1993) sees a five-stage process of evolution: pre-(second world) war, 1945-55, post-1960, post-1975, and 1990 on; and these are largely consistent with Rowse’s observations of distinct historical periods in Arguing the arts: The funding of the arts in Australia (Rowse 1985). In her 2007 Re-visioning arts and cultural policy, Craik (2007) points to a more detailed and nuanced development, detailing eight stages of government approach:

It is argued here that a more nuanced chronology of Australian cultural policy may be more informative and appropriate... This chronology would encompass the following developments:

1. pre-1900 settler culture emphasising nostalgia and a new beginning,
2. 1900-39 state cultural entrepreneurship,
3. 1940-54 the era of national cultural organisations,
4. 1955-67 organisational patronage (through specialist bodies funded by government),
5. 1967-74 policies of growth and facilitation,
6. 1975-90 access and equity and community cultural development,
7. 1991-95 diversity, excellence, cultural policy and cultural industries, and
8. 1996- the review cycle and a return to neo-patronage.

(Craik 2007: 7-8)

From this current perspective, an alternative, more summative assessment sees the period from 1908 through to 1972, as being a broadly cohesive one: an enriching period with a degree of continuity in terms of raising both community awareness and public profile of arts and their relevance in Australian life. The post-Whitlam period has not seen such continuity, with arts-favoured periods being balanced by terms of governments whose priorities have not been as sympathetic as those of the Labor party in the 1970s.

From the mid-1970s through to 1988, little changed in terms of the federal arts policy/funding mechanism (Gardiner-Garden 2009). Government responsibility for the arts shifted from ministerial jurisdiction a number of times, and various reviews took place, such as the 1976 Industries Assistance Commission (IAC) review (Craik 2007: 90) and the 1986 House of Representatives Standing Committee on Expenditure’s Inquiry into commonwealth assistance to the arts report, known more commonly as the McLeay report (Craik 2007: 92). Although the IAC review recommended a number of controversial measures - including an eight-year period during which the major performing arts companies should be weaned off recurrent funding - the conservative government of the time, led by Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser (1975–83), declined the majority of the recommendations. Responding to a question in parliament, Fraser stated:

The Government strongly affirms its support for the arts in virtually
all its forms. Honourable members will know that the Government reorganised and strengthened the framework of the Australia Council earlier this year in a way which I believe has been well accepted and generally applauded by the artistic community throughout Australia. The Government is committed not only to the support of individual art but also to the support of the major performing companies in Australia - the opera, ballet and drama. That will be its continuing policy. The Government has this view because art is not something which can be judged merely by harsh economic criteria. I do not know of any country which pursues an adequate artistic talent and performance merely by adopting the user-pays principle. No country with a high performance in the arts has succeeded on that principle. We do not want to kill off one part of Australia- I believe it to be art in all its forms- which is important not just to people who go to the opera but to all Australians. One only has to see the extent to which community art in many areas is spreading throughout the country towns, the villages and the suburbs of the cities to know that art is widely understood and appreciated by hundreds of thousands of Australian citizens. So support will continue.

(Commonwealth of Australia 1976: 1)

Fraser’s government did, however, freeze funding to, and reduce staffing of, the Australia Council for the remainder of its time in government. In a newspaper article entitled Australia Council besieged, published six months after the Fraser government was defeated, Australia Council Chairperson, Dr Timothy Pascoe, was quoted as follows:

The previous government was excessively hard on the Australia Council…They really had it in for the Australia Council. Its funding slipped back by about 20 per cent over seven years and they cut back its staff by 35 per cent. Over the same period the staff decline in the public service was 3.5 per cent. More bias than analysis led to that.
Notwithstanding a great deal of debate around its future, and some minor changes to its organizational structure, the Australia Council’s advisory/funding instrument platform remained essentially intact. As such, very little changed in the way of policy. Even though the Australia Council experienced seven years of real funding reduction, the period from the mid-seventies through the eighties was, overall, a period of arts funding growth across all levels of government (Throsby 2001; Gardiner-Garden 2009). Federal arts funding during the Hawke Labor government years (1983-91) compensated for the immediately previous period of austerity. From 1983 to 1986, federal government arts funding increased by 40 per cent (Gardiner-Garden 2009).

One recommendation of the IAC’s 1976 report, which did flow through to a Fraser government policy adjustment, was recommendation number 1 (part 3):

Federal assistance to the performing arts should ultimately be distributed reasonably equally between the three major objectives…expanding dissemination of the performing arts to the community generally, where they further the ends of education and innovation…

(Gardiner-Garden 2009: 5-6)

In September 1977, the Prime Minister announced the inclusion of a community arts board into the Australia Council. Consideration of community arts funding remains in a diminished form in the current guise of the Community Partnerships artform panel (one of seven since the 2013 Australia Council review replaced artform boards with panels) (ACFTA 2013). In 1988, Chris Puplick, federal opposition spokesperson for the Arts, announced a new coalition arts policy, in which he stated his intent to place policy responsibility back into the hands of the minister and abolish the Australia Council. Although it ridiculed this policy at the time, the Hawke Government itself introduced the Australia Council amendment bill 1988 (Austl.), which gave the minister the power to make general policy directions. The late 1980s and 1990s saw greater activity in the policy debate, with a series of
political positions being taken, and stated, differentiating successive approaches by respective government and opposition leaders. In the 1990s, *cultural policy* rather than *arts policy* became the national political vernacular, and the notion of justifying arts expenditure by virtue of its contribution to the national workforce, and economy, was introduced:

As a direct result of criticisms made by the IAC commissioners, the Australia Council commissioned statistical research reports which showed that the arts sector was a profitable one. It was with these reports - which first began to be released in the mid-1980s – that the arts sector was able to construct itself as an ‘industry’ for the first time. With the establishment in 1993 of the Department of Communications and the Arts (DOCA), the arts sector was articulated in policy as part of the ‘cultural industries’…there has been a shift in policy goals towards greater emphasis on entrepreneurial methods for the generation of the arts dollar as opposed to public provision of these funds…

(Gibson 2001: 75)

Senator Bob McMullen, Minister for the Arts (1993-1994) talked of a cultural policy statement for a ‘ten-year framework for cultural development in Australia’ (Seares 2011: 13), and in November 1993, argued that cultural industries were a significant contributor to the nation’s economy. The senator drew on various relevant studies, including those from cultural ministers councils and the Australia Council. Reports indicated dramatic increases in arts consumption and entertainment expenditure, and a disproportionately large growth in arts sector employment. Supporting the minister’s assertions were the March 1993 Australian Bureau of Statistics figures that suggested that 1.6 million people, or 11.8 per cent of the Australian population aged 15 years or over, were involved in the provision of culture and leisure activities; with 34.7 per cent of these doing so for payment:

In 1992 and 1993 the expression *cultural development* began to appear with increasing frequency in government discussions of the arts. In May 1992, the government foreshadowed a statement on
The federal opposition’s 1993 policy document, *A new vision for the arts in Australia*, was largely overlooked. It was presented by the government, and broadly perceived by the electorate, as a lesser alternative to the then Prime Minister’s Keating’s plans - even though its alternative model represented no prospective decrease in funding (Craik 2007). Cultural policy had become a matter of public intent for both parties by the last quarter of 1994. The opposition released *The cultural frontier, coalition priorities for the arts* during the first week of October; this was less than two weeks prior to the government’s own 18 October publication of its four-times postponed cultural policy called *Creative nation*:

These were the first attempts at comprehensive cultural statements and represented the climax of the inclination of the previous couple of years to link arts with communication, to put them both into the wider context of cultural policy and then to link cultural policy with Australia’s economic interest and international identity. The statements displayed a remarkable similarity of interests.

Similar they were, with both documents recognising the need for better access for regional communities to elite arts, and proposing more touring to non-metropolitan centres from the major cities. Neither, however, articulated a plan to encourage regional arts activities or better cross-tier government co-operation. Regardless of their similarity, Labor’s *Creative nation*:

…represented one of the most comprehensive and forward-looking statements of government policy towards culture that had been seen anywhere in the world

(Gardiner-Garden 2009: 43)

(Throsby 2001: np)
After the fall of the Labor government in 1996, federal arts and cultural policy momentum ostensibly ceased. The newly elected Coalition government, with John Howard as Prime Minister, ‘lacked a coherent policy of its own’ (Craik 2007: 18) but much of *Creative nation* continued in place (without the name), influencing policy development at the Australian state level, and that of the incoming Blair Labour government in the United Kingdom:

> It is significant to the increase in status for the arts that *Creative nation* briefly established that the succeeding Coalition government, while slashing funding to most sectors in its first budget in 1996, continued the Australia Council’s level of funding and even allocated $14 million in new funds to be spent specifically on regional arts development, emerging artists…
> (Gibson 2001: 84).

The conservative Howard federal government (1996 - 2007) was broadly considered to have no vision for arts and culture: ‘no inspiring blueprint for the role culture could play in fostering a dynamic society’ (Craik 2007: 19), although the 1996 establishment of the Regional Arts Fund and the 1998 evolution of the Arts Council of Australia into *Regional Arts Australia*, were recognised as noticeable high points of focused support:

> The Howard Liberal National Party Coalition government elected in 1996 applied itself to a wide range of issues of concern to the arts and cultural sector and one of its first actions was to establish a fund for regional arts support, fulfilling some of the earlier promise of the redistribution debate.
> (MacNeill, Lye, & Caulfield 2013: 5)

The above section of the chapter has tracked the development of arts and cultural policy in Australia throughout the 20th century, situating various Australian governments’ approaches to the importance of arts and cultural expression, and their support thereof. The discussion of policy development and the varying prominence given to arts and culture by policy makers and commentators throughout alternating
conservative and labor governments was shown to have culminated, by the last
decade of the century, in both the release of the first ever Australian cultural policy,
and its obsolescence due to change in government and political orientation. To this
point, policy has been general, enabling access to the arts by communities on a
broad level, but not focusing on specific applications such as community music
activity. The next section of the chapter discusses developments since the fall of the
Keating Labor government, that which was responsible for the development of
*Creative nation: commonwealth cultural policy* (DOCA 1994), and considers public
policy traction that has occurred over the first decade and a half of the twenty-first
century, up until the current time. The development and implementation of a new
national policy almost two decades after the release of the first, and subsequent
initiatives that included cross-tier government arts and culture policy connections,
are discussed and interpreted as factors relevant to the support of community arts
and music activity.

The historical development of *Creative Australia: national cultural policy*
(Australian Government 2013c) began at the return of a federal Labor government
in 2007 and took a full six years to unfold. In a public address in 2009, the then
federal minister for the arts reflected on the changes to arts support since his
government’s election, and spoke of their plan to formulate the policy. After a series
of public forum opportunities, including an arts ministry-hosted internet portal, and
a number of delays, it was finally announced and launched in March 2013.

In the introduction to *Creative Australia*, (then) Prime Minister Julia Gillard alluded
to its connection to the 1994 *Creative nation* policy, and to Whitlam’s development
of the Australia Council before that, suggesting a developmental thread of policy
awareness and intent:

> It is now 40 years since the Australia Council for the Arts was
> formed and almost two decades since our first cultural policy,
> *Creative nation*, was launched.
> Its successor, *Creative Australia*, continues the spirit of
> engagement with the arts embraced by my predecessors
> Gough Whitlam and Paul Keating, and affirms the centrality
of the arts to our national identity, social cohesion and economic success. 

*Creative Australia* builds upon the good work of the past four decades…

(Australian Government 2013c: 2)

As this chapter points out, however, there is no significant, identifiable, thread of continuity of ‘good work’ (Australian Government 2013c: 2), particularly through the intervening conservative government terms that make up eighteen of those forty years. This overview of the development of Australian government policy on arts support shows the piecemeal nature of official positions on the arts in this country. Despite claims of continuity or evolution, the history of arts and cultural policy development in Australia could be seen more genuinely as a series of loosely related events and considerations; particularly so in the years leading up to 1954, with much of the development aligned with, and in many ways a result of, the nation’s historical ties to England. The creation of the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust, and its parenting of Australia’s major national performing arts bodies as a result of the first Australian visit of a reigning British monarch in 1954, is a clear example of this. The establishment of a British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)-like network of radio stations and orchestras in the 1930s, and the British-model CEMA (transitioning similarly to a national arts council) are two others.

It is only really with Whitlam’s influence on public policy, on his ascent to power in 1972, that overt priority was given to the arts. Whitlam’s stated rationale for this prioritising was that all Labor (government) objectives should lead to a society engaging in a flourishing arts environment (Whitlam 1985). This philosophy did lead to a tangible policy connection with state and local community activity, by virtue of the three–year process of arts support consolidation that led to the creation of the Australia Council in 1975, by the passing into federal law of the *Australia Council Act 1975* (Austl.). The Act, in place up until its formal revision in 2013, formally required the ACFTA to promote arts in the community and encourage (arts) support by state and local government.
Since the Whitlam period, some 40 years ago, the consideration of overarching support for community arts activity has deteriorated, with that period representing an historical apex of proactivity on the subject. Although the 2013 structure of Australia’s principal arts funding and advisory body includes a community partnerships committee (ACFTA 2014b), the current *Australia Council Act (Australia Council Act 2013)* omits the original act’s reference to state and local government support from its list of legislated functions. The Community Partnerships panel, one of seven permanent artform panels in the revised structure, suggests an intended connection between local, state, territory and federal agencies as one of its aims:

> Community Partnerships will invest proactively in long-term sustainable outcomes for communities through the arts and will continue to build on the Australia Council’s leadership role in facilitating partnerships supporting arts and culture involving local, state, territory and federal agencies and the private sector.

(ACFTA 2014b: np)

This is not the same as a policy or funding requirement necessitating an official connected approach towards support for community music activity.

The above discussion demonstrates that community music activity, positioned within community arts activity generally, has not figured with continuity or substantial priority in federal Australian arts and/or cultural policy thus far. Neither has there been a pattern of demands or requirements made by the national leadership of state or local governments to disseminate a national arts agenda. In demonstrating these points, this chapter progresses the discussion, and the issue of government support for community music activity, to a somewhat haphazard present. Disconnected and inconsistent focus on arts and cultural policy during the nation’s history presents to explain this state, particularly in relation to non-professional, community music activity. The next section of this chapter connects the historical perspective of Australian arts and cultural policy development to an exploration of the current landscape. It provides an overview at federal, NSW, and local government levels, investigating and discussing the policy-related responsibilities, function, jurisdiction
and interplay of the three tiers of Australian government, with reference to community music activity.

**Current Australian arts and culture policy landscape**

The current Australian arts and culture policy environment presents as a motley and fractious landscape, resulting from a century of largely ad hoc decisions and positions expressed by successive governments. This section describes that environment, breaking down the formal structures at federal, state and local government levels, and investigates the policy-related responsibilities, function, jurisdiction and interplay of the three levels of government. In order to situate a meaningful discussion of acknowledged jurisdiction, and legislated responsibility for shepherding policy, this section begins by describing the government structure of Australia as it has existed, essentially unchanged, since the pre-existing six self-governing (British) colonies became states of the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901. Australia has three levels of government: (1) federal; (2) state and territory; and (3) local (referred to commonly as council). While this three-tiered structure is commonly accepted as a genuine division of government service roles, Australian commentator and delegate to the 1998 Australian Constitutional Convention, Mitchell, maintains:

...in our system local government is not a ‘tier (or level) of government’ at all. It is a means used by the state governments for exercising aspects of their own administrative governmental functions. Local government itself is created and maintained by state government legislation, the geographic extent of local government districts is determined by the state governments, the powers of councils are determined by and conferred by state governments, the authority to make regulations is delegated and supervised by the state governments, and the establishment of new councils and amalgamation of existing councils are matters for the state governments.

(Mitchell 2012: np)

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3 The two other Australian mainland territories, Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory, were not established until 1911.
Of the six states and two mainland territories that constitute the Commonwealth of Australia, NSW has the largest population:

There are six states in Australia: New South Wales (NSW), Queensland (Qld), South Australia (SA), Tasmania (Tas.), Victoria (Vic.) and Western Australia (W.A.). Each state has its own state Constitution, which divides the state's government into the same divisions of legislature, executive, and judiciary as the Australian Government... two mainland territories, The Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and The Northern Territory (NT) and one offshore territory, Norfolk Island, have been granted a limited right of self-government by the Australian Government. In these territories, a range of governmental matters are now handled by a locally-elected parliament. Outside of government, the ACT and the NT are often treated like states because of their significant population sizes.

(Australian Government 2013d: np)

The following information outlines local government jurisdiction in Australia, as published by the federal government (Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development [DIRD] 2003). While not legislating local government roles itself, it identifies the community-focused responsibility of councils and acknowledges a number of community-specific functions normally satisfied by them, clearly identifying the state and territory governments’ direct legislative responsibilities:

Constitutional responsibility for local government lies with the States and Territories, with each jurisdiction providing the legal and regulatory framework for council operations. Consequently, there are often significant differences in the roles, functions and responsibilities of councils and the State systems responsible for overseeing councils and the services they deliver. The Australian Government has recognised that the national interest is served through improving local governments' capacity to deliver services to all Australians, while also enhancing the performance and efficiency of the sector. The Australian Government uses the Local
Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 as the primary mechanism to achieve these goals.

Local government roles
State legislation provides the framework for the roles of local government, and there are few limitations on what services local government can provide. In the last few decades the role of local government has expanded significantly, following the devolution of functions to local government from other levels of government. Broadly, local government has roles in governance, advocacy, service delivery, planning and community development, and regulation.

Local government functions
As services are devolved from other levels of government to the local government sector, the range of services and the role of local government continues to expand, taking in areas from economic and social development through to environmental management. Councils determine service provision according to local needs and the requirements of the various Local Government Acts and are increasingly providing services above and beyond those traditionally associated with local government. Examples of local government functions and services include:

- engineering (public works design, construction and maintenance - for example, roads, bridges, footpaths, drainage, cleaning, waste collection and management),
- recreation (golf courses, swimming pools, sports courts, recreation centres, halls, kiosks, camping grounds and caravan parks),
- health (water sampling, food sampling, immunisation, toilets, noise control, meat inspection and animal control),
- community services (child care, elderly care and accommodation, refuge facilities, meals on wheels,
counseling and welfare),
• building (inspection, licensing, certification and enforcement),
• planning and development approval,
• administration (aerodromes, quarries, cemeteries, parking stations and street parking),
• cultural/educational (libraries, art galleries and museums),
• in some States, water and sewerage, and
• other (abattoirs, sale-yards, markets and group purchasing schemes).

Unlike many other Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, including the United Kingdom and the United States of America, Australian local governments do not have responsibility for services such as health, education, policing and public housing, which remain largely the responsibilities of States and Territories or the Australian Government.

(DIRD 2003: np)

The substantial quote above constitutes the Australian federal government’s identification of roles and responsibilities of local government, as devolved and delegated through state government. It refers broadly to overarching aspects of responsibility that articulate with localised community cultural activity, and is veiled in communicating any requirement that could result in support for community music activity. Reference to local government service provision being ‘according to local needs and the requirements of the various Local Government Acts’, (DIRD 2003: np) and listing only broadly relevant functions and services such as ‘recreation’ and ‘cultural/educational’ (DIRD 2003: np) support this thesis’ assertion that there is a lack of cross-tier legislative articulation. This assertion is corroborated by interviews with local government officers and state-based devolved funding authority representatives.
Local Government boundaries, and number, alter periodically with political and administrative discretion. In the 10 years from 2003 until 2012, the total number of Australian Local Government Areas (LGAs) decreased from 722 to 565 (22 per cent); with a reduction in the number of NSW LGAs from 175 to 152 (13 per cent) (DIRD 2003; Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS] 2013a). NSW has traditionally held the greatest number of local government areas of all the states and territories in Australia.

A connected recognition, across all three levels of Australian government, of the place of music, and more broadly, arts and culture, has not, historically, presented as robust, reliable, or directed. Recently, there has been an articulated policy environment developing, one that is intended to involve and engage the three levels of government in the task of broadly connected arts and cultural planning (Australian Government 2013b, 2103c; DP&C 2013). At this time, however, much of that policy is either a matter of months old, or in draft form only (Saxby 2013).

In March 2013 the Federal Government released *Creative Australia – national cultural policy* (Australian Government 2013c). It is the first national arts and/or cultural policy to be released since Paul Keating (Prime Minister, December 1991 – March 1996) released *Creative nation* in 1994 (DOCA 1994). Although the Rudd/Gillard federal Labor government introduced its intention to develop a policy as far back as 2007 (Garret 2009; Seares 2011; Eltham & Westbury 2010), the release of *Creative Australia* was the second only formal policy statement in the nation’s history (Eltham & Westbury 2010; Seares 2011; Australian Government 2013c). The intervening conservative government (1996 - 2007) did not formally dismantle the 1994 policy, however there were discontinued initiatives during this period, no formal cultural or arts policy was declared, and the arts portfolio was downgraded. Even though the word *arts* appeared in the three ministerial titles during the period, none of those ministers had the title *Minister for the Arts*.  

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Only five ministers have been titled *Minister for the Arts* in Australian parliamentary history, Bob McMullen (1993-1994), Simon Crean (2010-2013), Tony Burke (March-September 2013), George Brandis (September 2013-September 2015), and Mitch Fifield (September 2015-). (Australian Government 2013e; https://www.arts.gov.au)

As was the case with *Creative nation* (DOCA 1994), economic benefit as a major justification for the support and promotion of artistic activity is prominent throughout *Creative Australia* (Australian Government 2013c). A noteworthy aspect of the new policy is the stated intention of the federal government to lead an integrated approach to policy and planning by setting up the first cross-tier government approach to progressing and supporting arts and cultural pursuit across the nation:

For the first time in Australia’s history, partnership across all levels of government will be enshrined under the creation of a national arts and culture accord. This will provide a framework for facilitating an increased level of partnership and coordination and set out the roles and funding responsibilities of the Australian government, state and territory governments and local governments. The accord will provide greater certainty about government investment, remove regulatory blocks and increase coordination in areas from live music to collaboration between collecting institutions.

(Australian Government 2013c: 12)

Actions planned for the accord, as articulated within *Creative Australia* (Australian Government 2013C) include: a requirement of all levels of government to develop a three-year work plan; and the formation of a partnership between the Australian Local Government Association, a Melbourne-based international research institute, following both the 2013 and 2016 federal elections, both resulting in conservative governments, arts and cultural policy direction is unclear.

6 The federation of state and territory local government associations.
and the Australia Council\(^7\), with a view towards strengthening cross-government, inter-agency coordination, and building a firm foundation for the accord.

On April 12, 2013, the Meeting of Australian Cultural Ministers Council signed the first national arts and culture accord, committing to greater collaboration between all levels of government and agreeing to identify key areas of joint government effort to be detailed in an initial triennial work plan - scheduled for finalization by July 2013 (DP&C 2013: np). The purpose and objectives of the accord are stated as follows:

This National Accord:

- clarifies the roles and responsibilities of all governments in supporting Australia’s arts, cultural heritage and creative industries, and
- provides a framework to enhance collaboration in areas of national interest and shared responsibility and work productively on specific issues through an agreed triennial work plan… In the spirit of partnership and cooperation, the Australian, state, territory and local governments agree that increased collaboration across the jurisdictions can enhance and strengthen support for the arts, cultural heritage and creative industries sector; for individual practitioners and cultural organisations, and for all Australians engaging with arts and culture to deliver a more accessible, sustainable and competitive cultural sector…

This national agreement seeks to provide a framework to:

- take a national approach to develop and grow Australia’s arts, cultural heritage and creative industries sectors for artists and audiences through direct action and non-arts partnerships within and across jurisdictions as relevant,
- address needs, issues, gaps and barriers; reduce duplication and complexity; and align policies, investment and programs

\(^7\) The Australia Council for the Arts - the Australian Government’s arts funding and advisory body.
in areas that deliver real improvements to the viability and vitality of the sector and the access of Australians to arts and culture,

- increase the impact of existing government investment and non-government support by ensuring that funding is used to the greatest advantage for the sector to deliver greatest benefit to the Australian community, and
- identify opportunities for enhanced partnerships with non-government stakeholders.

(DP&C 2013: np)

Figure 1 (following page) is a simple representation of the Australian arts and cultural policy framework prior to the launch of the Creative Australia national cultural policy on 13 March 2013 (Australian Government 2013c). It illustrates the practical disconnect between Australian federal, state and local government tiers, and identifies current governmental structures in relation to arts and cultural policy responsibility and jurisdiction.

The National arts and culture accord (Australian Government 2013b) was proposed as a framework within which intended actions included:

- All levels of government developing a three-year work plan which will set out priority areas for joint action, including in arts education, and
- Coordinating local government cultural activities through the National Local Government Cultural Forum, a partnership between the Australian Local Government Association, Global Cities Research Institute at RMIT University, and the Australia Council, to strengthen coordination and provide a firm base on which the National Arts and Culture Accord can build.

(Australian Government 2013b: 12-13)
Figure 1: Cross-tier Australian government policy disconnection.

Figure 2 suggests the integrative impact that the Gillard government’s proposed National arts and culture accord (Australian Government 2013b) could have on cross-tier arts and cultural policy. At September 2016, there is no published progress on a triennial work plan.

The Australian constitution (Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act 1900), the basis for Australia’s laws and its political system, does not make mention of local government. There have been two unsuccessful attempts, by way of federal referenda (1974 and 1988) to address this omission, with another referendum planned initially to coincide with the September 2013 federal election. Each state constitution does recognise local government, with amendments being made to each between 1979 and 1989 (NSW in 1986) (Constitution Act 1902 No 32), reinforcing the provision that

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8 The referendum had been planned to coincide with the 2013 federal election, but after a federal government leadership change in late July, the election was brought forward a week and the referendum postponed. Since the change of government that followed that election, and the subsequent 2016 election, there has been no announcement regarding the timing of the postponed referendum.
local government is the legislative responsibility of the state and territory governments (Roth 2013: 3).

Figure 2: The potential impact on Australian government policy connectivity brought about by the proposed National arts and culture accord (Australian Government 2013b).

Although public support for Federal constitutional recognition appears to have waned across the two referenda (votes in favour of the change were 46.85 per cent in 1974 and 33.62 per cent in 1988)⁹, federal parliament formally acknowledged the role and importance of local government in 2006, passing a resolution that recognises its part in the governance of Australia:

The federal parliament gave formal recognition to local government in 2006. On 6 September 2006 the then Minister for Local Government, Territories and Roads, Hon. J. Lloyd, moved a motion

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⁹ It should be noted that the referendum proposals were worded differently in 1988 from those of 1974, and the political campaigns for both the Yes and No proponents create variables of dynamic that defy robust comparison of genuine public sentiment across the two referendum outcomes.
in the federal parliament:

That the House:

1. recognises that local government is part of the governance of Australia, serving communities through locally elected councils,
2. values the rich diversity of councils around Australia, reflecting the varied communities they serve,
3. acknowledges the role of local government in governance, advocacy, the provision of infrastructure, service delivery, planning, community development and regulation,
4. acknowledges the importance of cooperating with and consulting with local government on the priorities of their local communities,
5. acknowledges the significant Australian Government funding that is provided to local government to spend on locally determined priorities, such as roads and other local government services, and
6. commends local government elected officials who give their time to serve their communities.

The motion was passed with bipartisan support. An amendment moved by the Labor opposition proposing constitutional recognition, was defeated along party lines.

(Megarry 2011: np)

The reality of the inter-governmental arts and cultural policy relationship to this point, is that local government bodies have historically been accountable to state and federal policy only to the degree of satisfying funding program criteria relating to any grants received for relevant programs or projects. Councils are required to comply with cultural accord provisions (Arts NSW & Local Government and Shires Association of NSW [LG&SA] 2010), to the degree that they operate in accordance with the principles and policies of their peak body, Local Government NSW, which was formerly named *The local government and shires association of NSW* (Local
Government NSW 2013a). The NSW *Fourth cultural accord* (Arts NSW & LG&SA 2010) provisions are not, however, overly proscriptive; representing little more than a broad, shared gesture towards encouraging an awareness of the importance of arts and cultural considerations. The following excerpt, articulating the five specific commitments central to the agreement, presents, instead, five broad intentions:

Specifically, over the next three years, Arts NSW and the Associations commit to working to:

1. provide Aboriginal people with greater opportunities to participate in, share and strengthen their culture through arts practice, and develop careers and businesses in the arts and cultural sector,
2. encourage the incorporation of provisions for local arts and cultural development into councils’ community strategic plans,
3. gain a better understanding of existing arts and cultural infrastructure across NSW and approaches to meeting future needs, including possible principles for the future development of arts and cultural infrastructure,
4. encourage councils to explore local initiatives to provide artist studios and residency programs, develop creative enterprise hubs and support local creative industries, and
5. engage with councils and other organizations to encourage the development of local capacity, and councils’ facilitation of connections between local arts and cultural groups.

(Arts NSW & LG&SA 2010: np)

While a conceptual framework of ‘working to’, ‘encouraging’, ‘providing greater opportunity’, and ‘exploring initiatives’ is praiseworthy as a guide to local councils, it is in no way binding. Interviews with two local government officers responsible for arts and cultural matters in one medium-sized regional city in NSW, and a funding agency manager (LGA 2, LGA 3, RAFM) revealed that they were unaware of the development of a national cultural accord, and felt no accountability to principles of the NSW *Fourth cultural accord* (Arts NSW & LG&SA 2010).
On the subject of the Australian Constitution, Mitchell observes:

The nature of the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution is unlike most other national constitutions. In most countries the Constitution is the “fountainhead” from which all government, law, rights and responsibilities flow. Before federation on January 1, 1901, Australia consisted of six political entities (which came to be called states from that time onwards) that were completely independent of one another. Each had its own laws, courts, governmental structures, taxation, armed forces, education and administration. In the main these were adaptations of principles inherited from England and, therefore, had remarkable similarity among the states. In the late nineteenth century there were proposals that the six colonies and, indeed, New Zealand, should develop a formal relationship or unity. For that purpose, meetings called “Australian Federal Conventions” (commonly referred to as “Constitutional Conventions”) were established to work out an agreement or “treaty” for corporate or cooperative existence that could be put to the people for consideration and vote. Submissions from the public were widely sought and received….  

Local government remained part of the states’ administrative structure over which the Commonwealth government and the Constitution had no authority. Local government is recognized in the state constitutions of all six states. Each state and the Northern Territory has a Local Government Act. The Australian Capital Territory has neither a Local Government Act nor, indeed, local government.  

(Mitchell 2012: np)

As the administrative and governance entity charged with the devolved responsibility for providing public recreational, cultural/educational and community services (DIRD 2003: np), it is local government’s remit within which support for community music activity is situated, survives, thrives or falters. While it is true that
organisations seeking financial and structural stability through registering as an incorporated association or cooperative may be required to comply with state legislative determinations (Department of Fair Trading [DOFT] 2013; Our Community 2013) it is overwhelmingly the local government environment within which Australian community music activity operates.

The overarching instrument for determining articulation between local and state government, that which guides councils in their community and compliance responsibilities, is the NSW Local Government Act, 1993. Its provisions for overt, financial support for community activity such as arts and music practice is outlined in Chapter 12, part 1, section 356:

1. a council may, in accordance with a resolution of the council, contribute money or otherwise grant financial assistance to persons for the purpose of exercising its functions.

2. a proposed recipient who acts for private gain is not ineligible to be granted financial assistance but must not receive any benefit under this section until at least 28 days’ public notice of the council’s proposal to pass the necessary resolution has been given.

3. however, public notice is not required if:
   (a) the financial assistance is part of a specific program, and
   (b) the program’s details have been included in the council’s draft operational plan for the year in which the financial assistance is proposed to be given, and
   (c) the program’s proposed budget for that year does not exceed 5 per cent of the council’s proposed income from the ordinary rates levied for that year, and
   (d) the program applies uniformly to all persons within the council’s area or to a significant group of persons within the area.

(Local Government Act 1993: np)
A more comprehensive discussion of in-community support for music activity, including both cash and in-kind support, is entered into in the following section of the chapter.

Having outlined the historical development of arts and culture policy development in Australia and explored the interplay between policy development and direction at federal, NSW state, and local government levels, the final section of this chapter investigates arts and culture policy directions, approaches and trends, at the local government level. It discusses the explicit and implicit support structures that result from, or in some cases provoke, development of such policy. Whilst considering trends and developments in NSW local government social and cultural policy generally, particular attention is given to the two local government areas in which the principal case studies are located, and community music is referenced as a focus of interpretation.

**Arts and culture policy in play at the local government level**

This section of the chapter focuses on structured local government support for community-based arts and music activity, financial and in-kind support for local arts organisations and reciprocity and recognition in terms of the part community arts activity plays in satisfying councils’ social planning criteria and compliance requirements. The principal case studies investigated were situated within one of two local government areas in regional NSW. For the purposes of this study, and in keeping with relevant Australian federal and state government nomenclature, ‘regional’ is defined as:

…all of NSW outside the greater Newcastle, Sydney, Wollongong conurbation. This is the definition of the state and federal government arts departments. It excludes cities with a population greater than 100,000.

(Regional Arts NSW 2014a: np)

The At Risk Youth, Mental Health Community, and Seniors’ Choir, were situated in Orange; a small regional city and local government area with a population of 40,000 in central west NSW, approximately 256 kilometres/160 miles west of Sydney. The
small rural town, West Wyalong (population 3,200), is situated further west, approximately 470 kilometres/290 miles west of Sydney, in the Bland Shire local government area. The Remote Health Worker Choir comprised members from twelve different local government areas across five states (Queensland, NSW, Victoria, Tasmania and the Northern Territory\(^{10}\)). The Ability Inclusive community drew members from four states, but became a case-study community, albeit a temporary one, on site at a community owned and run music education facility (Regional Conservatorium) within the Orange City local government area (LGA). This ephemeral community formed as the cohort of participants in a NSW government-funded creative residency facilitated by the Orange Regional Conservatorium; the aim of which was to integrate professional musicians living with a permanent disability and professional, regionally-based, musicians from the general community.

For the practical purposes of policy relevance and local government support at the local level, local government policy in the two LGAs, Orange City and Bland Shire, are the focus. It is worth noting here that the acknowledgement within policy documents from these two councils of music, musical activity, arts and cultural pursuit(s) has diminished since 2007. At that time, both the Bland Shire Council and Orange City Council had cultural plans in place (Velins 2003; Orange City Council 2007), and as mentioned previously, this was encouraged by the NSW government in its *Cultural planning guidelines for local government*. (Ministry for the Arts [MFTA] 2005). Since 2007, the state-wide trend has been a decrease in cultural policies published by New South Wales councils.\(^{11}\)

Across the two cultural plans mentioned above, references to music activity, in total, are as follows:

\(^{10}\) As explained earlier in this chapter, the Northern Territory is often treated like a state because of its significant population size.

\(^{11}\) At May 2007, out of a total of 152 LGAs in NSW, sixty-two councils had cultural plans; forty were committed to developing one; and fifty neither had one, nor were developing one. Since 30 June 2012, councils are no longer required to complete a separate social, community, or cultural plan (NSW Government 2013c).
Orange Cultural Plan 2007-2011
Strategic Objective 2. Orange – an inclusive, Accepting, Connected Community
Targeted Outcome 1. Continue support and fostering of a diverse program of events and activities of arts, music, drama, literature, film and food and wine

(Orange City Council 2007: 31)

and:

Bland Shire Council Cultural Plan 2003-2008
Key Performance Area 6: Community Well-being & Support Services
6.2.2 Strategy: Facilitate and support cultural activities in the Shire
• Bland Shire Council Advisory Committee
Objective: Provide and facilitate opportunities for local and touring exhibitions & performances
Recommendation (4). Each year focus on a different area of live performance, e.g. theatre, music, dance.

(Velins 2003:15)

By the next generation of local government plans, matters cultural across the two Council areas are broadly included in: the City of Orange Community Strategic Plan 2013-2023 (Orange City Council 2013), and the Bland Shire Community Plan 2011-2016 (Bland Shire Council 2011). The latter specifically mentions music once, by way of a proposed initiative for youth. That reference relates to the disadvantaged youth program that constitutes part of one of this project’s case studies (Bland Shire Council 2011: 16). The City of Orange Community Strategic Plan 2013-2023 (Orange City Council 2013), however, does not mention music at all. With the elements of its stated community vision broken down into four categories (city, community, economy and environment), the references closest to relevant are as follows:
Our community
The Orange community will support and enhance a healthy, safe and liveable city with a range of recreational, cultural and community services…

Community Indicators:
- Access to areas of open space
- Participation in sporting and recreational activities
- Perceptions of safety and incidence of crime
- Participation in Arts and Cultural Activities.

(Orange City Council 2013: 15)

and:

Our economy
Objective 10: Build on the economy, lifestyle and character of Orange to position the city as a destination of choice
Strategy 10.3: Facilitate and support the attraction and development of events, festivals, venues and activities for residents and visitors, ensuring access and participation for older people

(Orange City Council 2013: 18)

The only document titled ‘policy’ in either of the two local government areas that refers to community is Orange’s Community Engagement Policy (Orange City Council 2010), which is a procedural guide for council staff that outlines processes and rationale for community engagement, it is not a document that outlines or promotes support of community activity. There is, in summary, no local government policy (relating to local government areas in which the case-study communities are situated) that relates explicitly to community music activity. Neither is there a policy relating, more broadly, to community arts activity. There are, however, examples of both in-kind and financial support demonstrated by both councils, which assist community-based music programs. In the case of the Bland Shire Council, encompassing the West Wyalong case-study components, the council provided 12.5 per cent of the running costs of the string and wind school; 100 per cent of the costs of the busking project, including workshops and compact disc recording; and a
yearly stipend for the town band conductor. Orange City Council provided in-kind support, including provision of premises, for the Seniors’ Choir weekly rehearsals; and an annual operational contribution to the regional conservatorium (community music education facility) that hosted the Ability Inclusive creativity residency. That contribution represented approximately 4 per cent of the organisation’s annual operational budget.

**Conclusion**
The NSW State Government, whose jurisdiction encompasses the Australian communities involved in this study, requires local councils to develop and implement strategies to promote and enable the cultural growth, expression, and well-being of its communities. Within this context, frameworks for community-based music activity are variously developed by way of supporting inclusive, participatory activity for self-expression, connectedness, social health and well-being. The *Fourth cultural accord* (Arts NSW & LG&SA 2010), the latest, and current, in a series of agreements initiated in 1997 between Arts NSW (the state department for the arts) and Local Government NSW (the peak body representing local government entities across the state), articulates commitment to jointly support arts and culture, working with other government and non-government agencies to this end. While individual local government bodies across the state vary in their approach to specific cultural planning issues within their jurisdictions, the NSW Local Government Act (*Local Government Act 1993*) sets out obligations for the provision of community cultural and entertainment services at the local level. Local Government NSW also reinforces its member councils’ responsibility for the provision of such in its arts and culture policy (*Local Government NSW 2013b*).

The third and highest tier of Australian government policy structure, that of the Australian federal government, was laid out in the recently-released *Creative Australia* national arts and culture policy (Australian Government 2013c), the first federal arts and culture policy since *Creative nation* (DOCA 1994). Two years into the operation of *Creative nation*, the implementing government fell, and a conservative national government stood from that time until 2007. Six months into the establishment of the 2013 policy, the implementing government fell and progress stalled. While there are some occasional administrative (compliance) and funding
connections between the federal, state and local government bodies across the nation, connected cultural policy providing a genuine flow-on, or drip-down, effect in regard to philosophical position, approach to sociocultural support and development, and attitudes to funding support imperatives, is notional at best, and is stagnating in the developmental stage. This stagnation has continued in the three years that have passed since 2013, under successive federal conservative government administrations.

The 2013 Creative Australia federal arts and cultural policy (Australian Government 2013c) declared an intention to connect the three levels of government in their approach to arts and culture across the country, by way of a proposed National Arts and Culture Accord (Australian Government 2013b). There is, however, no federal legislative requirement for such a connective approach; nor have there been published NSW government requirements for local government arts or cultural planning since 2005 (MFTA 2005). Interviews with local government officers support the observation that there are no standing requirements from the federal or state governments in relation to artistic or cultural policy making at the local government level. The entry of a returned federal conservative government in July 2016 has not resulted in any change to that policy status quo as it existed post September 2013 election.

At mid-2016, there is no public evidence of:

- an update of or alternative to the 2013 national policy to reflect adoption or adaptation by the September-elected federal government,
- release of a NSW state Cultural Policy,
- a new (fifth, 2014-forward) cultural accord between New South Wales state and local government bodies,
- arts or cultural policies in place in either of the local government areas with jurisdiction over the principal case studies, or
- activity or progress in the development of the proposed national cultural accord.

In relation to the current status quo, given the lack of progress described above, two
arguably supportable views occur. The first is that a change of government, or the expiration of an identified policy term (as per the *Fourth cultural accord 2010-2013*) renders extant policy invalid. The second view is that in lieu of any policy renewal, update or revision, the pre-existing policy remains, by default, current. The former scenario would apply more convincingly in the case of the most recent federal government policy – *Creative Australia* (Australian Government 2013c), particularly given its release only six months prior to the change of government. In that case, arts and cultural policy appears to have been left in a state of suspension. This is evidenced by the *Creative Australia* website identifying the previous government, complete with previous Prime Minister and (now opposition) Arts Minister as the authors and supporters of the policy. This remained the case several months after the fall of that government. In contrast, the second view could be seen as viable in relation to state government policy, with the delay in progressing policy and procedure sitting within the context of an uninterrupted government administration.

Aggregation and analysis of available literature, overlaid with advice gleaned from interviews with local and state government officials, lead to the following significant, underpinning, observations: that there has been a diminution of explicit arts and cultural policy at the local government level, particularly since the implementation of new local government planning and reporting guidelines (Department of Local Government [DoLG 2009; DLG 2013), and that there is no genuine policy articulation linking the three levels of Australian government. Overt arts and cultural policy at the federal level appears to be largely off the agenda, with no apparent movement since September 2013. The NSW state government postponed the development and release of *Creative NSW*, its first ever arts and cultural policy. There has been no movement on the proposed National cultural accord and no mention of a fifth NSW/Local government cultural accord.

This chapter has demonstrated a lack of clarity across the different levels of Australian government in how they support community music activity. It has also highlighted a disconnect between the three individual government tiers in their consideration of such activity. This is in addition to a paucity of specific support mechanisms that can translate generic policy statements into implemented practice. Despite statements at each of the three levels of Australian government about
expectations for community arts experiences, it is difficult to locate where responsibility for community music activity rests in the Australian polity. Given this situation, it is important to investigate and understand how and why community music participants successfully engage in their activities. It is on the opinions, experiences and expectations of community music practitioners within this political, ideological and practical context, that the following three chapters focus.
Chapter 3: Group members’ perspectives through the emergence of themes

Introduction
The previous chapter analysed the historical development of arts and culture policy in Australia, and the current policy environment across the two NSW Local Government Areas (LGAs) relevant to this study’s seven case-study communities. Following on from discussion of the government support environment, which in turn addressed the subject of specific policies impacting directly on community–based group music activity, this chapter examines the first of two principal research questions underpinning the study: What aspects of social and cultural development result directly from community group music programs? This is done through the presentation of coded data collected principally through a questionnaire that comprised both quantitative and qualitative components. The participants who engaged with this data gathering instrument responded in the first part to a set of Likert scale statements, measuring their agreement or disagreement to twenty-three statements, providing a broad thematic orientation and hierarchy of consideration for the aspects of sociocultural benefit experienced by group members of the participating case study communities. The second part of the questionnaire comprised seven free-answer questions; and the data drawn from these seven questions served to validate the trends demonstrated by the responses to the first part, and extricate more nuanced reflections on the benefits of group music activity (Appendices 1 & 2). The chapter interrogates the data sets produced by the two elements of the questionnaire and reconciles them in the form of nine emergent themes of community music activity. These themes function as categorised aspects of socio-cultural development, encompassing both reasons for taking up membership and benefits derived therefrom. Further analysis of the nine themes juxtaposes them against inherent motivational characteristics (Table 5), indicating a variety of personal meanings and modes of participant experience and expectation. The application of a secondary lens of motivational characteristics brings into the foreground an implicit meta-theme of learning, which emerges as a common factor that underpins a significant portion of two of the high rating themes (themes 7 and 9, identified in the list below).
The nine emergent themes of community music activity, as identified through analysis of the questionnaire free answer data, and organised in order of increasing prominence, are:

1. Contribution to community,
2. Recreation,
3. Support,
4. Personal enjoyment,
5. The experience of group musicking,
6. Well-being,
7. Skill development and personal challenge,
8. Social engagement, and
9. Musical or artistic motivation and achievement.

While some of these themes could be seen to overlap - for instance Social engagement and The experience of group musicking would appear to have some common ground, and The experience of group musicking and Musical or artistic motivation, similarly - each theme represents a discrete set of motivation types and identifiable benefits as reported by the participants, and coded from the data collected. Any further simplification, or rationalisation into fewer categories of response data, would have left this thesis susceptible to criticism of under- or mis-representation of the breadth of response foci for a statistically significant component of the participant cohort. As an ethnographic study, the participants’ responses and reflections were accepted, recorded and coded, as assessments, perceptions and descriptions that are meaningful to them.
No attempt has been made by the researcher to paraphrase, refine or suggest deeper meanings to participant comments. For this reason, there may be a case for a separate study to consider a more provocative approach to investigate some of what could be described as meta-themes, such as Personal enjoyment and The experience of group musicking, and generalised responses such as ‘because it is fun’ or ‘to play with others’. However, the premise of this study is that, as an ethnography, what the participants thought and felt and how they described the environment, activity or experience, was accepted as the level and quality of data that fed the results and the reporting of them. Even comments such as: ‘Dunno I like it I guess’ (WW 21) and ‘I am not as grumpy’ (WW 12) were coded as of equal standing to more specific comments, and contributed as such to the determination and measurement of themes. Neither does the study take on the task or responsibility of analysing the underlying considerations and experiences that contribute to participants’ choice of terminology in identifying benefits of community music activities. In keeping with the ethnographic nature of the project (Burns 2000; Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007), it accepts participants’ descriptions and definitions as authentic to them, therefore valid to the study. The author has, however, made arbitrary decisions in regard to the thematic categories into which some grey-area responses are included. Such coding decisions were made according to either demonstrated, observable, immediate community (location and group-specific) vernacular, where there was a high level of researcher-familiarity with the culturally-specific subtlety of meaning, or even distribution into contiguous themes, where there was not.

In considering relevant literature, the chapter makes reference to two prominent, current, theoretical frameworks; each of which explicitly addresses the identification and description of successful community music activity. These frameworks are Higgins’ *Community as an act of hospitality* (Higgins 2012) and Schippers and Bartleet’s *Nine domains of community music* (Schippers & Bartleet 2013). The chapter considers Higgins’ principals of hospitality and ‘the unconditional welcome’ (Higgins 2012) as a touchstone for contemporary classification of the cohorts studied as bona fide examples of community music activity, and areas of alignment and contrast with Schippers and Bartleet’s observations, utilising their classification of ‘key “ingredients” of successful practices across demographic, geographic, cultural, and contextual variations’ (Schippers and Bartleet 2013: 454). Higgins’ principle of hospitality at the centre of community music (Higgins 2012) becomes increasingly significant to this study in the next chapter,
which deals with dimensions of successful community music. The broader community music-focused literature, including Cahill (1998); Veblen and Olsson (2002); Veblen (2008); Dunbar-Hall and Bartleet (2009); Silverman (2009, 2011, 2012); Joseph (2009, 2014); Harrison (2010); Jones (2010); Leglar and Smith (2010); Pitts (2010); Veblen et al. (2013); Silverman and Cohen (2013); Joseph and Southcott (2013); and Southcott and Joseph (2013, 2014, 2015a, 2015b), constitutes a principal body of relevant literature against which the chapter’s observations are articulated and compared.

This chapter examines the data, and the data types, collected from the participant questionnaire, establishing a thematic premise across the three case-study communities (WW, RHWC and NH) that engaged with the questionnaire instrument. Data from the Likert scale section of the questionnaire is organised into a quantitative representation of cross-cohort trends, with an evident hierarchy of prominence that establishes a clear thematic foundation by way of three leading community music participation values:

- The development of musical ability,
- Social engagement, and
- Well-being.

The chapter goes on to collate the qualitative data from the seven free-answer questions and code them into nine discrete themes. The conundrum of how to reconcile the two data sets is then negotiated, through comparison and juxtaposition, resulting in a strong and consistent, cross-sample structure that presents results in a clear, comprehensive and integrated format. The Likert scale data establishes the thematic foundation, and subsequently reinforces the validity of the nine themes of sociocultural benefit as a response to the question: *What aspects of social and cultural development result directly from community group music programs?*. Table 6 illustrates the relationship of the three main community music participation values established from the Likert Scale data to the expanded structure of nine themes.

The next section identifies each of the nine themes in order of increasing prominence across the sample. It discusses each theme’s significance to the participants, their activities and perceptions, and the relationships the themes have to each other. The
closing section of the chapter discusses observations and interpretations of similarities and differences in comparative prominence of each theme across the three individual cohorts, and degrees of thematic frequency variation between that of each individual cohort and the total questionnaire data sample. This analytical step applies the element of triangulation (Burns 2000; Denscombe 2007; Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007; Creswell 2013) to the data and provides corroboration of the results.

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<tr>
<th>Three leading community music participation values</th>
<th>Nine themes of community music activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>The development of musical ability</td>
<td>Musical or artistic motivation and achievement</td>
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<td>The experience of group musicking</td>
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<td>Skill development and personal challenge</td>
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<td>Well-being</td>
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Table 6: Three leading community music participation values articulated with the nine themes.

The chapter is organised in the following way: First, the emergence of the themes, comprising a précis of the coding and analysis of raw data that resulted in the identification of common words and categories of group member experience and expectation, in relation to their community music experience; next is a discussion of each of the nine themes, substantiated by relevant quotes from the group members. The third section discusses variations and differences observed across the participating case-study cohorts, presenting proportionate commonality and disparity through discussion and graphic representation of comparative thematic prominence both within each individual cohort and across the total, collective sample. The chapter closes with conclusions predicated on the realist ethnography approach, described by Creswell in *Qualitative inquiry and research design* (Creswell 2013), and utilised in the study.
Emergence of the themes

Of the seven case-study communities participating in the project, three engaged with the questionnaire tool. From these, 40 questionnaires were completed. It was from this, more formal data-gathering instrument (in contrast with the semi-formal interviews and free-expression testimonials) that participant perceptions of the benefits - both reasons for joining, experiences after and/or during membership, and reasons for recommending the activity to others - principally emerged. Whereas the semi-formal and informal interviews and testimonials spoke more of the qualities and characteristics of the group music community environment, and less about specific identifiable and quantifiable aspects of sociocultural development, the questionnaire data collection was largely predicated on measuring and testing hypothesised (grounded-theory) aspects of sociocultural benefit. The questionnaire data relates, in the main, to results and impacts of activity, rather than characteristics of each community music environment. Therefore, the question of What aspects of social and cultural development result directly from community group music programs? is primarily served by the questionnaire data. A noteworthy characteristic of this data, the ethnographic approach and the instrument’s premise of testing hypothesised benefits, is that it did not necessarily disprove others. The reported aspects of sociocultural benefit, and the comparative frequency of those aspects, are necessarily limited by those factors of which participants are aware. Although this may seem to be an obvious consideration, it is, nonetheless impactful on the comparative frequency and prominence of the aspects. This factor alone provides justification for the inclusion of what appear, statistically, to be insignificant aspects. For example, Contribution to community and Recreation, as reported benefits, feature at only 2.1 per cent and 2.5 per cent respectively of the total thematic identification. They are, however, significant in that they were identified by a small number of participants as discrete factors, and they may well be component considerations in some other identified factors. Again, further interrogation of questionnaire responses was not an element of this study’s design. Therefore, both these themes, along with Support, (at 5.1 per cent of total thematic responses) stand as valid. In confirming the methodological robustness of the nine emergent themes, the following grid of defining motivational characteristics provided a secondary validation lens.

Data from the completed questionnaires (which comprise 23 Likert scale statements and a set of 7 free-answer questions), reveal that the ten highest ranking of Likert scale
statements, those to which more than 70 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed, relate to either musical, social, or well-being considerations. Table 7 identifies the ten Likert scale statements with a Strongly Agree or Agree rating of greater than 70 per cent.

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<tr>
<th>Likert scale statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree or Agree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being a member of the ensemble has developed my musical ability</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I were to leave the ensemble, I would miss the activity</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I were to move out of my area I would look for a similar ensemble activity</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would recommend membership in my ensemble to my friends</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I consider the ensemble to be a community in itself</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being a member of the ensemble has helped me socially</td>
<td>82.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would recommend membership of my ensemble to anyone</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I sometimes find that I am too tired to bother going to a rehearsal</td>
<td>80%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have to be really unwell to miss a rehearsal</td>
<td>79.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music is thought of highly in my community</td>
<td>72.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Ten highest rating Likert scale statements, those rated by more than 70 per cent of group members as either strongly agree or agree / *strongly disagree or disagree.

The questionnaire response information constitutes the principal data set for consideration of the first of the study’s two principal research questions: *What aspects of social and cultural development result directly from community group music programs?*. Interview and testimonial data, presented mainly in the following two chapters on leaders’ perceptions and environmental context, do however play a part in reinforcing this chapter’s focus. Similarly, the Likert statement data includes some general personal value considerations, more relevant to the environmental context, as well as the more specific theme or aspect-related information. Examples of the more general, contextual participant information drawn from the Likert scale statement ratings include:

- If I were to move out of my area I would look for a similar ensemble activity (rated equal second with 90 per cent),
- I would recommend membership in my ensemble to my friends (rated equal third with 85 per cent),
- I consider the ensemble to be a community in itself (rated equal third with 85 per cent),
- I would recommend membership of my ensemble to anyone (rated equal fifth with 80 per cent), and
• Music is thought of highly in my community (rated seventh with 72.5 per cent).

The above statements allude to the perceived value of membership as something worth sharing with group members' broad social groups, as significant to personal identity and belonging and appreciated by the community. Examples of statements with higher levels of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that relate directly to aspects of sociocultural benefit are:

• being a member of the ensemble has developed my musical ability (rated highest with 95 per cent),
• being a member of the ensemble has helped me socially (rated fourth with 82.5 per cent),
• I sometimes find that I am too tired to bother going to a rehearsal (rated equal fifth, strongly disagree or disagree, with 80 per cent), and
• I have to be really unwell to miss a rehearsal (rated sixth with 79.5 per cent).

These statements relate directly to the considerations of musical benefit, social engagement, and balancing health and well-being.

Notwithstanding the general nature of some of the statements, particularly the first of the two lists above, the Likert scale ratings provide for contextual analysis and coding of the responses, as identifying and corroborating one (or more) of the nine identified themes. Moreover, they begin to shape, as a starting point to the coding and categorising process, a hierarchy of thematic significance, with musical development, social considerations and well-being emerging as the three pre-eminent areas of awareness.

The free-answer section of the questionnaire, designed to allow more personalized responses to open questions (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007) affords the greatest insight into personal meaning in relation to the ‘what aspects…’ research question.
Questions 2, 3, 6 and 7 of the questionnaire free-answer section were particularly rich in eliciting personal meaning:

- Question 2. Why are you a member of the ensemble?
- Question 3. How would you describe the effect your ensemble membership has on your life?
- Question 6. What reasons would encourage you to suggest an ensemble activity to another person?
- Question 7. Why is the ensemble music activity important to you?

Question 1 principally provides context and background, and questions 4 and 5 each focus on one aspect only:

- Question 1. How did you become involved in your ensemble?
- Question 4. What impact has the ensemble activity had on your family life?
- Question 5. What impact has the ensemble activity had on your existing social network?

Having identified the nine themes as the most concise group of categories, with no convincing case for distillation to a smaller number of collective descriptors, it is important to note that this categorization of aspects does not suggest that the themes are equally represented in, or suggested by, the data. The comparative frequency of thematically categorised responses is heavily weighted towards certain themes, with those ranked in the top four constituting 66.9 per cent of the total response theme frequency and the bottom four constituting an aggregated 21.1 per cent. It is also worth noting that in many cases participants responded to the free-answer questions with multi-faceted, or even multiple, comments - as the responses were restricted only by the four lines of space allocated for each question on the questionnaire form. Multiple themes can therefore be identified from a single participant response to one question; for example, in response to question 5. How would you describe the effect your ensemble membership has on your life?, WW 12 answered as follows:

- better musical and social confidence
(themes 6. Well-being, and 9. Musical or artistic motivation and achievement),

- improved learning ability & perception (theme 7. Skill development and personal challenge), and
- I have met a diverse range of people (theme 8. Social engagement).

Contribution to community is the lowest ranking theme, with only 2.1 per cent frequency among the 236 coded participant responses. At that level, however, it is still deemed valid, as the five comments are clear in meaning and defy categorising under any of the other eight themes. Recreation, with a marginally higher frequency of 2.5 per cent emerged through comments that spoke in terms of a break from the working routine, a hobby, lifestyle and interests. Again, these are considerations that would not qualify, or resonate, convincingly within other themes. Personal enjoyment and Well-being present as the two themes that are most closely related to Recreation, with a common prioritization of pleasure as a focal consideration. Neither of those two discrete themes demand the pivotal consideration of activity that is necessarily free from work or chore-like association. In the case of Well-being, inclusion would require comments to indicate a clear and conscious identification of a health and / or well-being intent or outcome: ‘… positive mental health, well-being and flourishing … in its broadest sense, well-being encompasses physical, mental, and social domains (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2013: np). After Recreation comes Support, with 5.1 per cent of all comments made by participants in the questionnaire presenting as clearly qualifying for inclusion. The element of Support, both giving and receiving, features with greater prominence in the coding of the less formal data, through focus groups, semi-formal interviews and testimonials. That data bears significance in the later chapter on environment, in which the focus becomes the facilitative, benefit-conducive environment; there the orientation shifts to the second principal question: How are the sociocultural benefits that are identified as resulting from participation in community music activity best effected? That lens examines elements that emerge as necessary to ensure that the benefits, here categorised in themes, can be experienced by community music group participants. The fourth theme is Personal enjoyment. At 11.4 per cent it is the first of the statistically substantial categories. Experiencing group musicking, for its own sake, ranks next, with 11.9 per cent of participant feedback; then comes Well-being with a 12.3 per cent rating. The theme of Well-being has particular significance in that it emerges strongly from
across the data set in two guises: as a perceive benefit resulting from group community music activity, and as a necessary dimension, or provision, of successful community music activity environment design. Skill development and personal challenge rates at 14.8 per cent, presenting sentiments that do not articulate as musically specific. Social engagement came in with the second highest rating (19.5 per cent of the total) and Musical or artistic motivation and achievement is the highest-ranking theme to emerge from the questionnaire, whereby comments specifically citing or alluding to musical factors score a frequency rating of 20.3 per cent of all questionnaire free-answer responses. Table 8 indicates the nine themes of community music activity, as they emerged from the data, in order of increasing frequency. Figure 3 shows the nine themes as rounded percentages of the total free-answer section of the questionnaire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Number / 236</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to community</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal enjoyment</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The experience of group musicking</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W-being</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skill development and personal challenge</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social engagement</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical and artistic motivation and achievement</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 8:** The nine themes of sociocultural benefit in order of increasing frequency.

The following section presents each of the nine themes, defining them and delineating them from each other. The process by which participant responses to the free-answer questions have been coded is outlined; and the criteria for qualification as a theme, as distinct from a loose collection of broadly similar comments, is discussed. Although there are several ways in which the participant data could be presented, the rationale for presenting it as a thematic structure was arrived at through analysis of emerging similarities, commonalities and consistencies across the sample, with few demographic–specific characteristics emerging. This approach offers two major advantages over alternative coding approaches such as age-group, gender, socio-economic, or instrumentation-specific foci. First, it allows for consideration and acknowledgement of subtle differences that exist in the prominence of some aspects of perceived sociocultural benefit between different cohorts within the sample group. Second, the thematic coding
structure accommodates all the response data from the free-answer section of the questionnaire, with nothing viewed as irrelevant or superfluous.

![Nine themes of sociocultural benefit](image)

**Figure 3**: The nine themes of sociocultural benefit proportionate to total group member feedback.

Chapter Five addresses the second research question: *How are the aspects of sociocultural development that are identified as resulting from participation in community music activity best effected?*, and presents data collected through semi-formal interviews, focus groups and testimonial data. As that data responds to less specific questions and allows for broader consideration of the participant experience and expectations, there is some feedback that falls outside the coding parameters. In that case such data is identified as such and discussed as ‘other’. Upon analysis, however, the data that speaks most directly to the first research question: *What aspects of social and cultural development result directly from community group music programs?*, divides meaningfully and convincingly into the nine cross-sample, cross-demographic categories. None of this data is viewed as superfluous and its categorisation into the identified themes provides a more effective and robust structure than those predicated on age, cultural background, gender, or ensemble-type.
Members’ theme 1: Contribution to community

The first of the themes, with the lowest occurrence rate of the nine, is Contribution to community. In the context of this study, Contribution to community refers to case-study participant identification of their contribution to the ensemble or broader community, through their membership or active involvement, as a deliberate and conscious gesture. Although it presents with comparatively few comments, Contribution to community stands alone as a category of themed participant feedback relating to rationale for participating in group music activity - contributing to the perceived personal sociocultural benefits of such activity. The theme is so named as the concept and the related comments are uncomplicated. The process of determining whether this thematically grouped set of responses constitutes a theme, or just a collection of (few) miscellaneous comments, is settled through the satisfaction of the following set of criteria, constructed as part of this study’s data coding matrix (Appendix 7):

a. are there more than two occurrences of participant comment that have a clear commonality of meaning and intent,

b. are those comments made by more than one participant, and

c. are those comments more meaningfully grouped under a discrete thematic descriptor (meeting criteria a. and b.) than another identified theme.

Although the significance of this thematically discrete set of comments could be challenged on the basis of percentage of overall responses to the questionnaire (5 out of 236 = 2.1 per cent), it is validated by the satisfaction of the above criteria. This particular theme is also supported in its inclusion as stand-alone by virtue of its uniquely altruistic character: ‘Disinterested and selfless concern for the well-being of others’ (Oxford dictionaries online 2015: np). No other theme from this study orientates itself principally to the interests of other participants. While there is an element of personal satisfaction embodied in the altruistic action, it is apparent from the relevant participant comments that agency in the artistic health, well-being and capability of the community is a matter of conscious and specific intent. In The altruism question: toward a social-psychological answer (Batson 2014), Batson addresses the conundrum of the place of self-interest within a framework of altruistic motivation:
Altruism is a motivational state with the ultimate goal of increasing another’s welfare… To pursue the ultimate goal of increasing the other’s welfare may involve cost to the self, but it also may not. Indeed, it can even involve self-benefit and the motivation still be altruistic, as long as obtaining this self-benefit is not the ultimate goal.

(Batson 2014: 6)

While Contribution to community presents as a stand-alone feature of the community music group member experience, it does also point to the significance and recognition of Well-being as a pivotal aspect of, and consideration for, successful community music activity. This point is discussed further both in this chapter (see section on theme 6, Well-being) and in Chapter Five. In each example of participant data relating to this theme, the participant making the comment comes from a position of peer- or self- recognised seniority, authority or greater experience that elevates their place or function within their respective group. Those elevated positions are as music teacher or past (or current) semi-professional performer. Although the comments constituting this theme derive exclusively from group members with this elevated status, not all participants who identified as such provided data qualifying for this theme. A small number of group members from across all three of the case-study communities that contributed to the participant questionnaire identified as being former or current music educators and did not refer overtly to the consideration of making a contribution.

It is significant that all the comments constituting this theme present from two of the seven questions: Question 2: Why are you a member of the ensemble?, and Question 7: Why is the ensemble activity important to you? Four of the five comments are from members of the West Wyalong community, and one from the Remote Health Worker Choir community. In addition to the proportional majority factor (the WW cohort constitutes 55 per cent of the sample for this section of the study, and RHWC, 10 per cent), WW comprises the broadest demographic of the three, as illustrated in Figure 3. The New Horizons cohort contributed no qualifying data to this theme.
Participant responses that populate the theme of Contribution to community are:

- I knew my skills could be really helpful (Why are you a member of the ensemble?, RHWC 1)
- it’s what I do, after 35 years as a musician/performer, contribute to the community (Why are you a member of the ensemble?, WW 2)
- the ensemble has done a lot for me through my life, and although at times it is a struggle, I feel like I need to give something back (Why is the ensemble activity important to you?, WW 1)
- (to) contribute to the community (Why is the ensemble activity important to you?, WW 2)
- making a contribution and getting it right (Why is the ensemble activity important to you?, WW 15).

Irrespective of the comparatively low number of relevant comments, each specifically references contribution to others, thereby substantiating the validity of the theme.

**Members’ theme 2: Recreation**

Recreation emerged as the second ranking discrete theme of sociocultural benefit reported by participants in the study, with a frequency of 2.5 per cent of the total participant data from the free-answer section of the questionnaire, constituting 6 out of the 236 qualifying participant responses. Although it comprises relatively few comments, just one more than those categorised by Contribution to community, Recreation satisfied the data coding matrix (Appendix 7) criteria of: several comments of similar thrust, made by more than two participants, and incompatible for integration with any of the other emergent themes identified through the methodology of this study. It is not surprising that participants identified Recreation as a primary consideration - either resulting from, or attracting them to, the activity; what is worthy of commentary however, is the relatively low frequency of identification within the body of data of this theme for its own sake, as a motivation for or perceived benefit of, group music activity. RHWC contributed no data to this theme.
It is clear that the themes of Personal enjoyment, Well-being and Social engagement coalesce in some regards with Recreation. Recreation activity is generally associated with enjoyment, which in turn can be considered an informal synonym for recreation (Oxford dictionaries online 2015: np). Recreation would be expected to contribute to a state of well-being, and recreation activity experienced with others would normally involve or lead to social engagement. These four themes and the subsets of participant data that define them, share boundaries as contiguous categories, illustrated by Figure 4. There is, however, a clear point of difference that clarifies and validates the two states of Personal enjoyment and Recreation as they apply to the coding and analysis of this data.

For the purposes of this chapter, and the thesis in general, Recreation refers to ‘activity done for enjoyment when one is not working’ (Oxford dictionaries online 2015: np). It is treated as a mass noun and refers to enjoyable activity that involves relief or diversion from paid work (employment) or unpaid work (routine chores): The term recreation describes purpose, structure, function and personal meaning of a qualifying activity. Recreation is an absolute concept, in that an activity is either recreational or not and it does not pertain to the perceived or reported quality of (an occurrence of) a specific activity. In contrast, enjoyment refers to the quality of an experienced activity, environment, or relationship (or set thereof). It is ‘the state or process of taking pleasure in something’ (Oxford dictionaries online 2015: np). Enjoyment describes the quality of (occurrences of) an experience. While the purpose or expectation of an activity, environment or relationship may be to experience enjoyment, it is the quality of that experience once it occurs or is enacted that determines the successful realisation of that purpose or expectation. Enjoyment is not an absolute concept. It can be experienced in greater or lesser degrees and exist as a comparative.

While Recreation activities would normally be expected to be enjoyable, not all enjoyable activities qualify as Recreation. In a practical sense, the differentiating factor between these two neighbouring themes, and the consideration of how participant feedback is distributed in the coding process, is the language used by participants in responding to the free-answer questions. The criteria and process of coding are consistent across all themes, and all thematic boundaries in this study. Community music group member feedback defining the theme of Recreation articulates clearly with its principles and descriptors, in such a way that the other categories could not genuinely encompass, nor align with, the
spirit and meaning of the theme. Playing music may be a recreation(al) activity, but participant comments referring to that specific activity as being ‘fun’, or ‘enjoyable’, are streamed to the Personal enjoyment theme. Comments that refer to the activity providing an outlet, or break from work or chore-like pressures or responsibilities, qualify for inclusion under the theme of Recreation theme. The key is in the communication of the participant’s assessment and perception, with the application of the coding matrix (Appendix 7) validating the distribution.

Comments pertaining to the theme of Recreation came as responses to four of the six data-rich questions and emerged as evenly spread across the New Horizons adult learning community and the West Wyalong community. Question 1. (How did you become involved in your ensemble?) gathered background data only, and this data is dealt with in Chapter One.

The theme of Recreation is substantiated by the following responses:

- an outlet (change) to the other types (sports) I’m involved with (Why are you a member of the ensemble?, NH 6)
- a break in my work week (How would you describe the effect your ensemble membership has on your life?, NH 4)
- rewarding hobby.. (What reasons would encourage you to suggest an ensemble activity to another person?, WW 1)
- a break from work & family’ (What reasons would encourage you to suggest an…, WW 12)
- another part of my life style & interests' (Why is the ensemble music activity important to you?, NH 6)
- ..also an activity totally independent of farm life’ (Why is the ensemble music activity…, WW 17).

Recreation rates at 2.5 per cent of all participant feedback in the free-answer section of the questionnaire. Notwithstanding this comparatively low proportion of the overall number of thematic-relevant free-answer comments, Recreation emerged to represent a stand-
alone category of perceived benefit. The relevant comments defy convincing classification under any of the other eight identified themes.

**Members’ theme 3: Support**

Next in the order of increasing statistical prominence is the theme of Support, with a frequency rating of 5.1 per cent (twelve thematic references) of the total of 236 free-answer questionnaire comments. Support is one of two themes, encompassing participant perceptions of benefits derived from community group music activity, that also emerges as one of six dimensions of successful community music activity. Well-being is the other. As one of the nine themes, Support contributes to the discussion concerning the first of the two main research questions that underpin the study and this thesis: *What aspects of social and cultural development result directly from community group music programs?*. As one of the six dimensions of community music activity, discussed comprehensively in Chapter Five, it also contributes to the discussion of the second principal research question: *How are the sociocultural benefits that are identified as resulting from participation in community music activity best effected?* In that context, as a required environmental element, Support rates at 11 per cent of the participant data – presenting with more than twice the prominence than it achieves in the context of this chapter, as a perceived benefit to the individual or group. In the context of this chapter, of the twelve comments constituting this category and thereby validating the theme, nine come as responses from one of the seven questions, Question 4: What impact has the ensemble activity had on your family life? Two of the remaining participant comments are responses to Question 6: What reasons would encourage you to recommend your ensemble activity to another person, and one from Question 5: What impact has the ensemble activity had on your existing social network? The other four free-answer questions, 1: How did you become involved in your ensemble, 2: Why are you a member of the ensemble?, 3: How would you describe the effect your ensemble membership has on your life?, and 7: Why is the ensemble music activity important to you? bear no comments relating to this theme.

Two thirds of the qualifying responses (eight) for this theme come from the New Horizons community (35 per cent of the questionnaire respondent sample) and one third (four) from West Wyalong (55 per cent of the relevant sample). Demographic factors,
particularly the age concentration (Figure 6), offer possible reasons for this weighting in the data. The Remote Health Worker Choir contributed no data to this theme.

Support in this context, that of a perceived benefit from, or attraction to, participation in group music activity, relates to the focus that involvement in such an activity gives to an individual in a social (family or community) context. The three questions from which the relevant comments emerge are those that overtly reflect on impact on relationships with others – those of family, existing social network and the non-specific ‘other people’- a reference to both existing and prospective social connections. While support for community-based music activity comes in several forms – as an external gesture of financial, logistical, marketing, governance, organisational, or other in-kind assistance (Association of NSW Regional Conservatoriums 2014) - support as a personally meaningful result of community music participation presents from the data as exclusively related to group member identity.

Support is one of six themes that emerge from the questionnaire free answer data that is characterised as passive (Table 5). Unlike the themes of Contribution to community, Skill development and personal challenge and Musical or artistic motivation and achievement, all of which are characterised by the elements of agency, achievement and proactivity, Support emerges from group member responses as an experiential facet of the activity and its environment rather than one that they deliberately foster.

Participant questionnaire responses that validate the identification of Support as one of the nine emergent themes of sociocultural benefit, deriving from participation in group music activity, are:

- my hubby has to listen to me practise. He supports me by attending concerts (What impact has the ensemble activity had on your family life?, NH 4)
- an opportunity for my husband to support something I am interested in (for a change). Very positive! (What impact has the ensemble activity had on your family life?, NH 5)
• my family is happy that I am enjoying my retirement. They support me by giving me praise and coming to concerts. They are proud of what I have accomplished (What impact has the ensemble activity had on your family life?, NH 7)

• my wife encourages me.. (What impact has the ensemble activity had on your family life?, NH 10)

• my husband has his own retirement activities and we support each other in our individual pursuits. My children and grandchildren are truly supportive. (What impact has the ensemble activity had on your family life?, NH 11)

• my partner does not participate but supports my involvement (What impact has the ensemble activity had on your family life?, NH 12)

• they enjoy seeing me enjoy it (What impact has the ensemble activity had on your family life?, WW 10)

• it makes them very proud of me and makes them more determined to pursue violin lessons for me (What impact has the ensemble activity had on your family life?, WW 3)

• encouragement to go again and again (What impact has the ensemble activity had on your family life?, WW 4)

• the sharing + support with other members (What reasons would encourage you to recommend your ensemble activity to another person?, NH 9)

• to work as a team, advance your music skills very quickly in a supportive environment and have lots of fun (What reasons would encourage you to recommend your ensemble activity to another person?, WW 3)

• friends come out and support me by coming to concerts (What impact has the ensemble activity had on your existing social network?, NH 7).
Members’ theme 4: Personal enjoyment

This theme presents in the data at a substantial rate of 11.4 per cent, comprising 27 criteria-consistent comments out of the total 236 coded free-answer questionnaire responses. This thesis accepts the Oxford Dictionaries’ definition of enjoyment as the qualifier for inclusion in this theme: ‘The state or process of taking pleasure in something’ (Oxford dictionaries online 2015: np), and it differentiates from the other themes by its constituent responses’ direct references to the words (and concepts of) ‘joy’, ‘fun’, ‘pleasure’, ‘love’ and ‘enjoyment’. It could, conceivably, present as an overarching category, encompassing more specific aspects such as The experience of group musicking and Recreation. It could also, conversely, be a component factor itself; encompassed by The experience of group musicking, Recreation, Musical or artistic motivation and achievement, Well-being or Social engagement. However, the function of this study is to reveal benefits as perceived and reported by the participants; to code the data as it emerges and analyse it without speculating as to deeper or hidden meanings below the surface of the comments offered. The differentiation between (personal) enjoyment and recreation is outlined in the section above on theme 2: Recreation. The participant cohort was cross-demographic, non-selective of socio-economic status and levels of educational achievement., and no filtering of language or assumptions of meaning took place. Utilising the validation criteria from the data coding matrix (Appendix 7): a) are there more than two occurrences of participant comment that have a clear commonality of meaning and intent; b) are those comments made by more than one participant; and c) are those comments more meaningfully grouped under a discrete thematic descriptor (meeting criteria a. and b.) than another identified theme; Personal enjoyment as a discrete theme stands as valid.

Personal enjoyment as a theme is defined not simply by responses that specify concepts of fun, joy, enjoyment, love and pleasure, as stated above, but most importantly, by responses that cite these concepts as the feature, or focus, of the comments. Following are examples of statements that refer to enjoyment, but do not qualify for inclusion in the thematic category of Personal enjoyment, due to the focus of each relating more directly to other identified themes:

- (I) enjoy the experience of playing in a band,
- I enjoy singing,
• I enjoyed playing with my friends,
• my family is happy that I am enjoying my retirement. They support me by giving me praise and coming to concerts,
• for the enjoyment of learning skills, and
• I have a sense of accomplishment – I enjoy music so much that it is wonderful to “make music”, not just listen to it.

None of the comments listed above qualifies for inclusion in the Personal enjoyment category, as the joy or enjoyment cited refers to a particular and thematically identifiable element of the experience. They are categorised variously as:

• The experience of group musicking (enjoyment of playing in a band),
• Musical or artistic motivation and challenge (enjoyment of singing),
• Social engagement (enjoyment of playing with my friends),
• Support (family supporting enjoyment of retirement through participation in group music activity),
• Skill development and personal challenge (for the enjoyment of learning), and
• Well-being (enjoyment of accomplishment through active involvement).

Two apparent exceptions to the premise described above, are the following comments, both categorised as belonging to the Personal enjoyment theme:

• (I) love playing the French horn, and
• it has been enjoyable singing again and I am looking forward to our performance later in the year.

Both of these comments are similar to I enjoy singing, in that they specify the activity of singing or playing an instrument. In the first of the two, however, the use of the superlative ‘love’ is judged by the researcher as carrying greater enjoyment-related import than that of Musical or artistic motivation and achievement. The emphasis of enjoyment and anticipation in the second, along with the consideration that the group was a choir (therefore, singing = the activity), also classifies this response as belonging to Personal enjoyment rather than Musical or artistic motivation and achievement.
The 27 community music group member comments that qualify for the theme of Personal enjoyment are spread across five of the seven questions, and the representation of qualifying comments from each of the three cohorts is similar to the proportionate spread of the sample. This is not the case with the three themes that present with fewer comments, Contribution to community, Recreation and Support. The RHWC group, representing 10 per cent of the questionnaire sample and 9.7 per cent of the questionnaire data is responsible for 18.5 per cent of this theme’s qualifying comments; the NH cohort, representing 35 per cent of the sample and 38.6 per cent of the data is responsible for 29.63 per cent of the Personal enjoyment responses; and the WW cohort, representing 55 per cent of the sample from the relevant data collection instrument and 51.7 per cent of the total questionnaire free-answer data, is responsible for 51.85 per cent of the comments in the Personal enjoyment category. While not exactly proportionate across the three fields (Table 10), this theme’s spread across data and sample suggests a level of consistency and more general strength in the identification of Personal enjoyment as a perceived benefit of group music activity. As the fourth lowest rating theme, Personal enjoyment is the first of the nine to comprise greater than proportionate representation, accounting for more than one (1.029) of every nine questionnaire free answer responses.

Participant comments that substantiate the theme of Personal enjoyment are:

- (I) love playing the French horn (Why are you a member of the ensemble?, NH 4)
- to do something interesting on school holidays and to have a good time (Why are you a member of the ensemble?, WW 3)
- we only meet once a year for 3 days but it is thoroughly enjoyable (Why are you a member of the ensemble?, WW 13)
- because I want to (Why are you a member of the ensemble?, WW 16)
- dunno I like it I guess (Why are you a member of the ensemble?, WW 21)
- very fulfilling. I would be bored without it. (How would you describe the effect the ensemble activity has on your life?, NH 2)
• (it) provides fun (How would you describe the effect the ensemble activity has on your life?, NH 5)
• enjoyable (How would you describe the effect the ensemble activity has on your life?, NH 6)
• it has been enjoyable singing again and I am looking forward to our performance later in the year (How would you describe the effect the ensemble activity has on your life?, RHWC 2)
• enrichment, fun, chance to have a go without it being demanding or an onus (How would you describe the effect the ensemble activity has on your life?, RHWC 3)
• personal enjoyment (How would you describe the effect the ensemble activity has on your life?, WW 18)
• fun and stimulating (What reasons would encourage you to suggest an ensemble activity to another person?, NH 3)
• fun (What reasons would encourage you to suggest an ensemble activity to another person?, NH 5)
• it’s a bit of fun (What reasons would encourage you to suggest an ensemble activity to another person?, NH 13)
• pleasure in doing something with other people of like mind …(What reasons would encourage you to suggest an ensemble activity to another person?, RHWC 2)
• it's fun (What reasons would encourage you to suggest an ensemble activity to another person?, RHWC 4)
• it’s something fun and worth doing (What reasons would encourage you to suggest an ensemble activity to another person?, WW, 6)
• have fun (What reasons would encourage you to suggest an ensemble activity to another person?, WW 19)
• …and have lots of fun (What reasons would encourage you to suggest an ensemble activity to another person?, WW 3)
• have fun (What reasons would encourage you to suggest an ensemble activity to another person?, WW 4)
• have fun (What reasons would encourage you to suggest an ensemble activity to another person?, WW 5)
• it is fun and exhilarating (Why is the ensemble music activity important to you?, NH 1)
• it’s fun... (Why is the ensemble music activity important to you?, RHWC 4)
• because I have learnt music and it is fun! (Why is the ensemble music activity important to you?, WW 4)
• because it is fun and enjoyable (Why is the ensemble music activity important to you?, WW 5)
• enjoyment (Why is the ensemble music activity important to you?, WW 18)
• it is fun (Why is the ensemble music activity important to you?, WW 21).

Members’ theme 5: The experience of group musicking
This theme emerges as a grouping of participant feedback that relates to the element of playing or singing together with people of similar interests; with a focus on the desire, pleasure, and attraction of being ‘part of a bigger picture in music’ (WW 13). Participants spoke of their desire to, and the satisfaction gained from, participating in a band, orchestra or choir, in which ‘The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. … the overall sound is amazing’ (NH 2). The rationale for using the term musicking, rather than playing or singing together, is that the participants reported the pleasure or desire not only in terms of the performative musical act, but also more generally in terms of being a part of (the) group activity. As the activity involved in a group music setting, particularly a community music setting, necessarily involves a set of performative and non-performative aspects, musicking presents as the appropriate term. As described by Small in *Musicking: the meanings of performance and listening* (Small 1998), musicking is not just performing, rehearsing or composing, but:

to take part, in any capacity, in a musical performance, whether by performing, by listening, by rehearsing or practicing, by providing material for performance... we might at times even extend the meaning to what the
person is doing who is taking the tickets at the door or the hefty men who shift the piano...or the roadies ...or the cleaners who clean up after everyone else has gone... (Small 1998: 9)

While music has an ‘inherently social nature…’ (Jones 2010: 292), and musicking ‘can uniquely foster the development of social capital’ (Jones 2010: 291) this theme differentiates from that of Social engagement. It is clear that music is a social activity (Small 1998; Swanwick 1999; Turino 2008; Pitts 2010), and while it is conceivable that there is an element of the social component that attracts participants to the notion of group musicking, the function of this identified thematic category is to code and give credence to participant comments that identify The experience of group musicking in and of itself. As it emerged, the frequency of such statements in the questionnaire free-answer section was substantial in number, with 11.9 per cent, or 28 out of 236 comments. This equates with a disproportionately favourable 1.067 comments out of every nine. The experience of group musicking rates as the median frequency, fifth out of nine; with a spread across the three respective cohorts that is generally consistent with their proportionate representation within the sample for the data set (Table 10). RHWC represents 10 per cent of the sample, 9.7 per cent of the data, and is responsible for 3.6 per cent of the qualifying comments; NH represents 35 per cent of the sample, 38.6 per cent of the data, and contributes 39.3 per cent of the group musicking responses; and West Wyalong represents 55 per cent of the sample, 51.7 per cent of the total (questionnaire free-answer) data, and contributes 57.1 per cent of the relevant comments. Responses coded as relevant to this theme emerged in response to four of the seven questions, 2, 4, 6 and 7, with the greatest concentration in response to question 6. What reasons would encourage you to suggest an ensemble activity to another person? When coding the participant responses, care was taken to accept and report the literal responses, as they presented as authentic and meaningful to the participants. The twenty-eight constituent response statements are grouped below as they relate to the questions, and within each of the question groupings, as individual cohort batches:

Question 2. Why are you a member of the ensemble?
  • the thrill of making music with others (NH 1)
• I have always wished I could be part of a band or orchestra, but I am not talented (skilled, committed) enough to join a professional one (NH 2)
• enjoy the experience of playing in a band (NH 3)
• I enjoy playing with other musicians (NH 5)
• I always wanted to be part of a band in high school, but wasn't able to be. Now, I have that opportunity (NH 7)
• I enjoy the music & playing with others (NH 9)
• because I am a horn player & wanted to play in a chamber ensemble of french horns (NH 13)
• …and was interested to be part of a choir that practices individually but will perform together (RHWC 2)
• to learn to play my instrument with other people (WW 6)
• I enjoy being with fellow musicians, enjoy the challenge of playing in a group (WW 15).

Question 4. What impact has the ensemble activity had on your family life?
• playing with other family members as a group (WW 9)
• getting to know how to better play with other people (WW 18).

Question 6. What reasons would encourage you to suggest an ensemble activity to another person?
• working as a group (NH 8)
• the enjoyment of sharing music with others (NH 9)
• experience playing with others and in an orchestra (WW 9)
• enjoyment of music playing together (WW 10)
• just for the fun of working together to create something very beautiful (WW 11)
• learning an instrument is more fun with others’ (WW 14)
• fun & fellowship of playing with like-minded people (WW 15)
• good experience playing with others (WW 18)
• to work as a team (WW 3).
Question 7. Why is the ensemble activity important to you?

- the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. I tootle away as best I can, but the overall sound is amazing! (NH 2)
- learning in a group (NH 3)
- It’s a chance to learn group- work skills, develop my understanding of music and share my interests with others who appreciate them (WW 8)
- playing with others is better than playing alone (WW 12)
- it is the only opportunity I have to play with others. To be part of a bigger picture in music (WW 13)
- personal satisfaction of being a team member (WW 15)
- because I am a member and I feel that as the years have progressed the group has got more advanced (WW 20).

A feature of the ethnographic nature and design of this study, and of the qualitative data gathered from the free answer section of the participant questionnaire, is the opportunity to discover participant perceptions and beliefs, expressed in language that is meaningful to them. The comments listed above offer a valuable perspective from a non-academic viewpoint in regard to the practical application of the still relatively recent term ‘musicking’, introduced fewer than 20 years ago by Small (1998). Reinforcing the validity of the notion that group musicking is more than playing or singing in a music group, it is informative to note that of the 28 participant comments listed above, 18 out of the 28, just over 64 per cent, referred specifically to the performative musical act (playing, learning). The remainder spoke of making, sharing, teamwork and belonging.

Members’ theme 6: Well-being

As is the case with the theme of Support, Well-being features in multiple contexts within the study. It emerges both as a perceived benefit by group members and leaders - the contextual foci of this and the next chapter, and as one of the six dimensions of successful community music activity that manifest as key provisions for the operation of such activity. This latter context is dealt with comprehensively in the Chapter Five. Unlike Support, however, Well-being features as a prominent element of both the perceived benefits (aspects of social and cultural development) that result directly from group music programs, and the key environmental provisions for the successful operation of
community music activity. As a perceived (and/or anticipated) benefit, Well-being rates with the fourth highest frequency of the nine themes, accounting for 12.3 per cent (29) of the 236 questionnaire free-answer responses. As dealt with in Chapters Four and Five, it rates highest in both leaders’ perspective, and total participant consideration of the six dimensions of successful community music. Well-being presents as a fulcrum in the structure of each group music community involved in the study. With this coalescence of statistical significance, it emerges as the preeminent theme of successful community music activity; articulating both a commonly perceived benefit therefrom, and a pivotal environmental consideration for program providers, directors and supporters.

Well-being is a contentious term, as its associations with health and healthcare create some challenges in determining and clarifying its application in the context of this thesis, and in the broader consideration of its function in relation to community music activity. Some current definitions position well-being as a subset of health, some an overarching category that includes health, and some define it only as it aligns with health; the majority of references to music and well-being in the literature relate either to a clinical or community-based intervention, with therapeutic ideals, principles and processes in play (Clift et al., 2011; McKay & Higham 2011; Hanser 2012; Macdonald, Kreutz, & Mitchell 2012; DeNora 2013). In many cases, such programs and environments have music therapists rather than practicing musicians directing or facilitating the activity. In this way, music and well-being appears to reside predominantly in overt health-based scenarios, with physical- and mental- health intervention agendas taking prominence over more general considerations such as equanimity, contentment, and: (a) ‘good or satisfactory condition of existence’ (Macquarie dictionary 2009: 1435); or ‘the state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy’ (Oxford dictionaries online 2015: np).

While intervention is neither foreign to, nor invalid as a strategy in, community music settings (Anderson & Rickard 2007; Gridley, Astbury, Sharples, & Aguirre 2011; Clift et al. 2011; Higgins 2012, 2014; Macdonald, Kreutz, & Mitchell 2012; Brown, Higham, & Rimmer 2014), in the context of this chapter and more broadly, this thesis, improved well-being is identified as a result of participation in a range of community music settings, all of which are predicated on artistic and educational processes and principles rather than overtly therapeutic values. Having acknowledged the challenges of common,
contemporary definition and usage of the term, this thesis favours the following definition, upon which its premise is supported:

There is no consensus around a single definition of well-being, but there is general agreement that at minimum, well-being includes the presence of positive emotions and moods (e.g., contentment, happiness), the absence of negative emotions (e.g., depression, anxiety), satisfaction with life, fulfilment and positive functioning.

(US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2013: np)

In identifying the challenging relationship of the terms ‘health’ and ‘well-being’, the following definitions may be useful: Health: ‘1. Soundness of body, freedom from disease or ailment. 2. The general condition of the body or mind with reference to soundness and vigour (Macquarie Dictionary, 2009: 573); ‘1. The state of being free from illness or injury; 1.1 A person’s mental or physical condition: (Oxford dictionaries online 2015: np); and ‘Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity’ (World Health Organisation 2003: np). What is apparent from the literature is that the terms health and well-being are connected. At best they share some areas of meaning, and are commonly used in tandem to refer to physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual wellness. At their most vexatious, they are used interchangeably. What is important for the purpose of this thesis, is that well-being is understood as referring to ‘the presence of positive emotions and moods… the absence of negative emotions… satisfaction with life, fulfilment and positive functioning’ (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2013: np).

Participant comments that constitute the theme of Well-being are:

Question 3. How would you describe the effect your ensemble membership has on your life?

- makes me use my brain (NH 5)
- I feel more energized and my thinking processes and memory have improved (NH 7)
- has given me an opportunity to learn something new – the effect is positive & uplifting (NH 9)
• great joy and a real confidence booster (NH 10)
• I have always been very social and now that I am retired the NH Music organization had created an environment that supports the mind, body, and social well-being aspects (NH 11)
• keeps me young at heart! (NH 12)
• brings back memories, happy ones (NH 12)
• it is an opportunity to relax, unwind, de-stress from my work routine (as a full-time, professional, high school music educator) (WW 2)
• it makes my mum and dad very proud of me, gives me more confidence and makes me more determined to keep learning the violin (WW 3)
• it has helped me (WW 4)
• gave me something to do (WW 7)
• adds something really nice to my hobbies (WW10)
• better musical and social confidence (WW 12).

Question 4. What impact has the ensemble activity had on your family life?
• my wife is also now involved. Keep active (NH 8)
• I am not as grumpy (WW 12).

Question 6. What reasons would encourage you to suggest an ensemble activity to another person?
• mental stimulation (NH 1)
• it is great to learn a new skill that keeps your mind alert and makes you feel that you have accomplished something (NH 7)
• keeping busy (NH 8)
• I am a huge proponent of life after retirement, and am frequently regaling anyone that will listen with both the health and social benefits of music sharing (NH 11)
• feel good factor! (RHWC 3)
• makes you feel good (RHWC 4)
• to have some “me” time, unrelated to work (WW 1).
Question 7. Why is the ensemble activity important to you?

- it provides mental stimulation that would be missing now that I have retired (NH 1)
- I have a sense of accomplishment – I enjoy music so much that it is wonderful to “make music”, not just listen to it (NH 7)
- the music makes me focus sharply on the task at hand and I find that now that I am retired the mind is cluttered. Music is the one area that I am oblivious to my surroundings or external forces (NH 11)
- taking care of myself is important and being part of the choir facilitates that process (RHWC 2)
- commitment… I said I would cause I love singing so it was joyfully saying yes (RHWC 3)
- makes you feel good (RHWC 4)
- the effect it has on my general health, improves brain activity (WW14).

The thematic prominence of Well-being across this thesis, its findings and the research leading up to it, is consistent with literature relating specifically to community music including Southcott (2009); De Vries (2010); Silverman (2011); Varvarigou et al. (2011); Sun and Buys (2013); Joseph and Southcott (2013); Southcott and Joseph (2014, 2015b); and Creech et al. (2014). It is also recognised more broadly as a beneficial aspect of engagement in non-specific arts:

Our analysis has found that engagement with the arts is associated with a significant positive increase in life satisfaction. Where life satisfaction is rated on a scale of one to 10, engagement with the arts is associated with an increase of 0.143 in wellbeing.

(ACFTA 2015: 42)

Members’ theme 7: Skill development and personal challenge
Skill development and personal challenge presents a functional departure from the other eight themes, by virtue of the terms’ connotations and associations, which imply personal agency, intention or achievement of improvement, and outcome-oriented activity. With
the exception of Contribution to community, and the partial exception of Musical or artistic achievement and motivation, the other themes are characterised by passive experiential phenomena (refer to breakdown of themes and motivational characteristics in Table 5). Musical or artistic achievement and motivation is identified as a partial exception because it encompasses more aspirational, less active aspects such as ‘I want to be more musical, and involved in more musical activities’ (Why are you a member of the ensemble?, WW 5) as well as those with a more active orientation: ‘to further my violin playing and musical skills’ (Why are you a member of the ensemble?, WW 3). The theme of Skill development and personal challenge categorises participant comments from the free-answer section of the questionnaire that relate to aims and objectives, goals and experiences, of personal progress and improvement in the context of their group music activity. The objective of continuous personal progress and the explicit task-oriented complication of meeting and overcoming personal challenges imply active agency rather than enjoyment for its own sake or passive receipt of benefits.

The emergence of this theme, and its proportional significance across the sample, serves also to identify the attraction of, and desire for, overt learning as a component of the community music experience. This consideration is reinforced by the prominence of another of the nine themes, that with the greatest number of constituent comments, Musical or artistic motivation and achievement. Aligned with the previous paragraph’s observation regarding the theme of Musical or artistic motivation and challenge and its element of proactive motivation is that theme’s contribution to the evidence of overt learning as a motivation. Out of that theme’s 48 qualifying responses, thirteen (27 per cent) are couched in such a way that the element of learning, and its significance to the respondent, is implicit. Those responses, none of which qualify for inclusion in the Skill development and personal challenge theme, but do contribute to its influence and validation across the data to identify a meta-theme of learning are:

1. to further my violin playing and musical skills (Why are you a member of the ensemble?, WW 3),
2. … to enhance my playing ability (Why are you a member of the ensemble?, WW 8),
3. because it gave me a chance to learn the double bass and now I go to boarding school I have kept it up… my passion for the instrument (Why are you a member of the ensemble?, WW 20),
4. … allowed me to realize my lifelong wish to play an instrument and learn to read music (How would you describe the effect your ensemble membership has on your life?, NH 1),
5. gives me an excellent interlude in my life to enrich + grow me as a musician (How would you describe the effect your ensemble membership has on your life?, WW 13),
6. … improved my musical skills, increased teaching skills, repertoire… (How would you describe the effect your ensemble membership has on your life?, WW 14),
7. I practise more (What impact has the ensemble activity had on your family life?, NH 13),
8. the satisfaction of learning & performing a piece of music well (What reasons would encourage you to suggest an ensemble activity to another person?, NH 1),
9. learn music (What reasons would encourage you to suggest an ensemble activity to another person?, WW 4),
10. if a beginner, they could learn more notes (What reasons would encourage you to suggest an ensemble activity to another person?, WW 5),
11. it will enhance their musical ability…(What reasons would encourage you to suggest an ensemble activity to another person?, WW 8),
12. (I) have learned so much (Why is the ensemble music activity important to you?, NH 5), and
13. develop my understanding of music (Why is the ensemble music activity important to you?, WW 8).

The representation of the meta-theme of learning, therefore, would number a total of 48 responses. This number is equal to that constituting the identified theme of musical or artistic motivation and development.
Returning to the focus of this section of the chapter, that of Skill development and personal challenge as a prominent theme of community music activity, as a category it codes and streams participant comments that emphasise the aspects of technical capability and achievement, as distinct from those relating to the artistic, aesthetic or ethereal, which constitute the theme of Musical or artistic motivation and achievement. Terms and concepts presented in comments constituting the theme of Skill development and personal challenge include learning, skill, development and improving, indicating a more demanding and deliberate element of Skill development and personal challenge. As with the other themes, no assumptions were made during the data coding as to whether participant meaning fell into this, or the contiguous musical or artistic achievement category; comments were taken and thematically organised according to the participants’ chosen terminology and without any coaching or assistance in further defining their responses to articulate deeper meaning. Skill development and personal challenge presents as a statistically significant theme, rating third highest of the nine, with a frequency of 14.8 per cent across the total questionnaire free-answer data. It contributes 34 of the total 236 comments. Community music group member comments that are categorised by this theme are listed below, organized under the relevant question headings:

Question 2. Why are you a member of the ensemble?

- to learn to play an instrument (NH 1)
- I like the challenge (NH 5)
- retired – keeping active in my field of expertise (30 yrs exp. choral conductor, 10 yrs band/jazz conductor) (NH 8)
- it … makes me practice once a week (WW 1)
- to further my violin playing and musical skills (WW 3)
- to improve musical skills (WW 12)
- …and beneficial to my music development (WW 13).

Question 3. How would you describe the effect your ensemble membership has on your life?

- …allowed me to realize my lifelong wish to play an instrument and learn to read music (NH 1)
since joining the Band I have been encouraged to learn 2 other instruments
...this definitely opens more doors for the future (WW 8)
• improved learning ability & perception skills (WW 12)
• improved my musical skills, increased teaching skills (WW 14)
• improving my group playing skills (WW 16).

Question 4. What impact has the ensemble activity had on your family life?
• I feel I am a role model when I spend time learning parts and &
  improving my skills (WW 12).

Question 6. What reasons would encourage you to suggest an ensemble activity to another person?
• the challenge… (NH 1)
• good learning experience (NH 5)
• a chance to learn or to increase capability on instr. (ument) (NH 8)
• for the enjoyment of learning (NH 9)
• ...a way to continue to develop skills (NH 13)
• satisfaction in learning (RHWC 2)
• to...advance your music skills very quickly... (WW 3)
• teaches you a skill (RHWC 4)
• you learn new things (WW 6)
• learn skills (WW 9)
• to increase musical ability (WW 11)
• lifelong learning (WW 12)
• development of skills (WW 15).

Question 7. Why is the ensemble music activity important to you?
• keeps me learning (NH 9)
• challenges yourself, … teaches you a skill (RHWC 4)
• maintain skills as a musician (WW 2)
• become better at playing in an ensemble and playing my instrument (WW 6)
- I wasn’t getting lessons at the time so it was a good excuse for me to practice for something (WW 7)
- a feeling of achievement (WW 12)
- …getting it right (WW 15)
- it improves my skill (WW 16)
- so I can get better on trombone (WW 19).

It is apparent from the above list that coding and analysis of the raw data presented a margin, and an imperative, for interpretation in relation to the allocation of participant responses to this thematic category. To varying degrees this precept applies to all nine identified themes, and to the overall coding process, with many examples across the data set of potentially alternative distribution outcomes. While some of the group member comments that present as pertaining to more than one possible theme are discussed specifically in the body of the chapter, others that are not may present with similar thematic ambiguity. In dealing with any such cases during the analysis process, arbitrary coding decisions were made according to the data coding matrix (Appendix 7). The data coding matrix model was applied to ensure analytical consistency and to underpin the validity of the findings.

**Members’ theme 8: Social engagement**

The difference in frequency between Skill development and personal challenge, at 14.8 per cent of all relevant participant feedback, and this theme – Social engagement, at 19.5 per cent, is second only in magnitude to the margin separating Support (at 5.1 per cent) and Personal enjoyment (at 11.4 per cent). Less than one percentage point then separates Social engagement from the highest rating theme of Musical or artistic motivation and achievement in prominence, as a perceived sociocultural benefit derived from, or attracting participants to, group music activity. Already presenting as a major aspect of sociocultural development deriving from, and/or attracting participants to, group music activity, the theme of Social engagement gains greater overall statistical importance later in the thesis when coupled with the environmental dimension of Membership. Membership is dealt with in Chapter Five as one of the six principal considerations for leaders in the design and operation of successful community music environments. These dimensions provide insight that relates to the second principal research question.
orientating the study: **How are the sociocultural benefits that are identified as resulting from participation in community music activity best effected?** The dimension of Membership bears relevance to the theme of Social engagement through its constituent factors of group identity, reciprocity of care for co-members, belonging, interaction, the notion of team, congeniality, trust and reliability, the principle and challenges of inclusivity, and shared objectives. These considerations are all social in nature and are discussed in Chapter 5 as those that emerged from the semi-formal and informal data collection instruments (semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and testimonials) from the total sample of participants across seven case study communities and seventeen community leaders, numbering 144.

The data from this study indicates that affiliation by common interest in group musicking (Small 1998; Veblen & Olsson 2002; Jones 2010; Higgins 2012) is perceived to be a safe and reliable platform for social activity; and that group music activity as a necessarily collaborative, team endeavour offers space for personal achievement, stimulation and satisfaction, within a shared, community sensibility. These observations are supported by the literature in relation to both urban and non-specific settings (Dykema 1916; Veblen & Olsson 2002; Sound Sense 2006; Silverman 2009, 2012; Higgins 2012, 2014; Schippers & Bartleet 2013; Silverman & Cohen 2013; Joseph & Southcott 2013; Southcott & Joseph 2015a, 2015b), and with a focus on, or significant consideration of, non-metropolitan environments (Keighery 2005; Reeder 2006; Bartleet et al. 2009; McHenry 2009, 2011; Klopper & Power 2012; Joseph 2014). As Higgins notes:

Community music is an active intervention between a music leader or facilitator and participants. Music educators who work in this way intentionally create spaces for inclusive and participatory musical doing. As a perspective it resonates with a commitment to musical expression as a crucible for social transformation, emancipation, empowerment, and cultural capital. As an approach that places emphasis on conversation, negotiation, collaboration, and cultural democracy, community music practices gives “voice” to those who take part.

(Higgins 2014: np)
In their survey and literature review researching the benefits of group singing on community mental health and well-being, Gridley et al. (2011) concluded that community benefits of singing in groups include:

- lowered feelings of social isolation, depression and anxiety
- increased social capital through participation in social, cultural and community activities
- denser social and friendship networks.

(Gridley et al. 2011: 5)

The free answer section of the questionnaire includes one question that specifically explores the social aspect of group music activity: Question 5. What impact has the ensemble activity had on your existing social network? However, only one response from that question is counted in the emergent data as relating to the theme of Social engagement, as the question was too specific to yield meaningfully balanced data. The one thematically-relevant response from that question that was deemed to be genuinely open was ‘a shared experience with good friends at this stage’ (RHWC 3). This was coded as valid, as it offered, without any identifiable leading or provocation, the aspect of sharing. Sharing as an inherently social activity demanded categorisation, where more predictable and perfunctory answers such as ‘it has increased it’ or ‘my ensemble is my social group’ were not judged to be genuinely meaningful. The apparent, inherent aspect of social interaction in group music activity dictated the logical inclusion of an overt social engagement question in the data collection instrument design. At the time of the construction of the tools, however, there was no expectation as to the degree of prominence that the social aspect would achieve in participant reports of their overall experience and continuing motivation. Upon analysis of the data elicited from the specific social network question, it was determined that several of the Social engagement-related responses invalidated themselves by merely acknowledging the social aspect, rather than genuinely contributing to its prominence as a major consideration. The free-answer questionnaire responses that generated the theme of Social engagement are as follows:

Question 2. Why are you a member of the ensemble?

- to meet people (NH 1)
• the band members (NH 11)
• it gives me a social outlet… (WW 1)
• I enjoyed playing with my friends (WW 7)
• to play with people with similar interests to me… (WW 8)
• I enjoy the group experience (WW 9)
• to play with other musicians - social fun (WW 12)
• it’s helped me to be a part of the music team at church (WW 17).

Question 3. How would you describe the effect your ensemble membership has on your life?

• being new to the community it has connected me to new friends … (NH 1)
• new people to meet (NH 4)
• made new friends (NH 5)
• they have been my entry way into a new community (NH 13)
• shows me how important it is to do things together with others just for fun (RHWC 4)
• I have met a diverse range of people (WW 12)
• met like-minded people… (WW 14)
• meeting new friends with an interest in music… (WW 17)
• I have been able to meet people that I never would have had anything to do with otherwise (WW 20).

Question 4. What impact has the ensemble activity had on your family life?

• broadened social 18 connections (WW 2)
• I could play with them (WW 16).

Question. 5. What impact has the ensemble activity had on your existing social network?

• a shared experience with good friends at this stage (RHWC 3).

Question 6. What reasons would encourage you to suggest an ensemble activity to another person?
• the interesting, fun people & staff (NH 1)
• part of a group (NH 4)
• interaction with other like-minded people (NH 5)
• might be interesting for their social 24 life (NH 6)
• meeting new people who enjoy music is great! (NH 7)
• enjoyment of …sharing with other members (NH 9)
• …and social benefits of music sharing (NH 11)
• social and activities (are) worthwhile (NH 12)
• doing something with other people of like mind… being able to share it with others (RHWC 2)
• connects you with other people (RHWC 4)
• the social benefits of being in a group (WW 1)
• meet new friends (WW 4)
• they could meet new friends (WW5)
• it’s good to meet new people (WW 6)
• social activity (WW12)
• to grow a person … socially (WW 13)
• meeting like-minded people (WW 14)
• a common interest in music (WW 17)
• meet different people (WW 19).

Question 7. Why is the ensemble music activity important to you?
• enjoy people (NH 5)
• music first, social second (NH 12)
• connects you with other people (RHWC 4)
• social connections (WW 2)
• share my interests with others who appreciate them (WW 8)
• to be engaged in an activity with other people who enjoy and are interested in music (WW 9)
• … and different people to talk to (WW 12). While it is certainly the case that participants quoted above made these comments in addition to comments pertaining to the other eight themes, it is worth noting that only eleven of the 46 comments make overt mention of music or the musical act.
Members’ theme 9: Musical or artistic motivation and achievement

This theme, the most prevalent of those emerging from the participant questionnaire data, categorises participant responses that identify a musical or (in some cases, and more broadly,) creative artistic benefit from, or rationale for, involvement in their group music activity. Such responses are presented without a deeper interrogation of why or what underlies the specific participant comment. As addressed in the introduction to this chapter, the purpose of the study is to take a meta-view, categorising thematically identifiable references that emerge from subjective participant perceptions and their personal meanings. The function of the analysis, and the thematic coding, is not to break data down to a subtextual level of possible influences and inferences underpinning or contributing to those articulated by participants. This is not to say that those same participants may not be more analytical in different sections of the questionnaire, or indeed other forms of participant input within the study, but it does indicate that responses have been coded, alluding specifically to the focus of one of the nine themes; and in this case it is the theme of musical or artistic expression for its own sake.

As discussed in the introduction to this chapter, there is a contestable zone on the shared boundary of Musical or artistic motivation and achievement and Skill development and personal challenge. This is also the case between other contiguous thematic territories, and it is not surprising, particularly considering the comprehensive nature of the thematic categorisation approach taken by the thesis. The nine themes are defined by, and identified to collate meaning of, all the qualifying participant data; with nothing left uncoded. The consideration of shared boundaries and cross-theme relationships is illustrated in Figure 4, by which six important structural features of the thematic relationships, are illustrated:

1. the nine themes exist as a connected cluster,
2. although they are connected, it is by shared boundaries rather than overlapping territories,
3. Personal enjoyment is directly connected to, and provides connection between, six of the remaining eight themes (Contribution to community, Support, Well-being, Recreation, Social engagement and The experience of group musicking),
4. Musical and artistic motivation and achievement shares two boundaries (Well-being and Skill development and personal challenge), whereas all bar one share at least three.

5. Skill development and personal challenge is contiguous with one other theme only (Musical and artistic motivation and achievement), and

6. Well-being operates as a fulcrum in the albeit imbalanced structure, illustrated by Figure 5.

![Figure 4: Visual representation of shared boundaries among contiguous themes.](image1)

![Figure 5: Cluster of emergent themes with statistical centre line.](image2)

The theme of Musical or artistic motivation and achievement comprises the final set of participant responses from the free-answer section of the questionnaire. Completing the main data set that supports the premise of this chapter, the responses were coded, as were
all the relevant questionnaire data, using the data coding matrix (Appendix 7). The coding matrix was applied to ensure that the distribution of data to this final theme is justified. The matrix determines the emphasis of each comment, and this is where the fine but impermeable line of definition is drawn. Comments such as the following qualify for this theme, rather than that of Skill development and personal challenge, because they all refer to musicality or musical skill as the focus:

- to further my violin playing and musical skills (WW 3),
- to improve musically (WW 12),
- Gives me an excellent interlude in my life to enrich + grow me as a musician (WW 13), and
- It will enhance their musical ability…(WW 8).

All of the participant comments that sit under the thematic heading of musical or artistic development and achievement are validated via the matrix qualifiers listed below in the thematic coding tool (Table 9):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment is or contains</th>
<th>Qualifiers</th>
<th>✔</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>literal reference</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or key words</td>
<td>(tick)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or euphemism(s) for key words</td>
<td>(or tick)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and/has emphasis on</td>
<td>key words</td>
<td>(tick)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>euphemism(s) for key words</td>
<td>(or tick)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and/or vernacular indicates meanings</td>
<td>- cultural</td>
<td>(optional tick)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- personal</td>
<td>(optional tick)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and/or context indicates meanings</td>
<td>- cultural</td>
<td>(optional tick)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- personal</td>
<td>(optional tick)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9: Thematic coding tool, applied to each participant response.

Following is the list of participant comments, grouped under the associated question headings, that substantiate the final and most prominent of the nine emergent themes - Musical or artistic motivation and achievement:

**Question 2. Why are you a member of the ensemble?**

- to experience performing (NH 1)
- the music (NH 11)
• love music, both solo (i.e. piano) and in groups (NH 12)
• I enjoy singing (RHWC 2)
• I’d like to do something creative and artistic (RHWC 4)
• to further my violin playing and musical skills (WW 3)
• because I want to be musical (WW 4)
• because I want to be more musical and more involved in music activities (WW 5)
• to enhance my playing ability (WW 8)
• I love playing music! (WW 10)
• sheer love of music making (WW 11)
• to encourage my students to be involved in ensemble work – to help them love music like I do (WW 11)
• to improve musically (WW 12)
• I enjoy music (WW 17)
• because it gave me a chance to learn the double bass and now I go to boarding school I have kept it up… my passion for the instrument (WW 20).

Question 3. How would you describe the effect your ensemble membership has on your life?

• allowed me to realise my lifelong wish to play an instrument and learn to read music (NH 1)
• let’s me rediscover my love for singing (RHWC 4)
• better musical (and social) confidence (WW 12)
• gives me an excellent interlude in my life to enrich + grow me as a musician (WW 13)
• …improved my musical skills, increased teaching skills, repertoire… (WW 14)
• has broadened my horizons considerably. Have always loved orchestral music, but now appreciate it so much more (WW 15).

Question 4. What impact has the ensemble activity had on your family life?

• I practise more (NH 13).
Question 6. What reasons would encourage you to suggest an ensemble activity to another person?

- the joy of music (NH 1)
- the satisfaction of learning & performing a piece of music well (NH1)
- if the other person were looking for something to do and was interested in music I would recommend it (NH 2)
- pleasure of making music (NH 4)
- It is great fun making music! (NH 10)
- learn music (WW 4)
- if a beginner they could learn more notes (WW 5)
- it will enhance their musical ability…(WW 8)
- just for the fun of working together to create something very beautiful (WW 11)
- for enjoyment of music (WW 12)
- To grow a person musically (WW 13).

Question 7. Why is the ensemble music activity important to you?

- I love the music (NH 1)
- I like using my talent, performing… (NH 3)
- love playing the French horn (NH 4)
- love music (NH 5)
- have learned so much (NH 5)
- music has always been my life (NH 8)
- I love to be involved in music & … love to perform & entertain others (NH 9)
- a chance for self-expression. An opportunity to grow musically (NH10)
- music first… (NH 12)
- I can’t imagine a day without music 43 – this is a group with which I can play (NH 13)
- develop my understanding of music (WW 8)
- I love music and making music (WW 10)
- new music… (WW 12).
Variations and differences across respondent cohort groups

As stated in the introduction to this chapter, the response level to the participant questionnaire was 40 case-study group members, from three case-study cohorts, out of a total of seven case study communities that totaled 144 participants. The breakdown of questionnaire respondents was:

- WW: 22 participants (14 females, 8 males),
- NH North American adult learning community: 14 participants (10 females, 4 males), and
- RHWC: 4 participants (4 females).

The gender balance of both the sample and of the individual case-study cohorts aligns with that of each of the case-study communities, in terms of community music activity participation trends. The gender balance is acknowledged as a genuine representation of the existing communities and the members of those communities willing to engage in the questionnaire. It is in no way shaped or determined by the researcher, the participant recruitment process or any other element of the research design. The proportionate representation by the three case-study communities that engaged with the questionnaire instrument is as follows:

- WW - 55 per cent of participant engagement in questionnaire
- NH North American adult learning community - 35 per cent of participant engagement in questionnaire
- RHWC - remote health worker choir - 10 per cent of participant engagement in questionnaire

Figure 6 shows the questionnaire respondent age ranges, and Table 10 identifies the correlation of participant number (sample) and number of responses (data items) from the questionnaire free-answer section. Although the nine themes encapsulate the entirety of the socioculturally beneficial aspects represented by participant feedback across the cohorts, there is variation between discrete groups, and between those individual groups and the aggregated data, in the prevalence and frequency of the different thematic responses.
Table 10: Correlation of participant number (sample size) and number of responses from the free-answer section of the questionnaire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cohort</th>
<th>Participant Sample</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>((n=))</td>
<td>(%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHWC</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NH</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WW</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Sample</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7 shows the proportional prominence of the nine themes across the total cohort, and within each of the three groups, against total number of coded responses (236):

Figure 7: Proportional prominence of the nine themes of sociocultural benefit.
Figure 8 shows proportional prominence of the nine themes as percentages of each of the cohort’s total questionnaire free-answer response data, compared to that of the total cohort:

As seen from Figures 7 and 8, there are proportional differences of thematic prominence across the three relevant cohorts, and between individual cohorts and the total. The most significant variance in individual cohort/total sample thematic prominence occurs between the Remote Health Worker Choir and the total sample. Figure 9 illustrates this variance in cross-cohort comparative proportional representation (as per cent of total responses) and in the thematic hierarchy, with ratings in each case from lowest to highest. It shows that there are minor variations only between the thematic proportions of the total sample and each of the WW and NH cohorts. In both cases the variation amounts to a one theme differential, with Well-being and Skill development varying by two-positions each in the rankings for WW and NH respectively, and a maximum of 4 per cent variance in any single theme. There is only a marginally greater variation between WW and NH, with three different rankings, six of the nine themes holding the same position in each, and a maximum thematic variance of 8 per cent. The comparison of the RHWC proportional thematic representation with that of the total cohort structure, however, shows a much greater degree of variation. In the RHWC/total cohort comparison, none of
the themes holds the same ranking, and only two themes, Recreation and Support, hold equivalent, sequential positions. A supportable explanation for this anomaly can be found in the organising body’s aims and the project’s stated objective, those of overtly supporting the well-being of its members and promoting resilience and mental health through the activity:

The CRANAplus support program is collectively known as Bush Support Services. Bush Support Services has an understanding that the particular mental health of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous remote health workers is a result of the unique nature of remote work. As leaders in remote health, CRANAplus through Bush Support Services is able to provide personalised care for remote health workers

(CRANAplus 2015: np)

The CRANAplus organisational web site refers explicitly to the RHWC project as an example of its approach to fostering well-being for its members:

The (Remote Health Worker) choir performed at the CRANAplus Conference in Darwin in 2013… The link between emotional well-being and choir singing is well-established.

(CRANAplus 2015: np)

The comparatively elevated rankings of Well-being and Personal enjoyment as perceived or recognised benefits of the RHWC activity are conceivably attributable to this increased awareness and the community’s anticipated function of the project as illustrated by the RHWC recruitment flyer (Appendix 8). That said, however, only one of the total RHWC participant group of thirteen demonstrated or declared confidence in a successful outcome during the six-month project. The aspect of Personal expectation and self-view as one of the six dimensions of community music activity, along with the allied considerations of Leadership and Membership, is explored and discussed in Chapter Five.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community contribution</th>
<th>Recreation</th>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Personal enjoyment</th>
<th>Group musicking</th>
<th>well-being*</th>
<th>skill dev./chall.*</th>
<th>social engagement</th>
<th>music/art mtvn./achv.</th>
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<tr>
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<td>5%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
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<td>20%</td>
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**WW**

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<th>Personal enjoyment</th>
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<tr>
<td>*one variation</td>
<td></td>
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**total**

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Recreation</th>
<th>Support</th>
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<th>Group musicking</th>
<th>well-being</th>
<th>skill dev./chall.*</th>
<th>social engagement</th>
<th>music/art mtvn./achv.</th>
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<td>12%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>20%</td>
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**NH**

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<th>Recreation</th>
<th>Support</th>
<th>personal enjoyment</th>
<th>Group musicking</th>
<th>well-being</th>
<th>skill dev./chall.*</th>
<th>social engagement</th>
<th>music/art mtvn./achv.</th>
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</table>

**total**

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Recreation</th>
<th>Support</th>
<th>personal enjoyment*</th>
<th>Group musicking</th>
<th>well-being*</th>
<th>skill dev./chall.*</th>
<th>social engagement*</th>
<th>music/art mtvn./achv. *</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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**RHWC**

<table>
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<th>Community contribution *</th>
<th>Group musicking</th>
<th>skill dev./chall.*</th>
<th>music/art mtvn./achv. *</th>
<th>personal enjoyment*</th>
<th>well-being*</th>
<th>social engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
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<tr>
<td>*multiple variations</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

*Figure 9*: Proportional variations in thematic prominence between total and individual participant cohorts.
Conclusion

This chapter has identified and explored the emergence of nine themes of community music activity, apparent from the analysis of the primary data of the study. The source of the data in the chapter was the participant questionnaire, comprising both a 23 question Likert scale section and seven free-answer questions. The questionnaire was completed by 40 group members from three of the seven case study communities involved in the study, with the richest, qualitative, data source being the 236 responses resulting from the free-answer section. The data from the Likert scale section of the questionnaire produced results that suggested a thematic foundation to the participants’ experiences and observations of their group music activity membership. Trends that emerged from the Likert scale data pointed to the significance of three leading community music participation values:

- The development of musical ability,
- Social engagement, and
- Well-being.

The three leading community music values flagged the broad areas of perceived benefit and personal meaning for individual participants and provided a framework upon which the comprehensive nine-theme structure is supported. The nine themes were defined and verified by the qualitative data from the questionnaire free-answer section, which comprised a much larger and more nuanced body of participant responses and led the enquiry to consider a full range of participant perceptions and expectations. The greater depth of the qualitative data allowed for comprehensive coding and convincing thematic categorisation of perceived benefits as reported by the 40 questionnaire respondents from the three distinct case study communities. In this way, the chapter substantially addressed the first of the two principal research questions underpinning the study: What aspects of social and cultural development result directly from community group music programs?

Throughout the chapter, the point was established and reiterated that the ethnographic nature of the data collection for the study supported analysis of the participant comments as offered by them, in their own way, without assumptions about or challenges to the literal meaning. The researcher approach to differences in subtleties of specific community and/or cultural vernacular, as an impact on participant expression and
thematic coding across the cohorts, was discussed; researcher familiarity with individual case study communities having been employed as an enabler in such cases rather than assumptions made or participants led in the data collection or analysis procedures. This objective acceptance of reported participant data did not, however, preclude the researcher from exploring cross-sample basal or structural trends, patterns or disparities. One such trend was observed in regard to the motivational characteristics of the nine themes, a factor that underpinned the different themes, and highlighted a fundamental divide between aspects of perceived sociocultural benefit that are rooted in, and dependent on, personal agency and proactivity, and those experienced through more passive, compliant involvement. Table 5 details these characteristics and illustrates the divide between agency and proactivity, aspiration and passivity as modes of participant experience and expectation.

The chapter makes the secondary observation that emergent themes vary significantly in prominence, with the number of qualifying comments constituting each theme ranging from as many as 48 (Musical or artistic motivation and achievement) to as few as five (Contribution to community). The concepts, ideas and feelings described by participants, however, particularly at the lower end of the frequency scale, differentiated sufficiently to justify the thematic separation and coding structure. Each of the nine themes, listed below, was identified as discrete, characteristic—specific and statistically defensible: (1) Contribution to community; (2) Recreation; (3) Support; (4) Personal enjoyment; (5) The experience of group musicking; (6) Well-being; (7) Skill development and personal challenge; (8) Social engagement; and (9) Musical or artistic motivation and achievement.

A crucial understanding of the articulation of the three leading community music participation values with the nine themes of successful community music activity, is that the chapter does not present or suggest that the three values are a distillation, or set of meta-themes of the comprehensive thematic structure. The reconciliation of the two lenses takes the form, rather, of the three guiding values supporting and validating participant-identified aspects of community music experience and expectation (Table 6).

The chapter presented data that supports the thematic structure, defining each theme through its specific descriptors, and discussing both criteria for thematic inclusion and application of the data coding matrix (Appendix 7). The coding challenge presented by
suggestions of thematic ambiguity was addressed by the overlay of two analytical considerations: the clearly defined thematic descriptors outlined in this chapter and the data coding matrix (Appendix 7). The coding process clarified inclusion of data as identifiable by thematic groupings, resulting in contiguous boundaries rather than shared, contested, marginal territories (Figure 4).

The chapter focused on the emergence of nine themes, as identified in relation to participant feedback on aspects of sociocultural benefit experienced or anticipated by them through their group music activity. This data and its analysis substantially addressed the first of two principal research questions: *What aspects of social and cultural development result directly from community group music programs?*. In discussing and interrogating the themes and their statistical significance, references were necessarily made to the secondary significance held by two of the themes, themes that present with a dual role and significant overall importance to the thesis and its findings. The prominence of Support and Well-being as two of six dimensions of successful community music activity, in addition to their identification as two of the nine themes, is briefly alluded to in this chapter’s sections on each theme. In doing so, awareness is introduced prior to a more comprehensive discussion of the ultimate importance of Support and Well-being in Chapters Five and Six.

A review of the demographic considerations of the sample cohorts was referenced, identifying gender balance and age range of questionnaire respondents for each cohort. Measuring the demographic characteristics of the respondents against those of their respective ensemble communities in total revealed that the gender and age group statistics for the responding sample was representative, and that neither of those two factors appeared to impact on the validity or credibility of the results or their applicability across cohorts. The chapter concluded by comparing and contrasting the proportional representation of the nine themes across the three case study cohorts, and discussing the similarities and variations between the individual cohorts and the total sample. To inform this comparison, Figure 6 graphically illustrated proportionate questionnaire respondent cohorts, each cohort’s percentage of the total sample and the respective age ranges; Figure 7, the proportional prominence of the nine themes across the total cohort, and within each of the three groups, against total number of coded responses; Figure 8 - the proportional prominence of the nine themes as percentages of each of the three cohort’s
total questionnaire free-answer response data, and as compared to that of the total cohort; and Table 10 correlated the participant number (sample size) and number of responses (coded data) from the free-answer section of the questionnaire. Figure 9 mapped the proportional variations in thematic prominence between total and individual participant cohorts, finding that there were minimal variations between each of the New Horizons seniors learning community and the West Wyalong small rural town and the total sample. The difference in each case was one variation in the order of thematic relevance and 4 per cent maximum variance in relation to any one theme. The difference between the New Horizons and West Wyalong groups in order of thematic prominence was three themes, and the variation in magnitude a maximum of 8 percent in like-theme to like-theme comparison. The variation, however, between the Remote Health Worker Choir and the total was significant. The RHWC/total cohort comparison reveals that none of the themes holds the same ranking, there is a variance of up to 11 per cent in like to like thematic comparison, and only two themes (Recreation and Support) inhabit equivalent, sequential positions. The chapter identifies a likely explanation for this anomaly however, citing the specific and declared aims of the RHWC’s overarching organisation as the promotion of resilience and mental health. Neither of the other two cohorts declared a specific interventionist or sociocultural aim or agenda in addition to the cross-cohort objective of practical community music education activities.

Having addressed the first of the two principal research questions from the perspective of the group music program participants, with the focus on what aspects of social and cultural development result directly from community group music programs, the following chapter presents the data elicited from respective case study community leaders. As an overlay to the participant data presented above, leader perspective will serve to complete the environmental overview in relation to the first research question and broaden the credibility of the findings.
Chapter 4: Leaders’ perspectives

Introduction
The previous chapter investigated and discussed community music activity as perceived and experienced by active community music group members, utilising data from the study’s 40 completed participant questionnaires. As the formal data gathering instrument, comprising 23 Likert scale statements and seven free-answer questions, the questionnaire produced response data that addressed the first of the two principal research questions: What aspects of social and cultural development result directly from community group music programs?, and informed the consideration of why it is that participants engage in community music activity. The chapter commenced by identifying three leading community music participation values that emerged from the responses to the Likert scale section. These three values, presenting as central to the community music activity experience, are:

1. The development of musical ability,
2. Social engagement, and
3. Well-being.

The free-answer section of the questionnaire, eliciting a larger and more nuanced body of participant perception and expectation, led the analysis to an expansion of the three values to the nine emergent themes of community music activity, listed below in increasing order of prominence:

1. Contribution to community,
2. Recreation,
3. Support,
4. Personal enjoyment,
5. The experience of group musicking,
6. Well-being,
7. Skill development and personal challenge,
8. Social engagement, and
9. Musical or artistic motivation and achievement.
This chapter follows the group member focus of the preceding one by exploring and discussing the consistencies, comparisons and contrasts between the community music group member themes investigated in the last chapter, and the perceptions, experiences and observations of the other major stakeholder group in the community music environment, those of the leaders. In total, twenty-four leaders contributed to the data for this chapter.

In the context of this thesis, the term leader refers to an individual who has an identified and decisive role or responsibility for guiding, facilitating, teaching and/or enabling a group music activity. Two significant considerations follow on from this definition. First, community music groups are formed and function with differing levels of formality around operational roles and responsibilities, including leadership and participation, allowing for a variety of group structures. The result of this variety is the potential for members of such organisations fulfilling dual roles as participant and leader, either temporarily or on an ongoing basis. This dual function membership applies to a small number of individual participants in this study (four), and consequently each of those individuals has contributed data as both group member and leader. Second, data collection included an autoethnographic component, due to the relevance of the author’s role, agency and experiences as a leader in six of the seven case study communities.

The chapter is set out in the following way: first, the case-study and community-specific function of each of the twenty-four leaders is identified, providing insights into the support structure of each group, the types of community conduits in place to provide secure articulation with the broader communities within each group operates, and the variety of contexts from which and in which community music activity generates and is purposed. Next, the data collection methods are detailed, a breakdown of depth of leader participation in the study is discussed, and this is followed by a discussion of the similarities and differences between the leaders and the group members, in relation to identified and perceived sociocultural benefits deriving from the community music activities with which they engage in their various roles. Alignments and disparities are discussed and trends are established. The chapter proceeds by identifying and discussing each theme that is identified by the leaders, with thematically coded quotes presented, and it concludes by observing that a third
research question has emerged as part of the analysis of the leaders’ data: Why do the identified sociocultural benefits result from the community music environments involved in the study? This question emerges as a de-facto category of testimonial and semi-structured interview data that reveals a layer of rationale and motivation that appears to underpin sustained leader involvement in the activities; leading the thesis into the next chapter’s investigation of context, support and environment.

The leaders
The twenty-four leaders involved with and impacting on the seven case study communities of the study are as follows:

1. Remote Health Worker Choir (RHWC)
   RHWC L1: Senior Clinical Psychologist for the remote area health worker support service and project manager, choir project

2. West Wyalong (WW)
   WW L1: Council Youth Development Officer

3. At Risk Youth (ARY)
   ARY L1: Program Coordinator, resilience and life skills program
   ARY L2: Sessional Tutor, resilience and life skills program

4. Ability Inclusive (AI)
   AI L1: Leading participant
   AI L2: Facilitating participant

5. Mental Health Community (MHC)
   MHC L1: Coordinator, Health Promotion Early Intervention Mental Health Drug and Alcohol service, rural and remote health districts
   MHC L2: Mental Health Promotion & Prevention Officer Mental Health Drug and Alcohol service, rural and remote health district
MHC L3: Occupational Therapist
   Mental Health Drug and Alcohol service, rural and remote health district
MHC L4: Diversional Therapist/Allied Mental Health Assistant
   Mental Health Drug and Alcohol service, rural and remote health district

6. Seniors’ Choir (SC)
   SC L1: Conductor/singing tutor, seniors choir
   SC L2: Conductor/singing tutor, aligned seniors choir
   SC L3: Conductor/singing tutor, aligned seniors choir
   SC L4: Head, overarching partner organisation
   SC L5: Conductor/singing tutor, aligned seniors choir

7. New Horizons adult learning community (NH)
   NH L1: Founder of New Horizons International Music Association
   NH L2: Director of Eastman Community Music School
   NH L3: Director of NH Beginning Band
   NH L4: NH mentor, Eastman School of Music (ESM) doctoral student
   NH L5: NH mentor, ESM doctoral student
   NH L6: NH saxophone mentor, ESM doctoral student
   NH L7: Conductor, local Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra
   NH L8: Medical Doctor, University of Rochester Medical Centre
   NH L9: Ex-conductor/tutor, New Horizons

The data presented in this chapter is sourced from a variety of semi-formal and informal data collection instruments. Data from four of the community music leaders was gathered using the ensemble and community leaders’ interview (Appendix 4), another four were interviewed using a combination of the leaders’ and ensemble members’ interview questions (Appendix 3), due to their dual roles of participants and leaders, while the remainder was gathered using unsolicited testimonials and third-party documentation including the Music for life US Public Broadcasting TV documentary (Dooley 2014) and the About viva voices YouTube documentary (Muisca Viva 2011a).
The leaders’ interview was semi-structured and based on the following open questions:

- What, if any, changes have you perceived in the members’ pride and self-esteem through participation in the ensemble?,
- What, if any, changes have you perceived in the community’s pride in, and esteem of, the participants?,
- Has there been a change in community pride and sense of identity, which you would attribute to the existence of the ensemble program?,
- Has there been any change in social/antisocial behaviour within the community, attributable to the ensemble program?,
- Has there been any change to attendance levels at school, work etc?, and
- In what way has community perception of the place and importance of music changed as a result of the existence of the ensemble program?

In the case of the four leaders also involved in case-study community groups as participants, the following questions from the participant’s interview were added:

- Why do you belong to the ensemble?,
- What is the nature and purpose of the ensemble?,
- What do you get out of the ensemble experience?,
- Is it what you expected?,
- What are 3 good things about the ensemble?, and
- What 3 things would you like to change?

While there is some thematic commonality linking participant and leader perspectives, there are also disconnects between the two data sets that indicate differing priorities and differently weighted personal meaning. Three of the nine themes are identified similarly by both groups: Well-being, Social engagement and Support. Some are interpreted and defined differently by the leaders: creativity, lifelong learning and intergenerational engagement, and identity and empowerment emerge as thematic categories from the leaders data, while still articulating clearly with the participant
generated themes of Musical or artistic motivation and achievement, Skill development and personal challenge, and Well-being respectively. The remaining three of the nine themes are not picked up on by the leaders at all.

Table 11 illustrates the thematic articulation of the community music group member and leader perspectives. Due to the disparity in thematic prominence, and the mixture of similar and differing identifiers across the two perspectives, the columns show articulation and relationship only, with neither list in order of increasing or decreasing frequency. The next section of the chapter discusses the leaders’ data in order of increasing thematic prominence and identifies the similarities and differences between it and that of the participants, as presented in the previous chapter. It is worth noting that the final and most prominent theme distilled from the leaders’ data, that of Well-being, carries the thesis forward to the focus of the next chapter, which is the environmental context of successful community music activity. Well-being features across all three data analysis elements of the study as the fourth most prominent of the nine themes articulated by participants (focus of the previous chapter), the most prominent of the leader-identified themes (focus of this chapter), and the most prominent of the six environmental considerations - dimensions of successful community music - as identified by the collective sample and discussed as the focus of the next chapter.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group member perspective (Chapter 3)</th>
<th>Leader perspective (Chapter 4)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Well-being</td>
<td>Well-being</td>
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<tr>
<td>Musical/artistic motivation &amp; achievement</td>
<td>Identity &amp; empowerment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social engagement</td>
<td>Creativity</td>
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<td>Skill development &amp; personal challenge</td>
<td>Social engagement &amp; equality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Lifelong learning &amp; intergenerational engagement</td>
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<td>Recreation</td>
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<td>Community contribution</td>
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<td>Personal enjoyment</td>
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<td>The experience of group musicking</td>
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Table 11: Thematic articulation of community music group member and leader perspectives.
Three inconsistent themes

The thematic categories that emerge from the leaders’ data (Table 11), are listed below in order of increasing prominence:

1. Creativity,
2. Support,
3. Lifelong learning and intergenerational engagement,
4. Social engagement and equality,
5. Identity and empowerment, and

Having introduced the conceptual reality of similarities and differences between leader- and group member- generated perspective, and reconciled the two lists of thematic categorisation, it is necessary to consider three separate statements, made by three different leaders, that are inconsistent with the thematic categories listed above and discussed below.

Each one defies integration into any of the nine themes of community music activity established in the previous chapter, and although two of the comments have a similar focus, they do not constitute the creation of another theme, but rather serve as noteworthy anomalies to the overall categorisation of total cohort data. The two unified-focus comments came from the two leaders of the at-risk youth community, and were offered as a postlude to the interview session in reflection on the value of facilitated informal group music participation for their cohort of at-risk youth. Those comments are:

- incidental and accidental learning (ARY L1), and
- informal, sequential and situational learning is what music provides (ARY L2)

The third of the three stand-alone statements came from a project leader in the mental health community case study and alludes to the importance of involvement and
guidance by professionals in the community music environment. While presenting outside of the thematic data categories from the leaders data set, and moreover, not rating a single mention in the participant data from the questionnaire (see the previous chapter), this comment presents as a precursor to the discussion of leadership, one of the six dimensions of successful community music, identified and interrogated in the chapter immediately following this one. The comment came in the form of a preamble to the response given to the question: *What three things would you like to change?*

- I think one of the important things is the connection with the professional, you know, that art is good, and it’s useful when it’s good you know, and we’re not doing anyone any favours to set them up to look shithouse, so, that professional involvement, that professional partnership is really critical (MHC L1).

The leader then goes on to say that limited resources make the sustainability of such involvement a challenge. It is the limitation that MHC L1 would like to see change. While the benefit of such involvement could be construed as a type of support for the program or activity, in analysing the data, it was determined that this comment does not fit within that theme. The logistical, organisational, and/or artistic expertise that professional leadership provides represents an external factor, and is inconsistent with the thematic parameters defining support in this thesis. Support as a theme in this study refers to the individual’s identification of encouragement, allowances made and understanding demonstrated by friends, colleagues and family in relation to their participation in, and the demands of, the group music activity. Leadership is not identified in this chapter as a thematic category, given its singular appearance in the leaders’ perspective data. It is herein instead treated as an anomalous precursor to Chapter Five, in which the environmental context that successful community music activity inhabits is investigated and discussed.

A key rationale for the inclusion of the leaders’ perspective in the thesis is the observational lens; that of the facilitator, supporter and advocate, for whom part of the role is to continuously assess, formally or informally, the progress and operation of the group or activity. *Leader* is defined in this chapter’s introduction as: *an individual who has an identified and decisive role or responsibility for guiding, facilitating,*
teaching and/or enabling a group music activity, and with that role or responsibility comes a valuable position of awareness and comparative objectivity (notwithstanding the previously mentioned examples of four leaders who also participate as community music group members) that contributes to the discussion for both of the principal research questions: (1) What aspects of social and cultural development result directly from community group music programs?, and (2) How are the sociocultural benefits that are identified as resulting from participation in community music activity best effected?. In addition to those two discussions, however, the analysis of leaders’ data also reveals a connective element, a third consideration in the equation. Unlike the group member data discussed in the Chapter Three, the leaders’ data suggests a secondary level of reflection on sociocultural development, one that informs the space between the what of the first principal research question, and the how of the second question. This deeper reflection provides an intermediate step of why the identified themes of social and cultural development are important, and prepares the way for the next chapter’s consideration of how a facilitative and supportive environment, one that provides for the flourishing of those thematic aspects, can be achieved.

Data is presented below in the form of quotes from community music leaders. The leaders’ lens, a variable composite of observation, assessment and facilitation, and the comments that evidence such overarching perspective, results in quotes that are layered and evidence a depth of opinion. To varying degrees, the comments reveal elements of the leaders’ rationale for their own involvement. Quotes are listed in a similar format to those of the previous chapter, in that they are grouped as they relate to the thematic headings. Many, though not all, of the quotes are significantly longer that those of the previous chapter. This variability of length is due to the variety of communication styles and the depth, complexity and nature of the leaders’ involvement across each of their communities and the sample as a whole. The study’s community music leader cohort comprises individuals with a range of levels of operational engagement and function within and around the activities and their group memberships. The cohort includes individuals whose orientations include musical, artistic, educational, bureaucratic, administrative and health leadership, and in some cases a combination of those capacities. Individual communication and expression style also dictates that some comments are more explicit than others and some more abstract, philosophical or conceptual.
The following statements are examples of the multi-dimensional leader responses. Such responses offer a point of progression from the participant observations of what aspects of sociocultural development result from group music activity - constituting the focus of the previous chapter, to how the environment is created and/or maintained – the focus of the next chapter, by introducing the element of perceived underlying factors - the why:

- somebody engaged in a creative activity… it can be quite spiritual and it can be quite powerful for them in terms of a range of developments (MHC L1, creativity)
- when you see a kid jump up and go - hang on, you’re playing that chord wrong and jumps up and shows him or her how to do it. By the end of the (semester – long) program we see that all the time. He’s gone from a … non-participating aggravator to somebody who by the end of the other (music) session, was actually participating, playing and listening. Music teaches kids to listen. You can gain a lot from music and the other activities but specifically, they wouldn’t know how to listen to other people. If they don’t listen while playing music, if they don’t listen then they will get out, out of whack, or they will miss out. They miss that immediate satisfaction; they get immediate dissatisfaction. These kids from all different parts of the school who have never had much to do with each other, and here they are working together to create something that is theirs (ARY L2, Support)
- there is a closeness about the group. They look out for each other – if someone hasn’t shown up, they check. When someone passes away, they leave a chair at the next rehearsal or concert out of respect. There is camaraderie; ownership and team spirit (SC L3, Support)
- performing in elementary schools, for elementary children and also with elementary children. Of course they love each other. You can be sure that the Grandmas and the Grandpas are going to love those kids. And the kids love being with the grandmas and grandpas also (NH L1, lifelong learning and intergenerational engagement)
• I think New Horizons is maybe one of the best examples of how you can incorporate socialization into a program. Because what is the goal of developing musical expertise as a performer when your age 70 or 60? Well part of it is that it's a skill that you want to develop or to enhance. But it's also a way of meeting people (NH L8, Social engagement and equality)

• get lost in their music and in their singing. It ticks all boxes in terms of how do you build resilience in people (RHWC L1, Well-being)

• it’s like in the past 2 years fairy dust has been sprinkled on the town with so much happening on the street, and busking was one of those things... the general environment is just better, and the kids are really feeling that as well (WW L1, Well-being).

Leaders’ theme 1: Creativity
The first of the thematic categories to emerge from the leaders’ data is creativity. Although it does not present as one of the nine discrete themes of sociocultural development identified through the participant data, creativity articulates with two of those themes, as illustrated in Table 11: Theme 6, Well-being, and 9. Musical or artistic motivation and achievement. Both of these themes rate as significant in the participant data, at 12.3 per cent and 20.3 per cent respectively. Creativity is specifically referred to by four community music group leaders, each identifying it clearly in a focused comment. For this reason it is identified separately in the context of this chapter, albeit as the least prominent of the individually identified categories of leader commentary. It is not inconsistent with the nine themes established through analysis of the participants’ data, and there is no suggestion that its identification requires the establishment of a separate theme. The creativity-focused comments come from four leaders and represent three of the seven case-study communities, mental health (MHC), at-risk youth (ARY) and the arts-inclusive cohort that comprises eight musicians living with a permanent disability and five from the general community (AI). As a discrete grouping of leaders’ comments, the creativity-focus represents 3 per cent of the total leader-perspective data. The four comments that constitute this grouping are:
it’s problem solving, and it is self-management… a lot of these kids don’t get the chance to be creative, really, like... we were doing the other day (collaboratively writing a song). For me, that was an amazing experience and I’m sure it was for the kids too (ARY L2)

the creative process has happened, we had no brief when we got here, we’ve now got 12 pieces. A bit of everything (Al L1)

somebody engaged in a creative activity… it can be quite spiritual and it can be quite powerful for them in terms of a range of developments (MHC L1)

(it) facilitates personal creativity in a safe environment (MHC L2).

Leaders’ theme 2: Support
As outlined above, Support in the context of this thesis is defined as consideration of and care for others within, or entering, a community. It exists in a social environment that comprises family, friends, colleagues, acquaintances, associates or others. Support, along with Well-being and Social engagement, is one of three themes that directly articulate the participant and leader perspective, and one of two (Support and Well-being) that extends that articulation to the subject of the next chapter, the six dimensions of successful community music activity. In this way it connects the discussions that address each of the principal research questions:

1. What aspects of social and cultural development result directly from community group music programs?, and
2. How are the sociocultural benefits that are identified as resulting from participation in community music activity best effected?

As one of two themes that is consistently and overtly identifiable across perspectives, Support rates at a similarly low level of response frequency in the contexts of what group members and leaders observe, at 5 and 5.9 per cent respectively, and at the higher rate of 11 per cent in the total sample’s identification of what is important in providing for a successful community music environment (Chapter Five). The eight comments quoted below, constituting 5.9 per cent of the leaders’ data, come from five of the seven case-study communities: MHC, WW, AI, SC, and ARY.
• where they’re probably braver in a sense, by doing it outside of school, it gives them the capacity probably, um, to extend themselves a little bit more, give them another social group to be involved in and to be celebrated by the wider community through their busking (WW L1)

• when you see a kid jump up and go – hang on, you’re playing that chord wrong, and jumps up and shows him or her how to do it. By the end of the program we see that all the time. He’s gone from a … non-participating aggravator to somebody who by the end of the other music session, was actually participating, playing and listening. Music teaches kids to listen. You can gain a lot from music and the other activities but specifically, they wouldn’t know how to listen to other people. If they don’t listen while playing music, if they don’t listen then they will get out, out of whack, or they will miss out. They miss that immediate satisfaction; they get immediate dissatisfaction. These kids from all different parts of the school who have never had much to do with each other, and here they are working together to create something that is theirs (ARY L2)

• in terms of risk taking, feeling safe. They were all engaged (ARY L2)

• I think there are other situations, that, I’ve seen around the group that, you know, some of the supportive stuff with the other participants around, um, encouraging one of the participants not to smoke so much, and that was actually, I don’t know if it’s about smoking, I think it’s probably more about being on task, and um, being able to lengthen the time she could go without having to get up and walk outside, I think that’s very interesting, ‘cause that was sort of developing a group, ah, support mechanism (MHC L1)

• and if you go to a rehearsal and there are a few people away for whatever reason, it’ll be like, oh, where’s the rest of us… where’s the rest of the gang… so there’s very much a sense of identity, or we are a group, and we have a purpose, and we have rehearsal every Friday, and why weren’t you here, and if somebody doesn’t turn up for a few
rehearsals it’s like *oo are they OK? And maybe we should check on them*… (MHC 2)

- when I walked in today, I actually felt quite, that sense of community was just… hit me as I walked through the door … you know I just went, oh it’s so good to be back… (MHC L3)
- there is a closeness about the group. They look out for each other – if someone hasn’t shown up, they check. When someone passes away, they leave a chair at the next rehearsal or concert out of respect. There is camaraderie; ownership and team spirit (SC L3).

**Leaders’ theme 3: Lifelong learning and intergenerational engagement**

This heading encapsulates the age-orientated comments raised by leaders, in considering and observing the impacts on and of older participants, senior learners, lifelong learning and cross-generational learning environments. Of the nine themes of sociocultural benefit, this group of comments aligns with Support and Skill development and personal challenge. It also has a degree of commonality with two other leader-generated foci, being identity and empowerment and Well-being. Notwithstanding these declared areas of commonality, lifelong learning and intergenerational engagement receives its own independent discussion in this chapter because the leaders’ data identifies age-related considerations as significant factors in themselves, constituting specific elements of benefit to participants, their families and community. All of the thirteen constituent comments come from leaders involved with the study’s two seniors-specific communities – the Seniors’ Choir and the New Horizons adult learning community. The (North American) NH community comments are more numerous in this category than those from the Australian SC, with a ratio of ten to three, and the number of NH leaders contributing to the data is nine compared to seven from the SC community. Noteworthy is the similarity between the Australian and North American feedback, with the tenor, type and quality of references consistent across the two cohorts. However, within the group of age-related comments there is a sub-categorisation into areas of specific focus, and the sub-categorisation does quarantine the senior choir comments into one area. This is not, in the overall context of the data set and its analysis, a significant factor in determining the findings of the study or implications for successful community practice. Leaders’ data as it relates to
lifelong learning and intergenerational engagement comprises thirteen comments that fall into six subthemes. The six subthemes are:

1. the power and value of cross-generational participation in building community cohesion (one comment),
2. the mutual benefit to individual age-groups of sharing and exchanging skills and perspectives, particularly the technical skills of younger musicians and life-experience of the older (one comment),
3. the social and emotional capacity of older people (one comment),
4. non-musical intergenerational connection (two comments),
5. young people’s re-evaluation of older people’s place and value in society (three comments), and
6. the unique freedom of older people to pursue their desired interests, unencumbered by impediments such as work, social expectations and immediate family responsibilities (five comments).

The comments, listed under the subcategories identified above, are:

The power and value of cross-generational participation in building community cohesion:

- in the case of New Horizons as people have learned a new skill and not only have they learned it and enjoyed it and have some socialization with their peers, but now they’re able to actually engage younger people in a meaningful activity where they are contributing something to that younger person, that’s incredible, what that does for a society is just incredible (NH L8)

The mutual benefit to individual age-groups of sharing and exchanging skills and perspectives, particularly the technical skills of younger musicians and life-experience of the older:
it’s naturally very good for the players in New Horizons Bands to get young blood coming in helping them showing them the way round technical things, maybe a better fingering. A better way to use your mouth and tongue and so on. But it’s also very good for those students, I mean we all loved our Grandparents and to be able to do something for someone elderly while your early 20’s, should be, I mean anyone with any generosity of spirit at all, will not only do it out of generosity, but will get a real kick out doing it. And so both sides benefit that’s a very good thing (NH L7)

The social and emotional capacity of older people:

- to be honest I feel like being a musician you never stop learning. So in a way, you’re always a student to the music. So even in the sense of arriving at New Horizons and being somewhat of a leader and providing that, that leadership to help other people who want to pick your brain about your instrument. I, myself was also learning in the process of talking to a different generation from me. (NH L4)

Non-musical intergenerational connection:

- performing in elementary schools, for elementary children and also with elementary children. Of course they love each other. You can be sure that the Grandmas and the Grandpas are going to love those kids. And the kids love being with the grandmas and grandpas also. (NH L1)
- I think it enriches the community. It makes it tighter. It makes it come together because at the concerts you won’t only see friends of the orchestra members. You will see grandchildren. You will see the grandchildren’s friends. You will see the friends of the parents. It brings together everybody (NH L5)

Young people’s re-evaluation of older people’s place and value in society:

- there were lots of grandparents and parents [of my other students]. They were blown away – some were in tears. Seeing people sing their hearts out. The kids really respected that too – they were witnessing people do
something really hard – it’s not easy getting up and singing in front of people. The generational angle was a bit of a breakthrough (SC L2)

- a lady brought her teenage grandkids [to the end of year concert]. One was almost in tears. She was proud of her grandmother. She saw her differently – not just old and decrepit! (SC L3)

The unique freedom of older people to pursue their desired interests, unencumbered by impediments such as work, social expectations and immediate family responsibilities:

- they’re doing it for their own reasons and they like to practice a whole lot. Retired people value this opportunity very much. And they give their all to it (NH L1)
- the big message from this is that music is something you can enjoy for a lifetime. There they are. There are the people who now are at a point in their life when they can do whatever they want to do with their time. They’re playing music. That’s the strongest message (NH L1)
- retirement is supposed to be fun; it should be fun… so I think people love to continue to learn but they know it’s not a career choice so that pressure is not on them (NH L3)
- this is the time to do everything else you weren’t able to do because you had other responsibilities… and with retirement that’s another opportunity to just open a new door (NH L5)
- working with them (seniors), they… might not necessarily respond or reach a plane, a higher plane and level in lessons, but there’s no… negative energy during rehearsals, so as far music making combined with … working with, the enthusiasm is what I like the most, they’re my favourite people to work with, of all my students, that’s what I’ve found is really interesting… (NH L6).

**Leaders’ theme 4: Social engagement and equality**

The second of three directly articulated themes is Social engagement, albeit, in the context of the leaders’ perspective, with an overt weighting towards social equality. In the previous chapter, in which the discussion focuses on group members’ perceptions of the benefits of group music activity, Social engagement is identified as a prominent
aspect of sociocultural benefit experienced or anticipated from involvement in group community music activity, without deeper consideration of why that is or may be, or what the contributing or resultant factors are. This chapter considers and interrogates the leaders’ perspectives on the community music element of Social engagement and identifies the function that such engagement has in establishing equality within that environment, disrupting social constructs that may exist outside of the community music group environment. The consideration of that disruption highlights the theme’s contiguous thematic border with Well-being and identifies the shared territory it maintains with identity and empowerment, another of this chapter’s focal points of leader commentary. The comparative significance of Social engagement across the lenses of participant experience and leader observation is as follows: the participant cohort perceives Social engagement as the second most prominent of the (nine themed) aspects of their experience and/or expectation, at 19.5 per cent of their total thematically-coded data, and the leaders observe it as the third highest (of six identified) aspects, at 20.7 per cent of their coded responses. Although expressed differently, constituent elements of this theme as presented in the next chapter, that which deals with the whole-of-sample data identification of the six dimensions of successful community music activity, feature as significant in that context also. Those elements present in the next chapter as the dimensions of hospitality, rated at 4.5 per cent, and membership, which rates at 20.5 per cent. The combined data proportion of those two dimensions, articulating clearly with the theme of Social engagement, would exceed that of the most prominent single dimension of Well-being, which rates at 24.8 per cent.

The leaders’ theme of Social engagement and equality is constituted by 26 comments. These comments are grouped in five subthemes. The comments emerge from six of the seven case study communities, with one each from RHWC, AI and ARY communities, two from SC, six from the NH leaders and fifteen from the MHC. The subthemes, listed from fewest to greatest constituent comments, are:

1. Leader training (one comment),
2. Empathy (one comment),
3. Capacity to engage and interact (two comments),
4. Level playing field: diversity and the mainstream (ten comments), and
5. Community socialisation (twelve comments).

The comments are:

Leader training:
- I think communicating with 30-40 adults from all different avenues who are trying to play the same piece is probably the best possible training I could ask for (NH L5).

Empathy
- one of the most powerful ways of breaking down those attitudes and, and, influencing how people think and behave in the general world is, is by, actually developing some empathy and some understanding about people’s mental illness (MHC L1).

Capacity to engage and interact
- if you were going to say 6 of us will be singing in the botanic gardens they’d freak, but if it’s, you know, 15 or 20 of us, it’s like, oh that’s OK. I can handle that. So I think it does impact on their singing capacity, but on their overall capacity, it’s a really lovely thing to do. In fact, I’ll never forget seeing (inpatient), someone you would never get saying boo, walking around with a tray of sandwiches handing them around… and you think - that’s amazing, quite amazing (MHC L2)
- it might be a little thing in your life and my life, but if we go, let’s say to the botanic gardens or whatever, they’ll talk about that for weeks, they’ll talk about that for weeks and how lovely the gardens were and how nice the food was, and what about that brass ensemble and whatever, they’ll talk about it for a long time, and that I think is how we’ve won over some of the more rigid clinical staff, they’ve heard that feedback. Because they can physically see that it’s good for them. This person has a smile on their face, and they’re talking
and is engaging and is chatting about what they’ve achieved. You know they may not have said two words earlier... (MHC L2).

Level playing field: diversity and the mainstream
- we are all on the same level. Yes we have to discipline sometimes and manage their behaviour, but I think with the music and instruments and everything it helps enormously because it’s situational, and because it experiential and because we facilitate the learning we are not putting restrictions on them (ARY L2)
- there’s been no disability here, just ability. We felt forced together initially. Like you’re disabled people and able people, you’re not, you’re here to facilitate. Like no, we’re just here to make music together. Level playing field (AI L2)
- if you open your mouth and make a noise, that’s good singing, not everyone has to be Dame Joan Sutherland, and I think it's a great leveller, you know in the choir you can have someone in there who is doing their PhD sitting there next to somebody who didn't even finish year 8 in high school, it’s a great leveller (MHC L2)
- you’ve got everything from people out in the community leading a normal life, they’ve got husband’s wives, kids whatever, and they’re accessing mental health services on an infrequent basis, through to people really can’t live anywhere else but here, and need constant care, um, and there would be an argument that those who’ve been here the longest, the (long-term resident patients) etc, perhaps could have lived in the community better, had we know what we know now, um, 20 years ago. So it really is the whole gamut. Sometimes I sit in the back of the choir and go.. my God, we’re quite a diverse little bunch here… (MHC L2)
- very much about reducing stigma (MHC L2)
- these are people who if you like have been outsiders, have been marginalised for a whole range of reasons…so we’re trying, for want of a better word, to mainstream them, and we’re getting there, we’re actually getting there (MHC L2)
it's a real integration exercise as well, they’re very much about reducing stigma, so not only are people in the choir who are inpatients, we have people in the choir who are community patients, people that’ve got nothing to do with MH whatsoever, we’ve got people who are staff, that whole integration process has been quite important and we couldn’t have achieved that in quite that way with anything else I don't think (MHC L2)

I think our other function is a level playing field, you know (MHC L3)

it puts us on a level playing field… we are no better than anyone else that’s there, we are all equal (MHC L4)

we are all equal, um, but it’s a great socialisation, it's a fabulous socialisation, for everybody. Um, and that cannot be underplayed, particularly… for clients that are inside the hospital at the present moment (MHC L4).

Community socialisation

they can engage with the community (RHWC L1)

when you walk in, the first thing, there is just this hum of chatter amongst them. I sit there for about 3 minutes just absorbing the community feeling amongst them all. It’s so lovely (SC L1)

social isolation for seniors is a very real and pressing issue (SC L4)

socialization is an important part of New Horizons music for some people maybe it’s the most important part (NH L1)

the social component of it is very important (NH L2)

some people come here I think as a social thing, you know, they play an instrument and they just do this and … look forward to the coffee breaks (NH L6)

I think New Horizons is maybe one of the best examples of how you can incorporate socialization into a program. Because what is the goal of developing musical expertise as a performer when your age 70 or 60? Well part of it is that it’s a skill that you want to develop or to enhance. But it's also a way of meeting people (NH L8)
• you have a built in agenda to discuss and develop mutual interests, so almost all the successful activities that I've been involved in, in aging, if they haven't had a socialization component, they just won't make it (NH L8)

• it’s actually a normal session, that normal people do, and normal people like going and singing in groups, and normal people like, and so it’s more... building somebody’s experience and confidence, with interacting, um, and challenging and stretching themselves and all of that, but particularly in a social type environment where people are learning skills, about, you know, just basic living skills and interaction and communication and those sorts of things, (belonging) whereas, I’m not sure, and maybe it’s because those sorts of things aren’t necessarily valued, I don't know, I don't know enough about art therapy... I’m not an expert on it, but I guess I’m seeing it as more that social connection than straightforward - we’re going to do an art therapy session and this will build somebody’s skills and ... I guess art therapy, a lot of that would be self-analysis and all of that, so you’re going deep into things ... but also connecting... connecting to, if you like, a community that, if you’re in a choir, if you’re singing in a group, there are a whole lot of things that come up, and it doesn’t matter if it's singing or if it’s a theatre group or if it’s something else, the sorts of things that I think are important that can happen is you can develop a sense of ... individual things about pride, about social skills, all of those sorts of things, but also a responsibility, that’s about being there on time, that’s about, participating in the group, that’s not letting the group down. If there’s going to be a performance, I need to be there I need to rehearse to get there. So in many ways it’s got a lot of skill development that’s, that’s under the surface, you know... (MHC L1)

• social inclusion, opportunity to get together and have social activities that are outside ‘ward’ activities (MHC L2)

• it’s also about a sense of togetherness with my clients, bringing me to the same level as my clients, doing something in partnership, um,
and… a lot of the time, I equate myself with being a client, so it makes sense (MHC L4)

- it’s a fabulous socialisation, for everybody (MHC L4).

**Leaders’ theme 5: Identity and empowerment**

As indicated in Table 11, identity and empowerment is one of three of the leaders’ data foci that articulates with Well-being - as it emerges both as one of the community group member-generated nine themes of sociocultural development and, and as one of the six dimensions of successful community music discussed in Chapter Five. Well-being itself is identified as a discrete theme by the leaders (Table 11), however identity and empowerment and creativity are given their own focus also. As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, there is some thematic commonality linking participant and leader perspectives, but there are also disconnects between the two data sets that indicate differing priorities and differently weighted personal meaning. Three of the nine themes are identified similarly by both groups: Well-being, Social engagement and Support. Some are interpreted and defined differently by the leaders: creativity, lifelong learning and intergenerational engagement, and identity and empowerment emerge as thematic categories from the leaders’ data, while still articulating clearly with the community music group member-generated themes of Musical or artistic motivation and achievement, Skill development and personal challenge, and Well-being respectively.

Leaders’ observations in relation to the transformative effects of community group music activity, specifically in relation to this study’s group members, identifies changes to group member community status, self-perception, individual and group confidence, capability and worth. The discussion of this sub-theme follows logically from that of Social engagement and equality, and Support before that, as the transformative process that results in the changes to identity and empowerment (and therefore, contributes to Well-being) as a function of successful Social engagement which in turn operates most effectively in a supportive environment. The thirty-one comments that constitute the leader-generated sub-theme of identity and empowerment represent a substantial 28.1 per cent of the total leader data, which is only 2.3 per cent smaller, three fewer qualifying comments, than the final and largest of the leader-focused (sub-)themes, Well-being. Aggregation with the other two leader-identified
foci that articulate with Well-being as both a theme of sociocultural benefit and a dimension of successful community music activity, creativity and Well-being itself (Table 11), results in a coded data subset of 61.5 per cent of leader data. This distillation of leader perspective points towards Well-being as the primary theme, benefit, and function of community music making. This implication is further tested and discussed in later chapters.

The twenty-nine comments that substantiate the leader-generated sub-theme of identity and empowerment arose from leaders of all the case-study cohorts in the following proportions:

- Seniors’ choir (SC) - one,
- New Horizons US adult music learning community (NH) - one,
- Arts Inclusive week-long residency comprising eight musicians living with a permanent disability and five from the general musician community (AI) - one,
- Remote Health Workers Choir (RHWC) - three,
- West Wyalong rural community (WW) - three,
- At Risk Youth (ARY) - nine, and
- Mental Health Community (MHC) - eleven.

The comments range in focus from rehabilitation and destigmatisation to transformation and increased confidence, social and other skill development, self-esteem and personal responsibility, self- and group- (including broader community) perception, ownership of process and benefits, self-determination, control and teamwork. That range of foci is represented by the following eight subthemes:

1. Emotion (one comment),
2. Rebalancing identity from unable to able (one comment),
3. Self-determination and personal control (two comments),
4. Self-view, transformation and transfer (three comments),
5. Recognition and self-value (four comments),
6. Capability (five comments),
7. Learning (five comments), and
8. Confidence, personal growth and development (eight comments).

The comments relating to the theme of Identity and empowerment are:

Emotion
- one of the biggest lessons for all of us is that, music, in the final analysis is an emotion and you don't have to be a professional to pick up on that emotion and you don't need to be a professional to create that emotion it can be done by all of us (NH L2).

Rebalancing identity from unable to able
- we made the agreement on day one, we are all musicians, this is about music, not disability (AI L2).

Self-determination and personal control
- made them feel like they had some control over their lives (RHWC L1)
- this is teaching people a skill they can take into their lives (RHWC L1).

Self-view, transformation and transfer
- music is a great way to bring the team work together not operating as individuals but operating as a team. The skills they are taught by their tutor is transferrable in the music group and also in other situations where they are exposed to different activities. These are activities they wouldn’t normally participate in due to socio-economic factors (ARY L1)
- skills that have been learnt are transferrable. Were able to structure that learning and build a frame work of learning and teaching and as they progress we can take that down and they are able to stand on their own two feet (ARY L2)
- you find by the end of the program, when it’s narrowed down, the music component is only one hour a week and I think that has had a quite significant impact on the way they see themselves, and how they
see themselves interacting as individuals with their peers and adults. Socially, out in the big wide world. So their skills are transferrable. They don’t think they can’t do it. They know if they have a go they might surprise themselves and everybody else and maybe there is a possibility of succeeding (ARY L2).

Recognition and self-value

- part of a community, a new community, a singing community (RHWC L1)
- well there’s just recognition. Well its bringing music onto the street. The community wouldn't know that those kids could do anything - they just see them walking around, particularly the boys, in packs, or out the front of the cafes – they see a different side to those particular kids. So, and that’s very much magnified in a small community, the ones who hang around. (WW L1)
- if it's singing or if it’s a theatre group or if it’s something else, the sorts of things that I think are important that can happen is you can develop a sense of … individual things about pride, about social skills, all of those sorts of things, but also a responsibility, that’s about being there on time, that’s about, participating in the group, that’s not letting the group down (MHC L1)
- I think there are a lot of benefits… about staff and family seeing a different side of someone… We can see it in our staff here, if somebody’s interacting with someone and they’re violently, or not violently but seriously unwell.. and if they’re in an acute ward all the time they’re all seeing people who are acutely unwell, so they’re not actually in a position where they’re seeing somebody and they’re – sometimes they don't even get much chance to see um, some recoveries and I think it’s really good for staff to see that, and I think that’s one of the reasons a lot of the staff liked coming, ‘cause they could actually see some benefits and they could see some growth in people, and I think, talking to some of the parents at some of the
concerts we had, that was phenomenal, that was the same sort of thing; the pride that they had… (MHC L1).

Capability

- seeing that they are capable of doing so much more than they thought they were, whether that be limited, in their minds, being limited by their age or by their experience. It’s just a joy to see them achieve what they thought they couldn’t (SC L1)
- so everything they do that stretches them a little bit gives them the capacity that they can do more, so every experience increases their capacity a little bit more… and the interesting thing about the music is that it’s extending them (WW L1)
- you know in the early days it was very challenging for me too, because some of the, you know, not everyone was singing on key all the time, and I had to be really careful who I stood next to (laugh)… so it was very um yeah, on a musical level it was also stretching me and challenging me (MHC L1)
- the benefits for them in terms of doing an interesting activity that stretches them and that has benefits for them was huge (MHC L1)
- and I think certainly, definitely, from within the (hospital) community… it has really demonstrated that people that other people thought can’t do anything, can do amazing things (MHC L4).

Learning

- it’s about patterns, it’s about lyrics, it’s about language, it’s about, physical proximity… they see things instantly, the meaning is there, instantly, they don’t need to ask, why are we doing this? Meaningful learning… (ARY L2)
- it not only encourages and develops gross and fine motor skills, self-management, communication, analytical thinking (ARY L2)
- I think its ownership of the whole learning process. It’s not just sit down, this is what we are going to do and you are going to do as I say, and all this theory, waiting for something to happen. These kids want
to get their hands on it, they want to see the results now. I don’t know if that’s due to the various ADHD problems etc. or whether this digital age has had a huge impact on that. I’d say it’s a combination of both. Kids like to see things happen - so music is this instant. Yes, you need to practice You don’t get brilliant results or satisfactory results without actually putting in a bit of work. This is what kids need to know and learn. You just don’t slap a photo on Facebook and get an instant response and then hide behind your laptop. This is the real world. This is how things work in a band. You get an instant response but it’s also a collaborative, facilitated and encouraged learning process (ARY L2)

- but also, they learn, thinking ahead.. if I do this what will happen next. Music is about that as well (ARY L2)
- people are learning skills, about, you know, just basic living skills and interaction and communication and those sorts of things (MHC L1).

Confidence, personal growth and development

- increased confidence and getting used to having a go at something different. (changes observed in participants’ pride or self-esteem through participation in the music program) (ARY L1)
- willingness to have a go and try new things as most of these individuals come from a non-formal musical background. They try to use the instruments, try to sing and try to write a song. Over the period of the duration their willingness has increased (ARY L1)
- that’s one of the major things, it’s like we were talking about the confidence thing in talking, making jokes, ah, I think even the coming – there are some participants there that, would sometimes come and sometimes not. Um, I think some of them actually walk over here (from their wards)… which is a fair effort (MHC L1)
- it’s certainly rehabilitation in terms of that socialisation and destigmatising, and that ability to be someone other than the person with the mental illness (MHC L2)
it changes their identity, it puts another layer onto their identity and maybe they’re not seen as the naughty kid, or that so-and-so’s kid, yeah… (WW L1)

- I get a buzz when I see people grow and develop, and, I look at (residential mental health patient), she’s someone who – she’s transformed, she’s absolutely transformed (MHC L2)

- I don't know how … her mental illness is or whether it’s just a lot of trauma I think, but, um, she’s a person with um, she’s a star, isn’t she? so she’s got an identity, that’s attached, a role, role now, where she was just …the oddball, that talked about farts and whatever, but now she’s … a star member of the choir… and that goes with her…so that gives her a valued social role. So that growth in attention span’s phenomenal. that’s… 3,000 per cent isn’t it! …and make a comment on how she’s thought the choir performed it, where the songs are in the book, she remembers where they are, she knows what, she follows the words, she can point it out to other people sometimes… (MHC L3)

- when the choir started it was pretty hard to get us in time, and now we’re actually singing harmonies and rounds and… (MHC L2).

Leaders’ theme 6: Well-being

In keeping with the definition given in the previous chapter on participant perspective, Well-being is identified as ‘the presence of positive emotions and moods…the absence of negative emotions… satisfaction with life, fulfilment and positive functioning’ (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2013: np).

Well-being is the highest-ranking stand-alone theme emerging from the leaders’ data, with forty qualifying comments, representing 29.3 per cent of the total leader data. When combined with the comments relating to the leader-generated sub-themes of creativity, and identity and empowerment, both of which articulate with Well-being as indicated in table 11, it presents with 60.9 per cent of all leader-generated data. Well-being features as the fourth most prominent of the nine group member-identified themes discussed in Chapter Three, and the most prominent of the six dimensions of successful community music discussed in Chapter Five. Considered in this way, Well-
being emerges as the overarching meta-theme of the study. It presents both as a prominent aspect of perceived sociocultural benefit by case-study participants - group members and leaders - and as the most prominent consideration in the provision and maintenance of successful community music environments as articulated by the total sample (see Chapter Five).

The forty comments that relate directly to Well-being are contributed by leaders from six of the seven case-studies, with the AI case-study being the one exception. Notwithstanding the lack of qualifying comments from leaders of one case-study community, the number of Well-being focused comments reinforces that theme’s significance as an observable result of, as well as an experienced benefit from, community music activity. In four of the seven case study communities, Well-being is declared to be a conscious and deliberate organisational objective. Well-being presents as the focus of leaders’ comments in the following cohort proportions:

- At-risk youth (ARY) – two comments,
- West Wyalong rural community (WW) – four comments,
- Seniors’ Choir (SC) – four comments,
- New Horizons US adult music learning community (NH) – seven comments,
- Remote Health Workers Choir (RHWC) – seven comments, and
- Mental Health Community (MHC) – sixteen comments.

All of the comments categorised below relate to positive emotions and moods (some specify a transfer from negative to positive) or satisfaction with life, fulfilment and/or positive functioning. They are categorised by the following five subthemes:

1. Positive ageing (three comments),
2. Fun and relaxation (four comments),
3. Physical well-being (six comments),
4. Social well-being (eleven comments), and
5. Psychological and emotional well-being (sixteen comments).
The community music leaders’ comments are given below in order of increasing subthematic prominence:

Positive ageing

- working in a group for a goal and an activity, having the motor skills for playing music and also to have the memory skills putting that all together it's probably a perfect exercise (NH L8)
- for me it wasn't just some sort of a phenomenon of saying 'look at these old people, a few of these old people can do' but it was a serious effort to help people to age in a much more beneficial way and it’s been very successful from what I've seen of it (NH L8)
- it also taught them a very, very important self-care strategy in terms of how singing can contribute to their wellbeing (RHWC L1).

Fun and relaxation

- there are other people who really want to improve, (but) there are people that come who just want to play and not do anything else… to kind of relax and stuff (NH L6)
- when we talk about music we say we play music. That's the word we use in every language. "Spiel" in German, "Jouer" in French... We play music. We don't work music…. So however hard you try and however difficult it is and however much we all struggle... whatever our limitations, if it in the end isn't in the deepest sense of the word fun it's not worth doing (NH L7)
- my philosophy is if it’s stressful, don’t come. It needs to be fun and that's it. No stress, no pressure (NH L9)
- and selfishly, pretty nice to leave your office on a Friday afternoon and go and have a bit of a sing – I quite like that I find it very relaxing and I find that it’s got personal benefits for me as well (MHC L1).
Physical well-being

- we were very pleased that it did have some strong health outcomes and indeed people had better breathing, better flexibility, but what was more surprising, I guess, we were overwhelmed by the positive wellbeing that came out of it. (SC L4)

- it all affects the pathways of your brain, and it all, its all part of, um, part of positive things happening in your life when lots of these kids don't have a positive thing happening… (WW L1)

- I guess, particularly for older people, it’s really important to keep those muscles being used. Cause it really is a case of use it or lose it. If you keep using your muscles you can actually keep vocalising and singing until very late in life. It’s very important to look after it by warming it up and keeping those your muscles toned (SC L5)

- but everyone looks fantastic you know… people that used to turn up looking a bit dishevelled (MHC L3)

- somebody who might be having problems with articulation, or with breathing… singing is just so beneficial (MHC L4)

- somebody who might be aphasic, having trouble with their speech, can actually sing, quite often they can sing, they can’t talk but they may be able to sing, and I’ve had quite a few examples of that, so that is incredibly beneficial. Breathing! We have one particular client … who excels with her breathing when she’s singing and she’s sitting up straight with her chin up… posture, so there are all the additional, little benefits, besides the socialisation and the enjoyment and the, well not only the enjoyment but the sheer joy of being able to sing… (MHC L4).

Social well-being

- the program and particularly the Music element of the program exposed him to activities that he never thought he would participate in, he is now teaching other kids at the (new school) and has blossomed. I have been speaking to some of his peers and other people who are not related to the program or (school) and they are
already talking about how he is mentoring other children now, and using his experiences and what he has learnt to help other children with low self-esteem and other problems (ARY L2)

- none of them are recognised within that school structure, so this is something for them to step aside and feel proud of their being recognised (WW L1)
- a sense of recognition, a sense of value… they feel like it’s their turn, a little bit… to be in the spotlight (WW L1)
- it’s like in the past 2 years fairy dust has been sprinkled on the town with so much happening on the street, and busking was one of those things... the general environment is just better, and the kids are really feeling that as well (WW L1)
- it brought them back into the world where people are still functioning and living their lives (SC L2)
- I didn’t think it would have such an impact on people. But now, there is this energy on a Monday. It’s added an uplifting dimension; there is a different vibe. People are buzzing around; it makes it a more lively place to be (SC L3)
- members of that choir telling other health workers how valued they felt because of this project (RHWC L1)
- what I’m trying to do in my role is to influence clinical practice in a different way, so it’s also very useful for me to be interacting with staff and also with the clients, with people who have a mental illness and see the interaction between staff and them, as a way of getting a sense of where the opportunities are and where the challenges are.. (MHC L1)
- people can never be enemies once their making music together, and I think that’s absolutely true, in a whole lot of settings… educational setting or mental health setting, you introduce singing and the magic happens - and I’ve seen that happen with really disadvantaged kids (MHC L2)
- if we sing something that’s not so crash hot, (participant with multiple mental health issues including high-level psychosis) is the
first to say, oh, that was crap, but when we sing something well… there was this pregnant silence, and then (psychiatric nurse) goes, well that was pretty good wasn't it, and everyone goes well… I actually got that part, and you go well, you know, you get it, you understand we’re trying to achieve something here and you’re aware … (MHC L2)

- she’s gone from being someone who couldn’t sit still for three minutes, she couldn't sit through a song, she’d be out the door for a cigarette… we used to have to go and, very hard, drag people out, and .. fight the nurses just to get them here. But now she comes by herself, she often comes by herself, yeah. (MHC L3).

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- self-esteem can transform from low confidence to confidence and (the) ability to mentor (others) (ARY L2)

- music is for everyone… that it is important as a child, and that you can keep it for your whole life. Because what do they say? Music washes away the dirt of everyday life (NH L3)

- it's an inspiration. And anyone elderly who doesn't play music when they see elderly people doing their thing in the New Horizons band, they think "Hey, maybe I'm not so old. Maybe I'll do something." You know. "Maybe I'll do Skiing or..." I don't know what to take up in old age. You just get a sense that it ain't over when you're 70 or 80 or 90. That a marvellous thing, of course (NH L7)

- boosted self-esteem (RHWC L1)

- I’m a Psychologist and the sorts of changes I have observed because of people’s participation in (RHWC), as a Psychologist who does therapy, we can only dream about achieving those sorts of changes through talking therapies. This is living therapy, really (RHWC L1)

- this is teaching people a skill they can take into their lives; they can feel good about themselves (RHWC L1)

- get lost in their music and in their singing. It ticks all boxes in terms of how do you build resilience in people (RHWC L1)
yes, definitely. That I am worthwhile, and I’ve been given this gift and.. it’s amazing (RHWC L1)

to broaden… the mental health service model, around how we do our core business, that, we talk about rehabilitation, but … often, as you can imagine, a lot of these people probably sit around doing nothing, and don’t fill their hours much, and, you’re not going to get well that way (MHC L1)

and so I think that yeah there’s been some progression there, with sound and tone quality and such, and I mean, we’re never going to be absolutely fantastic, but that’s not the name of the game, the sound we make is almost secondary to why we’re there (MHC L2)

I think music in itself is a great rehabilitation activity, put it in the context of the group, then that adds another fantastic level, but it also promotes a really positive image of…what people with mental illness can achieve (MHC L3)

the physical nature of singing I think is really beneficial… you know your.. lady here had a few tears… I think that, music and singing can really tap into, different parts of people’s brains (MHC L3)

I think it’s just that whole thing about a non-medical, intervention being worthwhile, and I think we’re moved a long way, even in three years, and possibly the success of the choir has helped (MHC L3)

there’s a lot of, um, positive messages within those lyrics (MHC L3)

lyrics are incredibly strong (MHC Choir CD content) …All of those are benefits (MHC L4)

for me, belonging to the (MHC choir) is both … has social and cognitive value (MHC L4)

While presenting with varying emphases, in several cases as theme-constituent sub-categories, the six leaders’ themes overwhelmingly support the nine emergent themes of sociocultural benefit established in the previous chapter. Figure 10 illustrates the relationship of the leaders’ perspective to the group members’ perspective defined by the themes and sub-themes discussed thus far, with leaders’ perspective represented by six transparent overlays:
Conclusion

This chapter commenced by referring to three leading community music participation values that emerged from responses to the Likert scale section of the participant questionnaire; that questionnaire functioned as the principal data collection instrument for gauging the participant perspective discussed in the previous chapter. Those three values - The development of musical ability, Social engagement, and Well-being, provided a framework upon which the comprehensive structure of nine themes of sociocultural benefit is supported. With this chapter, the perspective of the case-study community music leaders is added to the two layers of leading community music participation values and themes of sociocultural benefit, creating a compelling composite view of priorities and perceptions of and for the broader community music membership. Figure 11 illustrates the three lenses offered thus far by the analysed data; the three leading community music participation values and the emergent themes and sub-themes identifying the participants’ and leaders’ perspectives:
The leaders’ data, sourced principally through a semi-formal interview instrument, was coded into themes and sub-themes using the same data coding matrix criteria (Appendix 7) that were applied to the group member data (detailed in Chapter Three):

- **a.** are there more than two occurrences of participant comment that have a clear commonality of meaning and intent,
- **b.** are those comments made by more than one participant, and
- **c.** are those comments more meaningfully grouped under a discrete thematic descriptor (meeting criteria **a.** and **b.**) than another identified theme.

Figure 11: The relationship of the three leading community music participation values to the emergent themes of leaders’ and participants’ perspectives.
In applying this process, three separate statements made by three different leaders emerged as inconsistent with the nine themes of community music activity. These anomalous statements are as follows:

- incidental and accidental learning (ARY-L1),
- Informal, sequential and situational learning is what music provides (ARY-L2), and
- I think one of the important things is the connection with the professional, you know, that art is good, and it’s useful when it’s good you know, and we’re not doing anyone any favours to set them up to look shithouse, so, that professional involvement, that professional partnership is really critical (MHC L1).

While none of the three statements refers specifically to the subject of leadership, they do so obliquely. The first two, contributed by the two At Risk Youth leaders, appear to provide commentary on the concept and benefits of informal learning. The statements, however, are proffered in the context of their case-study specific facilitated learning environment. The third comment is made within the organisational context of a mental health service in partnership with a professional music director. Given this contextualisation, it is clear that a common underpinning consideration is that of guidance, direction, and leadership - a consideration that is absent thus far from the emergent identified themes and the sub-themes. This common consideration that contextually underpins the three anomalous statements presents as a precursor to the discussion of leadership as one of the six dimensions of successful community music, identified and discussed in the next chapter.

The focus of this chapter was the examination of community music leaders’ perspectives on the sociocultural benefits to respective community music activity group members and their broader communities. Comparisons were between the leaders’ and group members’ perceptions, expectations and observations, presented and categorised, using and extending the thematic structure established in the previous chapter. The discussion of consistencies and contrasts between the two perspectives revealed that the majority of leaders’ data was consistent with emergent thematic
structure developed in the analysis of the group members’ data: Contribution to community; Recreation; Support; Personal enjoyment; The experience of group musicking; Well-being; Skill development and personal challenge; Social engagement; and Musical or artistic motivation and achievement.

From a total of 135 leader statements, three were determined to be inconsistent with the themes. Those three statements were neither sufficiently unified nor statistically significant enough to justify a separate theme, but provide a precursor to the next chapter, which discusses environmental context for successful community music activity. In saying that the leaders’ perspective was found to be consistent with the nine participant-derived themes, not all themes were identifiable in the leaders’ data, and in a number of cases emphases within the theme-related statements were quite different to those of the participants. As is shown in Table 11 and Figure 10, some of the categorised leader data, although identifiably linked to one or more of the nine themes, defined and presented in related sub-themes. Well-being and Support articulated directly across the two perspectives; Social engagement translated to the leaders’ perspective with the minor adjustment of an elevated recognition of the element of equality; Musical or artistic motivation and achievement was redefined in the sub-theme of creativity; and Skill development and personal challenge appeared within the leaders’ data in the sub-theme of lifelong learning and intergenerational engagement. Of the nine themes defined by the participant data, Contribution to community; Recreation; The experience of group musicking; and Personal enjoyment did not feature. The lack of overt identification of these four themes by the leaders is, however, consistent with a differentiated function and/or purpose of the community music leader over that of the group member. Elements such as a recreational atmosphere, personal enjoyment and the group musicking experience are likely to be contrived by the community music group leader as part of the organisational structure, activity and environment. This consideration of environment and context is investigated at length in the next chapter.

A further element of perspective offered by the leaders’ data that emerged and was explored in this chapter is an unanticipated secondary level of reflection on sociocultural development, presenting an intermediate, connective step between the what of the first principal research question and the how of the second. In responding
to the leaders’ interview questions and offering perspective via the other informal data collection instruments (including unsolicited testimonials and third-party documentation relevant to the specific case-study communities) leaders frequently included views and comments on why the identified themes of social and cultural development are important to them and their communities. By providing some insight into the leaders’ perceptions and understanding of why the identified aspects of sociocultural benefit are important to their cohorts and their group music activity, this section of the thesis prepares the way for the next chapter’s consideration of how a facilitative and supportive environment, one that provides for the flourishing of those thematic aspects, can be achieved. What is beneficial and why it is so necessarily leads to the consideration of what needs to be provided to ensure successful and engaging activity, how best to reliably achieve those benefits.

The previous chapter established nine emergent themes of sociocultural development, defined through the perspective of the community music group case-study participants. This chapter has tested and reinforced the validity of those themes through the investigation of the leaders’ perspective and discussion of the similarities and differences between the participants’ and leaders’ perspectives. It has indicated the levels of comparative importance of the different themes to the two stakeholder groups, with overwhelming evidence that of the themes, Well-being features as the most significant. The underlying element of why the themes are important has been introduced, and this connective element along with the emergent prominence of Well-being across both stakeholder groups positions the thesis well to progress to the next chapter, which presents the third and final set of data, and directly addresses the second principal research question: How are the sociocultural benefits that are identified as resulting from participation in community music activity best effected?

The chapter will do this by presenting the data, formulated as a set of six defining dimensions of successful community music activity. The six dimensions that are identified and discussed result from the analysis and coding of data collected from across the sample through a range of qualitative data collection instruments that include interviews, testimonials and third-party reports.
Chapter 5: Six dimensions of successful community music activity

Introduction
Chapter Two of this thesis gave an historical analysis of arts and culture policy in Australia at the federal and state levels, and examined the current policy environment across the New South Wales Local Government Areas (LGAs) that are relevant to the study’s case-study communities. That analysis, in turn, addressed the consideration of specific government policies that impact directly on community–based group music activity. The purpose of that chapter was to set the scene, providing the public landscape within which community music activity is positioned and operates. The examination of historical and current arts and cultural policy, and the assessment of how it sits within current Australian polity, concluded by observing that there is a lack of clarity across the different levels of Australian government as to the support given by them to community music activity. It highlighted a clear disconnect between individual tiers of government in their consideration of such activity, and a paucity of specific support mechanisms that translate generic policy statements into practice. Statements at each of the three levels of Australian government about expectations for community arts experiences do not translate into identifiable responsibility for community music activity in Australian polity. Following the examination of government policy and its support for community music activity, Chapters Three and Four focused on discrete perspectives of the two main community music group stakeholder groups - members and leaders - and the benefits, expectations and experiences articulated by them in relation to their participation in their community-specific engagement.

As the first of the thesis’ three main data presentation chapters, Chapter Three identified and discussed nine emergent themes of sociocultural benefit as described by group member data, sourced through the participant questionnaire. That questionnaire captured data from three of the seven case-study communities, with a sample of 40 community music group members. The nine themes that emerged from the coded data are: Contribution to community; Recreation; Support; Personal enjoyment; The experience of group musicking; Well-being; Skill development and personal challenge; Social engagement; and Musical or artistic motivation and achievement. These nine themes address, from the perspective of the community music group
members, the first of two principal research questions that underpin the study: What aspects of social and cultural development result directly from community group music programs?

Chapter Four, the second of the three main data presentation chapters, reflected on the nine themes through the perspectives of twenty-four community music leaders. Those leaders provided a total of 135 responses and statements in relation to their observations of the benefits of group music activity to group members and their communities. The analysis of the leaders’ data, sourced through semi-structured interviews and testimonials, resulted in the articulation of consistent thematic categorisation and sub-categorisation of the observed and perceived aspects of social and cultural benefit resulting from group music activity. Closely involved with the participating leaders was the author, a participant observer during the research, and this is reflected in the section on autoethography in Chapter One.

Chapters Three and Four:
- established the premise of the nine emergent themes of sociocultural development, as defined through the community music group case-study participant data, and
- reinforced the nine themes and provided insight as to their sociocultural importance through the observations and considerations of the community music leaders who are connected to the case-study communities.

Chapter Four reinforced and validated the themes that had emerged from the participant questionnaire data, while rebalancing some, reshaping others and varying the perceived importance of most through the leaders’ perspectives. Four of the nine themes: Recreation; Community contribution; Personal enjoyment; and The experience of group musicking; did not feature at all in the leaders’ perspectives. Importantly, however, the six themes and sub-themes that did emerge from the leaders’ data were compatible and reconcilable with the larger set of group member-generated themes. Of the 135 leaders’ responses and statements, only three did were anomalous to the six leaders’ themes and sub-themes. Two of these comments were
made by leaders from the At Risk Youth case study and related to music pedagogy, and third was made by a leader from the Mental Health Community. The latter comment related to the importance of leadership; specifically, partnership with a professional resource. While the two comments relating to pedagogy present as anomalous to the bulk of the study’s data, the comment relating to leadership directs that phase of the data analysis to the next, that which provides the focus of this chapter. Leadership emerges as one of the six dimensions, identified and discussed in this chapter, as essential provisions for a successful community music environment.

The articulation of group members’ and leaders’ perspectives of the benefits of group community music activity is shown in Table 11, in Chapter Four. Those identified benefits relate both to reasons for joining and leading group music programs - perceptions and expectations prior to membership - and the benefits reported by participants and leaders after or during involvement - personal, lived experience of membership and group operation. While the previous chapter did not examine or interrogate the personal or experiential factors behind participants’ perceptions or benefits, it did introduce the bridging element of why the identified aspects are important, providing a connection to this chapter’s exploration of sample-wide data. Through the identification of the six dimensions, this chapter provides the final element of the multi-dimensional premise that describes, and serves as a model or strategic framework for successful community music programs. For the purpose of this thesis, successful community music activity is defined as that from or within which participants perceive ongoing or cumulative personal benefit.

In this chapter, the third of the three main data presentation chapters, the thesis investigates a third analytical lens for community music study, the environmental context in which community music activity occurs. It formulates a set of defining dimensions, as requisite considerations for successful community music activity, through the analysis and coding of data collected from across the sample through a range of qualitative data collection instruments including interviews, testimonials and reports. The set of six dimensions responds to both tangible and intangible structural elements theorised by the researcher (Table 12), and operates to distil and categorise a variety of participant-identified considerations that include the unconditional welcome; facilities and physical resources; logistics and organisation; artistic and
organisational leadership; identity and status mobility; social expectations and perceptions; group identity; sense of belonging; trust and reliability; connection to place and orientation; and safeness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Six dimensions of successful community music activity</th>
<th>Elements</th>
<th>Tangible</th>
<th>Intangible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>unconditional welcome</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>facilities</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>physical resources</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>human resources</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>financial resources</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>security</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>logistics</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>encouragement – external</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>artistic</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>organisational</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pedagogical</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal expectations and self-view</td>
<td>sense of place</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>attitude</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>identity</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member-ship</td>
<td>encouragement – internal</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sense of place</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>attitude</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-being</td>
<td>sense of place</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>attitude</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>spirit</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>safety</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12: Six dimensions of successful community music activity with structural elements identified as tangible and/or intangible.

This chapter presents a progression from collating and categorising primary source data to suggesting and formulating an environment conducive to facilitating those themes and sustaining the experiences that nurture them. The two previous chapters substantially addressed the principal research question of What aspects of social and cultural development result directly from community group music programs?, and provided the connective element of why those aspects are important. This chapter investigates the project’s second principal research question: How are the aspects of sociocultural development that are identified as resulting from participation in community music activity best effected? Translating the themes and the raw data responses themselves into a definition of six dimensions of successful community music activity, each of the dimensions and their constituent considerations (subthemes) is explained, along with the purpose and rationale of organising the factors into six dimensions. In doing so, the comprehensive and connected coverage
provided by the dimensions is highlighted, showing them to encapsulate the critical precursors and facilitative environmental enablers that allow for the achievement of the sociocultural development outlined in chapters three and four. The achievement of the identified aspects of social and cultural benefit is best effected through a framework that provides or actively accommodates the coexistence of six interrelated dimensions of successful community music activity. These dimensions, comprising tangible and intangible factors, coalesce to formulate the physical, emotional and cultural space within which successful community music, that from or within which participants perceive ongoing or cumulative personal benefit, thrives. Such a space reliably supports, nurtures and facilitates community music activity.

Due to the extensive and complex nature of the data, this chapter is organised as follows: first, a brief explanation is given to differentiate two concepts that contribute to the premise of six the dimensions as an overarching, comprehensive and inclusive principle that reifies ecological capacity, environmental robustness and social traction for community music activity - the dimensions’ structural elements and the constituent dimensional considerations. Second, the dimensions are identified with a breakdown of the constituent dimensional considerations, and the dimensions are articulated, aligned and compared with the nine themes of sociocultural benefit that were established and discussed in the two previous chapters; suggesting meta-themes that intersect stakeholder perceived outcomes with contextual and environmental provisions. The third section of the chapter discusses the comparative prominence of each of the six dimensions, suggesting a hierarchy of significance, although not diminishing the validity of any of the dimensions. Next is a discussion of the small segment of raw data that was dismissed in the final analysis as anomalous to the coding of dimensions. This is followed by the presentation of the data, with each dimension defined, explored, and substantiated with quotes from the participants, and organized according to the constituent dimensional considerations (subthemes).

**Structural elements and constituent dimensional considerations**

These two terms are critical to an understanding of the premise of the dimensions of successful community music, and therefore require a paragraph at this point in the chapter for clarification and explanation. In essence, the structural elements are the principal underpinning components of the dimensions, theorised by the author during
analysis of the raw data. Each of the elements represents an organisational perspective suggested by the author's professional capacity as a community music leader and facilitator. While there are multiple structural elements underpinning the majority of the dimensions, dimension 1, Hospitality, is underpinned by one - the unconditional welcome. This concept borrows directly from Higgins in his description of a type of Hospitality that:

suggests unconditionality, a welcome without reservation, without previous calculation, and, in the context of community music, an unlimited display of reception toward a potential music participant.

(Higgins 2012: 139)

The constituent dimensional considerations, as distinct from the structural elements, are sub-themes emerging from the data. The constituent dimensional considerations consolidate thematically to form the six dimensions, and although there is some commonality in nomenclature between the structural elements and the constituent dimensional considerations, they represent thematic subsets, or codes of participant comments. Importantly, the structural elements are analytical constructs of the author while the constituent dimensional considerations, identified and labelled by the author, are emergent constructs of the data.

The dimensions
The six dimensions of successful community music activity are: Hospitality; Support; Leadership; Personal expectations and self-view; Membership; and Well-being. There is a small proportion (3.3 per cent) of the cross-sample data that did not qualify for inclusion in the six dimensions; these comments will be discussed in the data presentation section later in the chapter. The six dimensions are listed at the end of this section in order of increasing significance. In keeping with the data presentation format in the two previous chapters, significance is determined by number of qualifying comments attributable to each dimension. Although the sizes of the case-study cohorts differ significantly, the result of this method is consistent with that of averaging the proportionate significance of each dimension to each case. (Figure 13). Table 13 lists the dimensions of successful community music with their constituent subthemes.
### Six dimensions of successful community music activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subthemes/codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Hospitality</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• inclusivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• tolerance and care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• unconditional welcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <strong>Support</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• assistive connections to broader community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• emotional reassurance and encouragement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• facilities and physical resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• financial assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• logistics, organisation and governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• personal assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <strong>Leadership</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• artistic leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• empathy and benevolence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• organisational leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• pedagogical leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• public relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <strong>Personal expectations and self-view</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• artistic expectations and perceptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• identity and status mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• personal capacity and potential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• personal enjoyment and satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• social expectations and perceptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <strong>Membership</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• affinity and congeniality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• contribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• equality and mutual respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• group identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ownership and responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• sense of belonging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• shared objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• trust and reliability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. <strong>Well-being</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• activity and purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• confidence, self-esteem and social capability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• connection to place and orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• emotional and spiritual benefit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• physical and mental benefit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• positivity and resilience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• safeness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• transformation or transcendence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13: Six dimensions of successful community music activity with subthemes/codes.

The subthemes detailed above presented as the first layer of coding. Although they consolidate to present a comprehensive contextual umbrella of six, practical,
environmental dimensions, they retain a substructural relevance that provides rigour in analysing the subtleties at the layer of individual stakeholder awareness and agency. The term *participant* refers to any one of the total sample group, both community music group members and the ensemble and community leaders participating in the broader study. This chapter discusses data from across the whole sample and makes no distinction between the leaders and group members as discrete data subsets. The term *dimension* in the context of this chapter, and across the thesis, refers to a fundamental measurable aspect that is part of a multi-layered whole. The six dimensions identified and discussed in this chapter constitute a complete set of interconnected environmental provisions that the data analysis indicates is fundamental to a successful community music environment.

Data analysed and coded as relevant for the focus of this chapter was sourced from 21 semi-structured interview and focus group sessions and testimonials involving a total sample of 60 participants, yielding 611 responses, statements or comments. The comparative representation of qualifying responses and comments that define the six dimensions of successful community music is as follows: Other – twenty (3.3 per cent); Hospitality – twenty-nine (4.7 per cent); Support – sixty-one (10% per cent); Leadership – 89 (14.5 per cent); Personal meaning and self-view 122 (20 per cent); Membership 127 (20.8%); and Well-being – 163 (26.7 per cent). As discussed in Chapter Four, Well-being features prominently through all three lenses: group members’ perspective, leaders’ perspective, and this chapter’s investigation of cross-sample environmental dimensions. Well-being rates as the third most prominent theme of nine in the group members’ perspective, the most prominent in the leaders’ perspective and the most prominent of the six, cross-sample, dimensions of successful community music activity. Table 14 articulates the nine themes of sociocultural benefit as identified by the group members and leaders with this chapter’s six dimensions of successful community music activity. Figure 12 shows the six dimensions as rounded proportional percentages of the cross-sample data.

The next section commences by identifying and discussing the twenty comments and responses that are categorised as *other*, clarifying the rationale by which they are excluded from consideration within the dimensions of successful community music.
activity. The group of comments that constitutes the category of other represents just over 3 per cent of the cross-sample data, with the following case-study distribution:

- New Horizons (North American) adult learning community - one comment,
- Ability Inclusive group - one comment,
- Mental Health Community - four comments,
- Seniors’ Choir - five comments, and
- At Risk Youth group - nine comments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of social and cultural benefit</th>
<th>Environmental elements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group members’ perspective:</strong> nine themes of sociocultural benefit</td>
<td><strong>Leaders’ perspective:</strong> prioritising six themes/sub-themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal enjoyment</td>
<td>Well-being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-being</td>
<td>Well-being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>Identity and empowerment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical or artistic motivation &amp; achievement</td>
<td>Creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group musicking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skill development &amp; personal challenge</td>
<td>Lifelong learning and intergenerational engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social engagement</td>
<td>Social engagement &amp; equality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Contribution</td>
<td>Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 14:** Articulation of the themes of sociocultural benefit as identified by group members and leaders with the six dimensions of successful community music activity.
Other

The comments classified as other, not encompassed by the six dimensions, are:

- I’m not going to talk down to them as beginners… you know (to participants) you may agree, some of the stuff I talk about may be a little over your heads, but you find it interesting, because… they’ve been through life… (NH L6)
- more skills, more – a lot here I never thought I’d be doing (AI 3)
- but there are certainly a lot of benefits for the clients themselves to come along, so I see it as a really valuable resource, very valuable activity, and a very fun, enjoyable thing too (MHC L4)
- for a lot of these folks social norms haven’t applied for a very long time, … I think those social norms are starting to sink in. Even things like getting up to go and have a cigarette and what have you, that kind of stuff is starting to calm down (MHC L2)
- when I was a kid at school if you did anything that was a little untoward… it was oh I’ll send you to (psychiatric hospital)... it was always as this horrible stigma, that (it) was this rotten horrible place where they send all the crazies, and, gee, you’d have to be in a pretty bad way to go there, and it had this
horrible, horrible, connotation to it, and I don't think we should ever underestimate that that stigma still exists in the community (MHC L2)

- some people having to put themselves forward because they’re very important and very good at this or … you’re still going to get those sorts of issues, I suppose that makes sense, because that’s, you know, people with a mental illness are in the workforce… you’re going to have the same sorts of challenges (MHC L1)
- ..we really have learnt such a lot…(SC 8)
- one of the things I’ve learnt coming here, is I’ve been taught to listen to my voice, there is a teaching that is happening… listening to my voice and to others (SC 12)
- gives us both great pleasure (SC 10)
- reconnected with art and creativity (Musica Viva 2012)
- we (Seniors’ Activity Centre) are now more open to more music activities because we have seen the impact (of the Viva Voices program) (SC L3)
- and I’ve loved it here, like, compared to.. you know..something you do at school.. go in there for an hour, and all you do is theory or something…you don't sit there and actually learn how to play something.. (ARY 16)
- ‘cause, at school, like, the most instrument, you ever play is like, a cymbal thing, you know, like, them tambourine things… (ARY 17)
- because it’s fun, and you learn cool stuff about it (ARY 9)
- you learn how to listen (ARY 11)
- without listening you won’t get anything out of life (ARY 8)
- you use your brain (ARY 12)
- you can change the way you play an instrument, but you can’t change your voice like that… (ARY 8)
- when you make a mistake, it’s harder to cover up (ARY 15)
- If you stuff up on the drums you can pretend you’re doing a solo thing and get back into the beat. With a microphone you can’t (ARY 8).

Unlike the data contributing to the discrete group member and leader perspectives analysed and discussed in Chapters Three and Four, some data items pertaining to this
chapter’s discussion are phrased in a negative tone. These negatively expressed comments do not contradict or challenge the thesis of the three-level analytical framework, or this chapter’s assertion of the validity of six dimensions. The mode of expression, and its comparative prominence in contrast with the data from the two previous chapters, is due largely to the less formal structure of the data collection instruments, accommodating more reflective, open-ended prompts. Some examples of negatively expressed, thesis supportive, comments are:

- they (other US ‘community’ bands) don't let beginners in (NH 16)
- it would be nice to see other cultures, more cultures (SC 14)
- I didn’t enter, I was nominated… (RHWC 9)
- what’s hard in these sort of programs is the sustainability of it, people change jobs, they, it becomes, you know, when you’re talking about people with a mental illness in a hospital environment you’re relying on the staff. So it’s a constant challenge, as people change roles move on, get busier (MHC L1)
- first, original, director was very unpopular, didn't 'get it'. (NH 29)
- another thing though, (our current conductor) certainly understands, but I know conductors who don't, we’re not heading for Carnegie Hall, we’ve either been there or we’re never going to get there. (NH 15)
- he came with a cornet, a Bb cornet, ‘cause he had been in brass bands and all that kind of stuff as a kid, and he started playing it, and they said no, you’re making too much noise, and they confiscated it off him, never gave it back, and that was the end of his music until the choir came along (MHC L2).

Having explored and explained the anomalous and non-qualifying data items, the remainder of the chapter is concerned with description and definition of each the six dimensions, and presentation of a selection of representative, qualifying data utilising the substructure of the constituent dimensional subthemes.

**Dimension 1: Hospitality**

The first of the six dimensions identified through the data analysis is Hospitality. Hospitality: ‘the friendly and generous reception … of visitors, guests or strangers’
refers in the context of this thesis to the unconditional welcome radiated and directed inward by the collective. Higgins (2012) suggests that community as it relates to community music can be best understood in terms of an act of hospitality, and the emergence in this study of the dimension of Hospitality, and the comments that define it, align strongly with Higgins’ theoretical framework:

My proposition is that hospitality encompasses the central characteristics of community music practice, broadly understood as people, participation, places, equality of opportunity, and diversity. I do not argue that hospitality should replace the term community, but that hospitality evokes the practical meaning of community in the work of community musicians. From this perspective, I propose that community, conceived actively as “an act of hospitality”, runs deeply through the practice of community music, and that an acute awareness of its production will expose the distinctiveness of community music within the musical discourse more generally.

(Higgins 2012: 133-134)

The case study distribution of the twenty-nine comments that contribute to and define the dimension of Hospitality, emerging from interviews and testimonials, is as follows: WW - three; MHC - three; NH - nine; and SC - fourteen. The comments qualifying under the dimension of Hospitality constitute 4.7 per cent of the total data set analysed for this section. No qualifying statements for the dimension of Hospitality come from RHWC, ARY or AI. All of the constituent comments are grouped in the dimensional subthemes (Table 13) and in participating case-study order, listed below:

Inclusivity
- the once reserved busking group were received with adulation by their peers. They have continued to Busk at community events and feel ready to make their first CD (WW L1)
• well there’s just recognition. Well its bringing music onto the street. The community wouldn't know that those kids could do anything - they just see them walking around, particularly the boys, in packs, or out the front of the cafes – they see a different side to those particular kids. So, and that’s very much magnified in a small community, the ones who hang around. (WW L1)

• we have an event every fall in Iowa (city), the band in Iowa has a number of offshoot groups, we have a polka band and a dixieland group, and brass quintet and a brass quartet, and every fall we have 4 or 5 area high school jazz bands at a local theatre that’s historic, and it’s very pretty and the acoustics are great, and we have 4 or 5 high school jazz bands play and then our swing band plays, and it’s always so fun to see the looks on the kids faces when we start to play, they’re like Oh my God, they can breathe and … (NH 16)

• (the conductor) has this thing she calls Sonic Saturday and it’s our band and the junior level kids and the high school kids and .. everybody altogether, and that's what I was talking about .. here are these teenage kids who are carrying on a conversation with me like we have something in common, because we do, and of course I always wear some kind of a shirt on band day, you know either a Zildian shirt or something like that, and if I’m going anywhere, to a restaurant or something, people stop me… I play drums (NH 17)

• our Wisconsin band has people younger and they don't adhere at all to the 50 and over (notional rule or guiding lower age limit), and they rehearse in the evening and all (NH 15)

• they (other US ‘community’ bands) don't let beginners in (NH 16)

• age limited? No, only found out about 50+ notion by watching official DVD at info session 1 year after joining! (NH 25)

• the place to enter – (there are) plenty community bands around, but they’re not accessible or welcoming though (NH 26)

• become a family, no pressure, (conductor) sets the tone, this is fun (NH 25)

• any competitive aspect comes with returners (people coming back to playing an instrument after some years). They see significance in, and are possessive over, parts. Typically they chill out, adjust to the New Horizons reality where which part you play is just a matter of which piece of paper you pick up (NH 26)
• I only came to Orange in March and didn't know anybody, and it was through (another member) and it’s been fantastic, met some great people and I love it (SC 4)
• it was a matter of meeting new people and fitting into a group, and that was it really (SC 5)
• and it’s so friendly (SC 8)
• different styles of music, we’re all more conscious of what we’re singing, what we’re doing; we’ve learnt a lot of the songs that we didn't know previously. It’s broadened our horizons (SC 13)
• it would be nice to see other cultures, more cultures (SC 12).

Tolerance and care
• and people genuinely care.. about what’s happened to them, and if it comes back that something bad has happened then there is that genuine sympathy and genuine connection between people, and even things like .. somebody might be cold, and people will notice that somebody is cold and they’ll mess about with the heater… but there is that genuine caring that weaves through it all, which is pretty special (MHC L2)
• members developed greater tolerance of other people (Musica Viva 2012)
• and was pleasantly surprised with the amount of friendship (SC 12)
• I’ve made some lovely friends, they’re all lovely, lovely people and I’m so glad I did, or would probably have ended up somewhere in care (SC 9)
• getting back to the team sport…there’s a certain amount… you feel a certain amount of pressure, but here there’s leeway, If you can’t make it, you don't feel pressurized (SC 17).

The unconditional welcome
• very tight group, it’s small, so people are very close, but very welcoming to new people (NH L9)
• I have a choir …which is open to anyone – there’s no auditions –at the moment I have 89 members in that, so that’s really cool (WW 1)
• I’ve just come from a (hospital redevelopment) meeting, service development meeting, and I walked in here and I just felt (laughs)... it was really lovely just
to feel a sense of community, and that this is what it’s all about, actually, all
the stuff we’re talking about in those senior management meetings, this is …
what it’s all about. (MHC L3)

- one of the beauties about our choir is that… I can safely say to people… it
really doesn't matter how well you sing, you can come along… so you can
safely say to a client who says oh, I can’t sing, well come along and listen, and
it doesn’t really matter, you can join in if you want to… um, so that’s been
really, really beneficial. (MHC L4)
- but I have been assured that my voice will blend in with the group (SC 19)
- it’s not political, you can have a chat and you feel welcome (SC 7)
- I’m new to the area and I always wanted to sing and was (always previously)
told to shut up, it’s an environment in which one can let go, sing and no one is
going to criticise you (SC 13)
- you don’t have to be able to read music, you don't have to audition, we just
hop in (SC 8)
- I couldn’t imagine at any time in the past, going into a group, knowing there
are really good singers, I know I’m not, but there are really good singers, and
not feeling intimidated (SC 9).

The participant comments above speak to the dimension of Hospitality though the use
of words such as recognition, home, join, welcome, everyone, altogether, accessible,
tolerance, blend, friendship, and leeway; and phrases such as other cultures, fitting in,
just hop in, become a family, received with adulation, open to everyone, no audition,
sense of community, genuine caring, and let go. While at the point of consolidation
into the overarching dimension of Hospitality the subtheme groupings become
arbitrary, it is instructive to identify their articulation with the data. Noteworthy
features of the qualifying response data are that the RHWC, ARY and AI groups did
not contribute through their data to this dimension, and that the groups defined by
seniority, the Seniors’ Choir (SC) and NH adult learner community, contributed the
majority of qualifying comments. Approximately half of the qualifying references
were contributed by the SC (14/29) and almost one third from the NH (9/29)
community. Analysis of these factors suggests that while nationality and sociocultural
background appear to bear little relevance to awareness and priority of Hospitality as
an environmental provision, older participants share an awareness of the attraction and importance of inclusivity, tolerance and care, and the unconditional welcome (Higgins 2012).

**Dimension 2: Support**

Support for community music activity comes in many forms, and although direct financial contribution to operational costs is an element of the suite of support mechanisms sought by and provided to community music groups and organisations, it is not the most prevalent. Types of support evident from both the total participant data, and the literature, include tangible, in-kind considerations such as low or no-cost provision of facilities and physical resources (rehearsal and performance spaces, chairs, pianos, cups and saucers for refreshment breaks etc.), assistance with logistics and administrative tasks, and moral support (encouragement, attendance at performances etc.) from friends, family and co-members.

While it is in-kind support that in most cases provides the critical assistance that music groups in the community rely on to survive, community organisations with qualifying legal status, such as incorporated associations (Cahill 1998), are able to apply for government funding (Arts NSW 2014), and those with tax-deductable gift recipient status can be attractive to donors and philanthropists. Community groups gathering for the purpose of making music may not be equally interested in establishing a corporate structure or forming a legislatively compliant committee even if such organisational steps are required for groups to achieve fundable legal status and the securing of insurances (Bartleet et al. 2009).

A group of people may collaborate for the carrying on of some activity and prepare a set of regulations generally to meet their perceived needs. Any activity, however non-commercial, involves some legal relationship; e.g., a printing contract for programmes. Such an association may perhaps hire a venue for a performance, involving some financial commitment and (desirably) public liability insurance. In a short time it will be recognised how unsatisfactory it is for the body itself not to have legal status. Indeed the members of such an association may find that they collectively and individually can be
subject to some totally unexpected claim, This is one of the principal reasons for having some corporate status.

(Cahill 1998: 17)

An option for community music groups is to operate under the umbrella of a legally constituted organisation (Cahill 1998; Bartleet et al. 2009; Sound Sense 2006), taking advantage of an affiliation or auspicing arrangement, which can offer provisions such as insurance cover, governance oversight and other tangible and intangible support mechanisms. In NSW, Regional Conservatoriums operate in eighteen locations across the state, in many cases both operating community programs and offering such an umbrella to groups without their own governance and / or legally constituted status. An explanation of their roles, illustrating this NSW-specific situation, is relevant at this point of the discussion in approaching principles, practicalities and models of support for community music in this state.

NSW regional conservatoriums are community-owned and operated music education facilities in non-metropolitan NSW. As a case-study, the regional conservatorium network’s programs and partnerships present a cross-section of community music activity across the state, offering a snapshot of multi-demographic teaching, learning and participation. Unique to NSW, regional conservatoriums function as community music hubs, engaged principally in informal, non-formal and semi-formal education (Mak n.d.; Green 2002, 2008; Folkstad 2005, 2006; Jaffurs 2006; Mans 2009; Mok 2011; Schippers & Bartleet 2013), as well as contributing to, and supporting, formal teaching and learning systems through the provision of curricular support, and increasingly, curriculum content, to schools. Reaching approximately 30,000 students and participants across NSW (Association of NSW Regional Conservatoriums 2014), regional conservatoriums are also uniquely positioned to observe, engage in, broker and develop in-kind support environments for community music activity. The Association of New South Wales Regional Conservatoriums (ANSWRC) is the peak body for the 18 member organisations:

Regional Conservatoriums are major contributors regional culture. In most cases, they are the principal provider of music education and performance in their respective regions. The Association’s
commitment to regional NSW begins with the pursuit of quality music education programs. Regional Conservatoriums are partially funded by NSW DEC (Department of Education and Communities) to develop these programs within NSW DEC schools.

(Association of NSW Regional Conservatoriums 2014: np)

and from the NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC), Arts Unit website:

NSW Regional Conservatoriums provide a range of music activities for students and community members of all ages and aspirations. The staff of Regional Conservatoriums provide quality music education across a broad range of musical styles. Programs offered include instrumental and vocal tuition, musicianship and theory, tuition for people with special needs, performing ensembles, performances for the community, professional development for teachers and performers, schools programs, music technology and early childhood music. NSW Regional Conservatoriums also offer additional music-related services such as recording studios, music libraries, and instrument and equipment hire.

(DEC 2014: np)

Although regional conservatoriums are independent, autonomous entities, they are unified by the Association strategic plan and the funding agreement with the NSW government (DEC 2013). Notwithstanding the areas of commonality in relation to key performance indicators and key result areas tied to funding, the nature and details of in-community partnerships, and the development of in-kind support, incoming and outgoing, vary significantly due to local dynamics and, often, local politics. As identified in Chapter Two, it is the local government administrative environment in which community music activity functions, responding to and provoking response from council and the community it serves. In a survey of NSW regional conservatoriums carried out in mid-2014, the following categories of in-kind (non-cash) support were identified:
Support that regional conservatoriums give to independent community music activities, groups or entities:

- provision of rehearsal, workshop and performance facilities at no, or nominal charge,
- storage of sheet music and other equipment,
- provision of instruments, sound and lighting,
- promotion of events through inclusion in organisational websites and newsletters,
- event coordination, administration and ticketing services,
- administration, insurance cover etc., and
- auspicing of grants.

Support that regional conservatoriums receive to assist their operation and / or administration of community music activities, groups or entities:

- provision of rehearsal, workshop and performance facilities at no, or low cost, and
- promotion of events through inclusion in organisational websites and newsletters – schools, other community organisations.

A significant form of in-kind support for regional conservatoriums is in the provision of operational premises. In many cases, repurposed government-owned educational facilities such as colleges and schools are leased at a nominal rate to regional conservatoriums. In addition to this, some conservatoriums are housed in church, university, or council-owned buildings - frequently at a lower-than-commercial rate. Relationships with government bodies and universities vary widely, and are usually determined locally (community-by-community) with regional conservatoriums reporting leasing arrangements that range from $1 to over $40,000 per year. More frequently than not, payments are at the lower end of that scale, with factors such as potential commercial value of a property, benefit to owner of third-party maintenance responsibility, cost/benefit of identifiably contributing to community and political considerations featuring in negotiations.
A sample of six NSW regional conservatorium operational managers responded as follows to a two-part survey question focused on local government support:

In relation to any local government support that your organisation receives, i) would you describe the support relationship as:

a) Dynamic? – you (the organisation) are required (formally or informally) to deliver community benefit outcomes or
b) Passive? – you (the organisation) are free to operate without consideration of council agenda or imperatives

ii) (in relation to that support relationship) do you feel you have to, and/or your predecessor(s) had to, initiate and maintain the relationship
a) Yes
b) No
c) Not Sure

For part i) 50% answered a) Dynamic and 50% b) Passive
For part ii) 100% of respondents answered a) Yes

There are 61 comments that substantiate the dimension of Support as one of the critical contributing elements of a successful community music environment as identified through the participant data. Of those comments, the AI group contributed three; SC, four; ARY, six; WW, nine; NH, ten; RHWC, twelve; and MHC, seventeen. The comments that speak to the dimension of Support represent 10 per cent of the total qualifying data, and a representative selection of the comments, 39 of the 61, are listed below. They are organised according to the sub-themes (Table 13) and case studies within those:

Assistive connections to broader community

- several members of the group were residents at Village Glen and also played a significant, lobbying role at the village (Musica Viva 2012)
- we are pleased to have been acknowledged by the community through their Support while busking and assistance through volunteering. This indicates to
us that our event is important to the whole community, not just the youth (WW L1).

Emotional reassurance and encouragement

- no, over the years, a lot of people ask Mum and Dad, if (I’m) blind, how does he memorise these songs, and they just say, (he’s) got an amazing voice. People ask Mum, if (he’s) blind - why’s (he) writing a song called see what I see and Mum just says (he) just writes beautiful lyrics (AI 2)
- I guess, like, people like compliment you – I’ve had a couple of compliments: oh you’re a really good singer, and, um like, (participant) sort of had compliments … on her drum work… but when they’re like questioning you about it,… like ..they think you’ve done it over the years or something, but … (she’s) just picked it up… (ARY 4)
- when you’re in a group the sound is stronger… Like in a choir, it sounds better (ARY 9)
- (since working together in a music program, we’re) closer, yeah closer (ARY 16, 17, 18, 19)
- he can sing, he can sing… (ARY 19)
- (student) would be the only one within that group that’s being promoted within the school, so there’s a big group of talented kids… can sing every bit as well as (student) probably can. But none of them are recognised within that school structure, so this is something for them to step aside and feel proud of their being recognised (WW L1)
- every time they perform, it’s almost dangerous on the road because people haven’t experienced busking before, there are all these rubbernecks slowing down in the middle of the road, watching what’s going on on the street corner. And we do a bit of a count as to how many people will come by, and they can get up to 60 people just standing around listening to them (WW L1)
- but they all come (school cohort), they come on their bikes, and they stand back, they stay right back, and then they they’ll move forward, eventually... and they’re only there to listen to (student names), then they might hover around for a few others…whatever money they’ve got, they’ll put in.. (Supporting the busking of the disadvantaged youth in the music program)... they’re committing to it being part of their community and society of the town, so… they’re… literally buying it.. (WW L1)
I really, really believe that when they’ve got to draw upon what they’ve got, and these are the things... you might not get a bang for your buck, even though with this group I really think we do, right now, it can be later on. It might not be till they’re 26 or 30 or whatever, when they think, oh no I did that and I could... somebody had faith in me to maintain me in that group, and I did have the capacity to do that, and it all affects the pathways of your brain, and it all, it’s all part of positive things happening in your life when lots of these kids don't have a positive thing happening...If they go away and have new experiences...the rest of the group, through observation, can see that someone like them is doing something special. To some degree it is open to them as well, that’s their perception, well you’re the same as me, and you’re doing that (WW L1)

one of the things about New Horizons is that you probably develop some of your closest friends, playing in New Horizons. And any time anybody in the band is experiencing some sort of trauma in their life – whether it be death of a spouse, illness of a child, or whatever it might be, the people in the band just come together for them (NH 18)

a big support network, as well as being a social network (NH mesa, Michael)

and you know it’s amazing, even when we play badly, people love it (NH 19)

I didn’t enter, I was nominated… (RHWC 9)

you’re doing a great job..(to another member during the focus group, general agreement) (RHWC 2)

but it was so encouraging (RHWC 4)

(talking to colleague, MHC L4) if I was your boss, I’m not at the moment, but I used to be, I would, um, just say that it’s worth going (MHC L3)

it’s about… offering people that hand…and saying – I’ll come and get you, you don't have to walk into the room on your own, none of us like walking into a room on our own, until we get to know one another, so, you know, for at least the first 3 or 4 times … everyone needs to be introduced, and, not only that, we… can’t just expect them to wander back either, we have a duty of care, um, yeah, but it can be hard work… (MHC L4)

whenever there’s a performance of the choir here on grounds, it never ceases to amaze me how many staff actually turn up (MHC L2)
I’ve seen around the group that, you know, some of the supportive stuff with the other participants around, um, encouraging one of the participants not to smoke so much, and that was actually, I don't know if it’s about smoking, I think it’s probably more about being on task, and um, being able to lengthen the time she could go without having to get up and walk outside, I think that’s very interesting, ‘cause that was sort of developing a group… support mechanism (MHC L1).

Facilities and physical resources
- five hundred are in the village, they built for us years ago, a gazebo. They came to rehearsal and walked around and measured with their feet (around the band) how big the gazebo should be for the band. I don't remember who it was, so many years ago, it was all volunteer, to fit the band. And it’s just, looks like a very typical small town, can’t even call it a park, but we do several concerts during the summer. It was very important with certain individuals who made it happen… the materials were donated and the labour was donated…. (NH L9)
- (interviewer: schools as community centres?) That is precisely it (NH L9).

Financial assistance
- in Orange, a local business now sponsors the group, and the Orange Regional Conservatorium continues to provide its support (Musica Viva 2012)
- in Mandurah (the conductor) spoke to the group half way through 2011 about what they wanted to do about the future. They all wanted it to continue. We asked them what they would be prepared to do, and they come up with fundraising ideas. They put together a Christmas raffle. I found the local business sponsor. We can pay the choirmaster (Musica Viva 2012).

Logistics, organisation and governance
- the group facilitators continue to have some email contact with Musica Viva, and feel that they could contact Musica Viva if they ever needed to. (Musica Viva 2012)
• the process involved strong commitment from our team, to ensure that the event was well managed and engaged as many local youth as possible. Our Regional Youth Development Working Party was staggered by what had to be done to reach our goal. This was an invaluable chance for them to play a leading role in event management while having the safety net of Council to assist where required. The event attracted a wide cross section of the youth community and thoroughly engaged them at numerous levels in positive entertainment. I am so proud of the manner in which our local youth embraced the opportunity, making it an event to remember for all the right reasons (WW L1)
• and council being behind it is another layer of credibility, as well (WW L1)
• I thank the CRANA organization for supporting along with the Bush Support Services and would encourage anyone to take the leap. It may not be a leap for them however when one starts a journey we really do not know what that sets in place (RHWC 6)
• organisation was flexible but organised (RHWC 2)
• he came with a cornet, a Bb cornet, ‘cause he had been in brass bands and all that kind of stuff as a kid, and he started playing it, and they said no, you’re making too much noise, and they confiscated it off him, never gave it back, and that was the end of his music until the choir came along (MHC L2)
• it’s quite resource intensive, and I guess that’s why I keep going on, talking about influencing the staff, because.. that’s what it relies on (MHC L1).

Personal assistance
• I’ve been playing music for a number of years, and (carer) has helped me around the last 2 years (AI 2)
• sister and brothers living in WA, sister more than willing to support me (AI 5)
• and they’ve all been so kind, you know, high school kids who’ve lugged so much percussion instruments for me…from my car in and they’re so sweet… (NH 21)
• I was glad I was doing my spot with someone (RHWC 3)
• a general consensus and support for the choir, among the Bloomfield community as a whole. When I speak to staff, or nurses, or whoever, there’s
always this appeal to the Choir and general support – you know, if (a residential patient) has got to be at the choir on Friday a 1:20, Oh that’s OK, I’ll make sure he gets his lunch early, or whatever (MHC L2)

- you know, the context of this is… a psychiatric hospital where initially the participants that were involved were people who didn't survive living in a community setting, and have ended up being very institutionalised, so they’re actually people who are patients, if you like, of a psychiatric hospital, and a very supported environment, and they live in this, it’s quite a … it’s more developed now, but 3 years ago it was a much more cloistered world, and the only people that had anything to do with them were the clinicians, so this is their home (MHC L1)

- a lot of them (in-community mental health service consumers) have a connection to the (on-campus activity) centre, where they almost take on a supportive role of people who are less able to cope than they are, so, in that way it makes sense as well, because they’re almost in a, not a caring, but they’re more connected and I think quite comfortable. The challenges with that though for those people, a lot of them need support to be picked up and brought out here, so then you get that, so I guess maybe one of things that’s nice about the choir is that joint connection, you haven’t just got people who are resident here and in a ward, you’ve actually got a mixture of people (MHC L1).

The dimension of Support arose from the data as the second least prominent of the six dimensions of successful community music activity. As a coded representation of approximately 10 per cent of the participant data, however, it communicates a substantial consideration for community music group members and leaders in relation to environmental provisions for successful community music activity. The selection of participant comments listed above shows a significant weighting within the dimension towards the subtheme of emotional reassurance and encouragement. This weighting is representative of the total data set that corresponds to the dimension of Support.
Dimension 3: Leadership

In chapter four, the perspective of participating community music group leaders was investigated and it was determined that the nine participant-identified themes of sociocultural development were supported, albeit with some differences in weighting of aspects of the themes; some themes were not directly articulated by the leaders and some others were articulated in the form of sub-themes that aligned with elements of one or more of the nine themes. As the chapter’s discussion progressed, however, it became apparent that three separate statements (out of a data set of 135 statements), each from one of three different leaders, are anomalous with the nine themes of community music activity. These statements are as follows:

- incidental and accidental learning (ARY L1),
- informal, sequential and situational learning is what music provides (ARY L2), and
- I think one of the important things is the connection with the professional, you know, that art is good, and it’s useful when it’s good you know, and we’re not doing anyone any favours to set them up to look shithouse, so, that professional involvement, that professional partnership is really critical (MHC L1).

It became clear upon analysis that the three statements, while not presenting overtly as connected, do have a common thread or relevance. Clearly, the first two comments, contributed by two leaders of the same program during the same interview, concern the aspect of informal learning. Notwithstanding that similarity, all three comments relate, albeit indirectly, to Leadership. As observed in the previous chapter, the comments share a common, underpinning, consideration of guidance, direction, and leadership. This common consideration in the leaders’ perspective data discussed in chapter four provides a connective thread, both to this chapter’s focus of the third analytical lens of the requisite dimensions of a successful community music environment - the consideration of how to effect the identified sociocultural benefits of group music activity - and to the third of these cross-sample identified dimensions, Leadership.
Leadership presents as the fourth highest rating dimension in the participant data, with 89 comments, being 14.5 per cent of the overall qualifying data. Leadership features in data from all of the seven case-study communities, and is present in nineteen of the twenty-one data gathering media (semi-structured interviews, focus groups, testimonials and unsolicited third-party reports). Case-study cohorts across the range of communities identified essential leadership qualities that distil into the following list of five essential capabilities:

1. artistic leadership,
2. empathy and benevolence,
3. organisational leadership,
4. pedagogical leadership\(^1\), and
5. public relations.

Some variability exists in relation to the third and fourth capabilities within organisations that operate as umbrellas for numerous groups, in that a separate (different) individual may take responsibility for public relations and/or, to a lesser degree, logistics; but with independent groups and communities, all five capabilities frequently rest with one individual. Table 15 shows the five essential leadership capabilities aligning with six of Schippers and Bartleet’s *Nine Domains of Community Music* (Schippers & Bartleet 2013):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Five essential leadership capabilities</th>
<th>From Schippers and Bartleet’s Nine domains of community music</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. artistic leadership</td>
<td>7. dynamic music-making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. empathy and benevolence</td>
<td>5. social engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. organisational leadership</td>
<td>2. organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. pedagogical leadership</td>
<td>8. engaging pedagogy and facilitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. public relations</td>
<td>3. visability and public relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. support and networking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 15:* The five essential leadership capabilities aligning with six of Schippers and Bartleet’s *Nine Domains of Community Music* (Schippers & Bartleet 2013).

In considering the elements of community music leadership, expressed as the domains listed above, Schippers and Bartleet cite NSW regional conservatoriums as an

\(^1\) Or in the case of the adult learning groups, andragogical (Knowles 1980; Dabback 2005; Veblen 2011)
example of overarching community-operated bodies that offer a range of coordination and logistics assistance, particularly in relation to school/community partnerships in non-metropolitan locations:

Some models for community/school music links already exist. For example, some regional conservatoria in NSW work closely with schools in the provision of: studio teachers for instrumental and vocal study; ensembles (especially full orchestras, wind symphonies, large choirs); specialized tutors (e.g. for chamber music groups); accompanists (especially for examinations); organization of group entries in eisteddfodau; organization of public performances; liaison with local councils and other organizations (charities, clubs etc.); access to venues and facilities; provision of administration staff and trained events managers. This model is well worth consideration by schools.

(Schippers & Bartleet 2013: 469)

This example of community music coordination and the nonformal/formal music education collaboration is reinforced by Cahill (1998), Reeder (2006), and Klopper and Powers (2012).

Current literature acknowledges the importance of leadership to effective and impactful community music activity. Higgins (2014) approaches the issue from the perspective of the leader’s role, responsibility and agency:

Community music is an active intervention between a music leader or facilitator and participants. Music educators who work in this way intentionally create spaces for inclusive and participatory musical doing. As a perspective it resonates with a commitment to musical expression as a crucible for social transformation, emancipation, empowerment, and cultural capital.

(Higgins 2014: np)

In Schippers’ and Bartleet’s (2013) evaluation of active community music programs in Australia, they observe that strength and clarity of leadership is the prominent,
common characteristic of the successful community music environments they encountered:

The most strikingly consistent factor in successful projects appeared to be the presence of an inspired individual. This individual works with the community to create and realize a vision of a vibrant musical community, often against considerable odds.

(Schippers & Bartleet 2013: 83)

This is not to say that a strong leader needs to take a didactic, or dictatorial approach, particularly in an adult or intergenerational learning environment. The capability to monitor the effectiveness of, and strategize around, pedagogy or andragogy (Knowles 1980; Dabback 2005; Coffman 2008, 2009; Veblen 2011) is both key to effectiveness in community music leadership and a reinforcement of the fourth essential leadership capability as suggested above - pedagogical leadership (Table 15):

Less accomplished ensembles may experience better learning and music making when the director shares some of the leadership responsibility with players. Co-creation of musical interpretation in dynamics and phrasing, for example, encourages participants to think beyond their own parts and embrace a larger role in ensembles. Insight into musical decision making can help individuals understand how their voices contribute to the whole…

(Myers, Bowles & Dabback 2013: 141)

Presenting in such a way that that participants feel a sense of validation and empathy from the conductor or leader; that their best is good enough (Ernst and Emmons 1992; Ernst 2001; Coffman 2008), and that mistakes are recognised as an important part of the learning process and a valid potential outcome of effort, can be a critical element in the teaching and learning transaction:

When the community musicians in this study were asked to enumerate the factors that contribute to the vibrancy of their activities, the first response was often a description of the inspiring leadership of an
individual community musician or educator who directs the activity with which they are involved, referring to the person’s leadership capabilities, musical and administrative expertise, pedagogical skills, inspiration, or encouragement. The most respected community music leaders show a deep understanding of how music connects people not only in their own groups, but also within the broader community.

(Bartleet, Brunt, Tait, & Threlfall 2013: 83)

Schippers and Bartleet’s nine domains were developed through their involvement in *Sound Links: Community music in Australia* - a large scale research project studying six divergent communities across Australia (Bartleet et al. 2009). They are:

- Infrastructure
- Organization
- Visability and public relations
- Relationship to place
- Social engagement
- Support and networking
- Dynamic music-making
- Engaging pedagogy and facilitation
- Links to school’

(Schippers & Bartleet 2013:459)

The data from this study reinforces the assertions of the literature as discussed above, with the subthemes listed in Table 13 synonymous with the five essential leadership capabilities (Table 15).

Comments defining and supporting the dimension of Leadership as an essential consideration for a successful community music environment presented with the following frequency: ARY contributed two; AI, eight; WW, nine; MHC, eleven; SC, fourteen; NH, twenty; and RHWC, twenty-five. 44 of the participant quotes are listed below, grouped in the five subthemes/essential capabilities of artistic leadership, empathy and benevolence, organisational leadership, pedagogical leadership, and public relations. The number of participant quotes relating to each subtheme is proportionate to the total data set distribution for this dimension:

Artistic leadership
- (ARY 1) and her drums kept us (the band) together (ARY 2)
there’s cats here who haven’t had the opportunity to work with somebody of my experience. Other than (AI 8), I’m the second oldest musician here. There are young cats in this thing that wouldn’t have come across musicians like me and (AI 8). I didn’t get that opportunity… it is really important (AI 6)

our busking group has grown in skills and confidence gained by participating in the Performance Class run by the Director of Orange Regional Conservatorium (WW L1 2009)

in terms of how can I also musically maybe play a bit of leadership within the group, without dominating, and without finding myself stuck and off-key, because I was … in with a whole lot of people who were banging it out wrong (MHC L1)

I think one of the important things is the connection with the professional, you know, that art is good, and it’s useful when it’s good you know, and we’re not doing anyone any favours to set them up to look shithouse so, that professional involvement, that professional partnership is really critical, but, then it does start to rely on one or two people and vulnerability of one or two drivers (MHC L1)

the great thing about having the executive leader to make the final decision about the songs, otherwise we would go on forever without making a decision (RHWC 11).

Empathy and benevolence

you see someone like (student) has real leadership qualities. I noticed yesterday that for no other reason than to make them feel involved, he went over to the (separate, small, more remote community) group at the end of the day (WW L1)

and the other thing Graham, and you may not want to hear it, is the clients love you. You’re a very big part of the reason why… (choir member) is one, she won’t come unless you come (MHC L3)

That’s a bit flippant, but you, no but you relate very well to the clients (MHC L3)
• with excellent teachers whom are also very friendly and have a happy disposition. (SC 18)
• the outstanding thing is that at all times (conductors) are encouraging to us and congratulating us on what we’re doing and I think that’s a really good boost to our sense of person.. (SC 14)
• I think their enthusiasm is just so catchy, they’re amazing. They seem to be enjoying it (SC 4)
• another thing though, (conductor) certainly understands, but I know conductors who don't, we’re not heading for Carnegie Hall, we’ve either been there or we’re never going to get there. (NH 15)
• I think (conductor) …sets the tone, and that attracts people, whereas… the group has a really good dynamic, I think the group contribute as well to how much fun it is, but she draws us in and draws in the group (NH 22)
• you know, Don Coffman at Iowa City always said the highlight of his week, and he’s the director and had been for about 15/16 years, he always said the highlight of his week was coming to NH, and he teaches music all week...(NH 21)
• and then I’d come face to face with you (conductor) and we’d have a laugh… (RHWC 3)
• I was really anxious about a trained teacher hearing me and me having to do it right… see I’ve had lots of anxieties around the correctness (general noises of agreement) and it was your personality I think that overcame that. Because (RHWC L1) said with someone from the conservatorium and I went errr, I don’t think so … (much noise of agreement again)… and I don't want to be exposed… something that I love doing.. and having it analysed.. and with the performance.. that was the head block, and the performance and having to do it right.. So it was overcoming those fears and . But I love making the sound I love playing with the sound/having the sound coming out of my mouth.. (RHWC 3)
• it’s been a really interesting journey of .. you know… you’ve been pulling me up on my self-doubt , often…( RHWC 7)
• I think you (conductor) make it safe and comfortable (RHWC 7)
first lesson I was really anxious but after that I thought, he’s cool, he keeps telling us how good we are (RHWC 5)
you were great – your tolerance, encouragement and humour really helped to make the experience memorable – thanks so much – I miss it already (RHWC 5)
with the encouragement and direction of (conductor) the lessons led me to feeling comfortable with the ability to sing (RHWC 6)
and haven't we been lucky you have been so encouraging and positive as well as grasping the depth of our hurdles (RHWC 4)
you made it positive, welcoming, comfortable and safe..as well as thoroughly enjoyable...and now I know I can sing!! (RHWC 7).

Organisational leadership

my role this week has been a bit of a facilitator, and…helping musos out, and communicating with each other (AI L1)
I do the facilitating, happy to do so (AI L2)
they trust me; have faith in me. Their parents know who I am, I might not know their parents, but they know who I am – before I was at Council, they know our family, sort of thing, so that probably, well definitely, the parents say well don't let (me) down, make sure you’re there, so that gives a bit of credibility (WW L1)
through excellent management and planning, the event was a resounding success, exceeding all of our expectations. Our Regional Youth Development Work Party got a taste of what is required in a professional environment and developed skills that they will use throughout their lives and future career.
They also have experienced the sense of satisfaction gained from being part of “something big” which has made a difference in our community (WW L1)
for me it’s very much about encouraging people to sing, because I believe it’s a wonderful thing to do, for anybody, and the more people we can get to sing the better. I think it's about unifying that group, I think, I see myself more as a, and it’s the same as my work here in this office, I’m a bit of a conduit between, staff, clinicians, nongovernment organisations, clients, outpatients,
you know, I’m sort of the piggy in the middle, and I very much see that in the choir as well (MHC L2)

- and I guess I wanted to role model staff involvement in it (MHC L1).

Pedagogical leadership

- it’s been a massive part (of my education)… I’ve met new people, made some contacts (AI 7)
- well certainly with disengaged kids and difficult kids, you can’t expect to follow the curriculum, page by page, but I think… identifying a kernel of ability, that’s kind of like, in a nutshell, what all teachers, hopefully should, or try, should be heading towards. I know myself… no matter how good intentioned you are, you do sort of, forget, and you sort of… be a control freak, it’s so easy to just be a control freak when you’re faced with kids that are so disruptive… it’s different when the kids are engaged and do work with you… and.. you can step back a lot better… I couldn’t agree more… you constantly try to remember that yourself, about allowing them, I think it is good to allow them ownership of their learning when you can, and… give them that sense of success, taste of success (WW 2)
- and the teachers are very good. (gen agreement…they are, we’re very fortunate) (SC 10)
- credit should go to the teachers (SC 8)
- with (conductors’) guidance we have learnt so much about music (SC testimonials)
- but you know (conductor) is very good about getting her groups to play, for instance, before the salt river brass concerts, several times a year we get to play, either on stage or outdoors… before the actual concert, which is a marvellous thing, yeah, so she does things like that that other bands don't have (NH 17)
- New Horizons allows us to relearn things we forget, it’s a class, things we learnt 50 or 60 years ago, this does that (NH 22)
- qualified and capable equals no pressure / contrasting with the (another) klezmer band, run by amateur, highly strung and stressful (NH L9)
- I think the tone that he (conductor) gives, is not really aggressive, he listens to us pretty well, only goes as far as we’re going … he has a nice technique of helping us go through different passages and explain them up on the board and stuff… (NH 27)

- it was to take me totally out of my comfort zone… but repeating works, yeah absolutely… not realising that there was an ability to sing and the nervousness associated with it…the teacher did it all, he brought out the positives… (RHWC 6)

- initially, but then I thought, oh, he’s just, he is so encouraging (noises of mmm), and every little thing that you thought you’d slipped on, Graham you were very good at being able to work us through each personality cause Deb and I are very different personalities as you know, and when you separated us you worked out very quickly how to, how you could teach that person, how to get to the same result in a different… what’s the word? soprano, alto, tenor, bass (RHWC 8)

- the direction you were giving with you know, all of this stuff (hand gestures, particularly re pitch) (RHWC 4)

- I would like to especially thank you (conductor) for delivering a program of such high standard. Learning a new skill from such a qualified teacher like you Graham has been the icing on the cake for me. I was able to trust in the process because I trusted you and your skill level (RHWC 4).

Public relations

- the quality of that program (at the high school) was very well known across NY state… The (band) director there for over 30 years… put the school on the map, because of the band program. So that’s what I inherited. It was very tough, because they were very big shoes to fill (NH L9).

Dimension 4: Personal expectation and self-view

Personal expectation, the third highest rating dimension of the six, speaks to the personal meaning that the group experience has. It rated only marginally lower than Membership, with 122 qualifying comments (20 per cent of the total data) to Membership’s 127 (20.8 per cent of the total). The dimensions of Personal
expectation and self-view and Membership are interrelated in that they both relate to the experience of the individual in relation to the group experience. They differ in that Personal expectation and self-view relates to the personal meaning of the individual, their expectations of how the experience will affect them, and what their personal preconceptions and views about their own potential and limitations are in relation to personal development and capacity. It also taps into an individual’s preferences, their flexibility, adaptability and identity, developed or learnt through personal experiences and interactions with others. Membership talks to the individual’s sense of validity as a part of a collective. Personal expectation and self-view concerns itself with the inward view of personal status, agency and mobility within the group, while Membership concerns itself with collective status, group agency, personal investment to the collective and the outward view. Table 16 identifies the differentiation between the two interrelated dimensions of Personal expectation and self-view, and Membership.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal expectation and self-view</th>
<th>Membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>personal standards</td>
<td>inclusion in the social standing of the group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self-imposed boundaries</td>
<td>identity as part of group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expectations, hopes and perceptions developed from cumulative life experience</td>
<td>belonging to whole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>inclusion in interaction by others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rules, practices, standards of the collective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status as an individual within the group, attributable to external experience(s) and personal capabilities</td>
<td>Status as a member of the group, attributable to membership of the group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 16:** Differentiation between the two interrelated dimensions of Personal expectation and self-view, and Membership.

Constituent factors for consideration in the dimension of Personal expectation and self-view include:

- artistic expectations and perceptions,
- identity and status mobility,
- personal capacity and potential,
- personal enjoyment and satisfaction, and
- social expectations and perceptions.
The distribution of participant data that defines and substantiates the dimension of personal expectation and self-view, differs significantly across the total sample, with a variation of three to forty-one qualifying data pieces across the seven case study cohorts. An analysis of the data set, with observations of demographic and other socioeconomic and sociocultural factors that may offer some explanation of this variation, features at the end of the chapter. The comments emerging from the data set presents in the following order: the AI group, that with the lowest number within this dimension, presents with three comments; the WW community with nine; the NH community, fifteen; RHWC with sixteen comments; SC, seventeen; MHC, twenty-five; and with the greatest number of qualifying, supportive, comments thus far, the ARY group presents with forty-one. Participant quotes are listed below, grouped in the case study cohorts from which they emanated, in increasing order of frequency:

Artistic expectations and perceptions
- What I’ve achieved is sharing songs (AI 2)
- in the school community? oh, I think it’s (the place and the importance of music) valued and seen as an asset… (WW 2)
- When I gave up the trying and took direction to sing from the platform above my head everything became a natural process (RHWC 6)
- for me it was more perfectionism… combined with the beauty of a … perfect song… (RHWC 4)
- we want more performance opportunities… (SC 11)
- in the early days it was very challenging for me too, because some of the, you know, not everyone was singing on key all the time, and I had to be really careful who I stood next to (laugh)… so it was very um yeah, on a musical level it was also stretching me and challenging me (MHC L1)
- cause actually it’s easy, cause the song, every song kinda repeats itself, so like, you learn one bit, and you get the rest of it. (ARY 5)
- we could get like a music career out of what we’re doing (ARY 17).
Identity and status mobility

- it changes their identity, it puts another layer onto their identity and maybe they’re not seen as the naughty kid, or that so-and-so’s kid, yeah… (WW L1)
- well I have to say, that for me… I wasn’t very young, and it didn’t reconnect me with my youth, cause I was 70 when I started to play, but I’ve got now these connections with my grandchildren…I go to see them and it’s like …oh let’s jam… and I don’t have to watch Glee to have something to talk to them about… (MH 17)
- you know that’s funny, because the first time my daughter came along to one of my performances, and she knows for four years I’ve been playing, and I’m telling her about it and … and she came and she said – oh my God, you can really play! … (lots of laughter) and that’s when I was playing drum set so I really look like I was playing… (lots of laughter) (NH 17)
- an ad in the CRANA magazine to have free singing lessons to perform in a choir at the conference raised in me a challenge to take me out of my comfort zone. At that moment I had no realization of exactly what that would be (RHWC 6)
- I’m not a singer, well I didn't think I was a singer - something new to do, it’s fun, and its great.. and I’m here (RHWC 7)
- I was always told ..mum… and my husband said… Oh, Jude… and now I sing, and I don't shut up! and I would recommend this to anyone (SC 8)
- there were lots of grandparents and parents [of my other students]. They were blown away – some were in tears. Seeing people sing their hearts out. The kids really respected that too – they were witnessing people do something really hard – it’s not easy getting up and singing in front of people. The generational angle was a bit of a breakthrough (Musica Viva 2012)
- a lady brought her teenage grandkids [to the end of year concert]. One was almost in tears. She was proud of her grandmother. She saw her differently – not just old and decrepit (Musica Viva 2012)
- it has really demonstrated that people that other people thought can’t do anything, can do amazing things (MHC L4)
• there’s a lot of damage really, from abuse… I don't know how … her mental illness is or whether it’s just a lot of trauma I think, but, um, she’s a person with um, she’s a star, isn’t she ? so she’s got an identity, that’s attached, a role, role now, where she was just… the oddball, that talked about farts and whatever, but now she’s… a star member of the Choir. And that goes with her (MHC L3)

• there are people here who have been working here for 20, 30 years and you say, oh, Joe Bloggs is in the choir, and he’s performing on Saturday night, and they say Oh, I didn’t even know he could sing… and you just think, it puts a whole different perspective on their life... (MHC L2)

• when I first came to this place 7 years ago, you’d see (male patient) walking past, but he never spoke, he never engaged in conversation, one day…, they had the Karaoke machine going and he picked up the microphone and started singing, they all went.. who knew, who knew he could sing. So when the Choir started up not long after that we went right, we’ve got to get (him) into that, and he’s very different to understand in his speech. And you know when he’s having a bad day now because that all stops. Last week, or the week before, he was really quiet and we said are you OK?, and he said, oh, I’m really tired, and there’s always a reason now, otherwise he’s really quite involved… otherwise he’s joking and playing and waving his arms about and pretending to conduct the choir … (MHC L2)

• some of the comments I’ve got are… oh gee, so people with a mental illness, are they in that choir? And oh, patients who live here… are in that choir (MHC L2)

• well I feel special (drummer, having been identified by other members as keeping the band together musically) (ARY 1)

• it was just all round, it was.. really good.. ‘cause like, um, (laughs) just, knowing that you’ve done.. like.. that, yeah.. and then people have actually liked what you’ve accomplished… (ARY 4).
Personal capacity and potential

- I’ve been blind since birth, actually. but when you look at it, doesn’t mean you can’t – you can take music with you- just like Stevie Wonder, and Ray Charles (AI 2)
- I’m not playing enough music, it is my passion, I want to be doing it full-time. It (the residency) inspired me to take my career to another level, and go and have a look around Melbourne, so that’s what we’re going to do, we’re going to move to Melbourne next year (AI 5)
- other people from the community comment and say – oh, you guys are fabulous, bla, bla, bla, and you work so hard, and… I can see – we even had this year – oh, and I can see your improvement from last year, and, oh, the kids are chuffed (WW 1)
- I don’t know they (high school band players) just seem so…above me (NH 20)
- I just sit there and think: I can actually do this. I.. I'm actually sitting here, playing. I never thought I would do that. It's.. it's amazing. It's a wonderful feeling (Dooley 2014)
- I wasn’t too sure… I wasn’t anxious or anything like that, I just thought my voice would give me away and I’d be wasting your time… Kevin (husband) I wanted to hit him, because… he didn’t understand, I, it was making me a little, um, testy, I thought I’ll just turn my back on it, and I’m so glad I didn’t because I’ve gained and I’ve come out of it with another experience in my life, one I’ve enjoyed (RHWC 9)
- I’ve never had individual singing lessons before. What the heck… throwing all the inhibitions. Having a different perspective – that was really nice… I enjoyed that - another way of experiencing my voice (RHWC 4)
- life creates these expectations… (RHWC 7)
- for a long time I’ve thought I’d like to sing in a group, but I never had the courage (SC 7)
- at first I didn’t think I could sing again in my mid-eighties, since my only experience of singing was at school and that’s a long time ago. Also English is not my first language. I thought one could hear my accent (SC 19)
• for somebody to be able to control and manage that situation to be able to turn up, even though they’re terrified, is pretty extraordinary. (MHC L1)
• like at the start you didn't think you’d be able to make any instrument into that song… (ARY 5)
• and kind’a at the start, when people were coming and going, to be frank, I didn't think we’d make it, like make something out of it (ARY 5)
• when you’re singing and others are playing instruments, it’s different because you’re afraid of what other people might think and not really focusing on what you want to enjoy (ARY 9)
• this could give us a career (ARY 19).

Personal enjoyment and satisfaction

• I’m only in one band, because I don't want any one thing to take over my life, but I wake up on a Tuesday and go, I get to go to band today… And it has become the highlight, over the winter, in other words it’s really, really, important (NH 17)
• I really feel unique in that everybody, most everybody else here didn’t join this band as a beginner, or…take it up …starting when they’re 70, but, it has brought something to my life I never even knew I was missing. And now… it to me, feels like, you know, second to my grandkids in case they hear this (NH 17)
• when I went to my first rehearsal and I was on my way home, and I said to my husband – God this is fun, I haven’t had so much fun since High School, and he said - well thanks a lot! (much laughter) (NH 18)
• (interviewer: Is the experience what you expected?) Better, better, more, more, yes and more (SC whole group)
• something to look forward to each week (SC testimonials)
• I come because I love it, I love it personally, singing, and I’ve really missed not coming when the last term or so my work’s taken my away (MHC L3)
• I liked it since day 1, when we started with the music thing (ARY 17)
• I just thought it would be crap, because I wasn't really into music, but then, yeah, I liked it… (ARY 19).
Social expectations and perceptions - 2

- I am … still passionate about the value of community music, and.. amateur music, and I have great concerns about the way society is heading and the corporatisation and the junk mentality… of everything I see around me just about…so many things (WW 2)

- I joined with my wife, because we thought it would have to be better sitting around singing than sitting around grizzling about what’s wrong with the rest of the world, and we’re enjoying it right to the top of our heads, it’s real good going, and we’ve met some nice people. There’s not one here I don't like (SC 10).

**Dimension 5: Membership**

In the context of this thesis and the study that provided the data, the term membership describes the state of one’s activity and agency as it is defined by participation in the group or collective. This dimension of successful community music speaks of the sense and security of belonging, of being an insider as opposed to an outsider, of feeling embraced by the group rather than being on the periphery. Membership in this context operates a dualistic function in that the collective bestows identity on the individual member, while the members represent the group and its meaning, as advocates, disciples or ambassadors. This sense of membership operates as an element of a member’s persona, with varying degrees of prominence, regardless of social environment. While membership relies on the status of belonging, that status is a constant both within and without the group environment. In this way, membership and its associated status of connectedness and belonging resides with the member, not the group. It differs from the previous dimension of personal expectation and self-view, in that although it resides with the individual, and in this way is a personally processed and experienced social and emotional state, membership is defined and effected by the social reality of the collective. Personal expectation and self-view represents the perspective of individual capacity, potential for growth and status mobility within the group.

Membership is a feeling that one has invested part of oneself to become a member… It is a feeling of belonging… Membership has *boundaries*; this means that there are people who belong and people who do not. The
boundaries provide members with the emotional safety necessary for needs and feelings to be exposed…

(McMillan & Chavis 1986: 9)

The dimensional subthemes (Table 13) that guide the coding of data under the dimension of Membership are:

- Affinity and congeniality,
- Contribution,
- Equality and mutual respect,
- Group identity,
- Interaction,
- Ownership and responsibility,
- Sense of belonging,
- Shared objectives, and
- Trust and reliability.

McMillan and Chavis (1986) identify five attributes of membership that interact and mutually support each other, they are boundaries; emotional safety; sense of belonging and identification; personal investment and a common symbol system:

Five attributes of membership seem to fit together in a circular, self-reinforcing way, with all conditions having both causes and effects. Boundaries provide the protection for intimacy. The emotional safety that is a consequence of secure boundaries allows people to feel that there is a place for them in the community and that they belong. A sense of belonging and identification facilitates the development of a common symbol system, which defines the community's boundaries. We believe too that feelings of belonging and emotional safety lead to self-investment in the community, which has the consequence of giving a member the sense of having earned his or her membership.

(McMillan & Chavis 1986: 15)
The dimension of Membership presents with 127 qualifying comments from the total respondent sample of \( n = 60 \), from 21 data collection instruments including interviews, focus group sessions and testimonials. The breakdown of data subsets across case-study communities is as follows: the AI group contributed eleven comments; RHWC twelve; ARY, fifteen; WW, sixteen; NH, twenty-one; the S C, twenty-four; and MHC, twenty-nine. The breakdown by subtheme is: Affinity and congeniality, 34; Contribution, 10; Equality and mutual respect, 9; Group identity, 32; Interaction, 14; Ownership and responsibility, 4; Sense of belonging, 17; Shared objectives, 4; and Trust and reliability, 5. Following is a representative portion of the participant quotes, presented in subtheme groupings, in case-study cohorts, in order of increasing frequency, and proportionate to the subthematic breakdown described above:

**Affinity and congeniality**

- they feel like they’re part of something bigger because they’re part of a group, they’re sharing a common interest with other like-minded people around the town so they develop a link with people outside their social group (WW L1)
- I'll tell what I can about band camps… oh God it’s fun, I’ve been to (lists 6 or 7), but you meet people form all over the world, actually we had a camp in Iowa city…You meet so many people from all over, and they become friends…when travelling we visit bands through connections made at band camp…we plot our travels from casino, bands, casino, bands… (NH 18)
- whenever I tell people about NH I tell ‘em it’s a group for over 50’s but we have a few younger people. But I kind of like that acknowledgement that it’s for older people… (lots of agreement) (NH 16)
- we have a great time together (NH L9)
- by December we had enough people to put on a concert,… and its been probably about 25 or so (members) through the years… kinda average, even though lots of people have come through… water finds its own level (NH L9)
- you’re here because you want to be… I mean you don’t have to do anything anymore, I mean you’re retired, so… (general laughter) …some people come here I think as a social thing, you know, they play an instrument and they just do this and … look forward to the coffee breaks (NH L6)
it’s non-competitive…yes, that’s right (much yessing) we boost each other. no pressure. (SC 17)

it is more than singing. It is friendship (Musica Viva 2012)

there is a closeness about the group. They look out for each other – if someone hasn’t shown up, they check. When someone passes away, they leave a chair at the next rehearsal or concert out of respect.

There is camaraderie; ownership and team spirit (Musica Viva 2012)

meeting new people and forming bonds of friendship (so important to seniors) (SC testimonials)

the pleasure of being in a warm, friendly group (Seniors Choir testimonials)

through coming to Choir, I am beginning to make new friendships (SC testimonials)

Tuesday is a day I look forward to each week because of the choir and the people in it (SC testimonials)

sometimes I sit in the back of the choir and go… my God, we’re quite a diverse little bunch here (MHC L2).

Contribution

very quickly picked up that… everybody’s contribution will go towards that sound (RHWC 1)

or they’re the kid that they might not have paid much attention to before or, you know, ostracised them a little bit and now they go – wow, he’s really good at that … I really want him in my group now… (WW 1)

the purpose of it is to have an activity that people can come together and do and not feel that they’re having mental health shoved down their neck (MHC L2)

having people involved in something outside of themselves, having people commit to something regularly and try and put in an effort, and want to participate and improve… how we actually harness that group and that momentum to break down stigma. I mean it has worked, cause there are some members of the choir who are general public members, who are there because they saw us perform somewhere, they wanted to be part of it (MHC L2).
Equality and mutual respect

- we made the agreement on day one, we are all musicians, this is about music, not disability (AI L2)
- you can have someone in there who is doing their PhD sitting there next to somebody who didn't even finish year 8 in high school, it’s a great leveller, it's a primal sound that quite frankly we should all do more of (MHC L2)
- it does bring us all… togetherness, it’s not an us and them situation, so it’s very much in line with the recovery model that’s, um, around in mental health services (MHC L3).

Group identity

- the ensemble works come pretty well together (AI 2)
- every collaboration is different. Haven’t worked with big symphony orchestra… have played pretty well everything else (AI 6)
- now that would be something, to know that as a community we could continue to maintain the original choir and expand according to those interested. There were many interested at the conference who asked how did you find out about this (RHWC 6)
- the ultimate was meeting up with you and everyone else in the group, and performing at the dinner. The realisation that it could work as a group was magic! I think the first rehearsal together was truly amazing! The sound of all the voices singing the different harmonies to me was wonderful (RHWC 7)
- I just think that music is such a joyous thing to do, and sometimes I play music with other people, or there’s a little bit of singing, but, I’d never been part of a choir… I just know that, when you’re doing it it’s like that thing… being a galah with a whole lot of galahs flying around…. so If there’s an opportunity to be part of that flock and fly like that, then I’ll do it. It’s really beautiful. I didn’t think much about anything except doing that, and there’s always room for improvement, with singing, and I thought, something might come out of that as well, but mostly, its just the joy of it… just because it brings people together into such a beautiful space, and so everything else in your life becomes irrelevant because you have that really intimate space that
you share...so, I’ll just jump into that whenever I can, because it’s really precious (RHWC 10)

- yeah, cause I haven’t performed in front of people in ages, it was the first time .. again …and it was really good, I enjoyed it… and just to know that you perform with your friends as well, like you’re a band, sort of thing… (ARY 4)
- when can we do this again? (WW Busking project Youth Week acquittal 2009)
- the little pack that’s around town, um, that come and watch them (the disadvantaged youth group) perform, and they all come.. they all come (WW L1)
- in a sporting team you can see who those standout kids are, but you know, when you’re singing as part of a choir.. and we always say - we’re not hearing 80-something different voices, we’re hearing one voice, and they’re part of that one , and , regardless of whether they’re the kid that isn’t really, you know, doing so well, that whole group is succeeding - therefore they are the successful ones. You know, and it’s not like you go – Wow, I just heard this big choir, and, gee that kid sounded really good, you know, the whole lot sounded good (WW 1)
- a communal activity (SC testimonials)
- I think from the community’s perspective that sense of belonging, you know the (MHC choir) is kind of a brand name now and people know who they are.. and if you go to a rehearsal and there are a few people away for whatever reason, it’ll be like, oh, where’s the rest of us… where’s the rest of the gang… so there’s very much a sense of identity, or we are a group, and we have a purpose, and we have rehearsal every Friday, and why weren’t you here, and if somebody doesn't turn up for a few rehearsals it’s like oo are they OK? And maybe we should check on them (MHC L2)
- when I’m trying to explain other things that we might like to be doing, I use that as an example and the response I usually get is ‘oh yeah, I know about that, so I think for me, once again it’s a sort of a … it opens the doors to people understanding why we might want to encourage people to participate in music or other arts programs (MHC L1).
Interaction

- …made a lot of great contacts, thoroughly enjoyed myself, one of the few times I’ve ever done composition in my life, I’ve written a piece for horn, saxophone and piano, and I’ll probably add a bass part to it at a later date (AI 1)
- (it is a) reminder of how to collaborate (AI 4)
- coming with a whole bunch of musicians from all across Australia creating stuff from scratch has been a bit of a challenge, but also entertaining (AI 9)
- I can see how … management… can - I don’t think they all are - can sometimes be seen by on-the-ground workers to be really disconnected from what’s really happening … well this connects me… on a pretty practical level (MHC L3)
- and interaction and communication and those sorts of things (MHC L1)
- when you’re a normal person interacting, whether we’re having a dinner party or whatever and we’re interacting, we make jokes, and we have a time to learn about interaction and sense of humour, and in fact that repartee is the way things happen and that makes the most interesting relationships, but then, we don't necessarily recognise that somebody with a mental illness has that as well, and we don't necessarily have the time to sit down and get to know them well enough, and understand, what they’ll think is funny…and in fact, maybe that’s what we’re getting to - that the music, or the activity that’s about doing something interesting and creative …and challenging at the same time, gives us the space to actually interact in a way that isn’t just- have you taken your meds?... it's a way of building friendships and taking the time out to spend time with people in a creative and interesting and normal way (MHC L1).

Ownership and responsibility

- it was a fabulous experience doing the lessons via remote and individually and then getting together to rehearse and perform. It has inspired me to try and organise a sing for pleasure group in (home town) with the hope that we could meet up with like-minded people from (neighbouring towns) (RHWC 2)
- connecting to, if you like, a community that, if you're in a choir, if you're singing in a group, there are a whole lot of things that come up, and it doesn't
matter if it's singing or if it’s a theatre group or if it’s something else, the sorts of things that I think are important that can happen is you can develop a sense of… individual things about pride, about social skills, all of those sorts of things, but also a responsibility, that’s about being there on time, that’s about, participating in the group, that’s not letting the group down if… you know, there’s going to be a performance, I need to be there I need to rehearse to get there (MHC L1).

Sense of belonging

- when meeting the other participants during our three rehearsals and performance it felt as though we had always known each other and as Graham had said we were a community (RHWC 6)
- despite us learning our songs in our homes all over Australia I felt very much connected to the other members of the choir and got enjoyment and reassurance from the fact that I knew others faced the same challenges of learning something new, making mistakes and having to deal with the fear of performing and exposure (RHWC 4)
- yeah, the sense of belonging, and the sense of giving something to a group that is, that is succeeding, and doing well… (WW 1)
- when I was a kid I was in the air force and I was in the only all women band in our air force.. we started having reunions, after … the band lasted for 10 years in the air force. We started having reunions in 1997, we have reunions every year we have a reunion, and this is not unusual for military groups … you have reunions, and we are able to put together a good concert every year because most of us belong to NH bands… (NH 18)
- happy! I belong. We have treats between band practice, and we…visit with each other. And then we get back to playing again (Dooley 2014)
- to belong, to feel like they belong to something (MHC L2)
- but that’s the thing… you either fit or you don’t. Out here, within this community… and I’m talking about the whole of the community out here, you either fit or you don’t (MHC L3).
Shared objectives

- I also made a small pile of new friends! Right from first meeting with (3 other group members) at the opening cocktail thingo – it was great – we had a shared interest/experience etc and we also had something that we were working together to achieve – it was great (RHWC 5)
- because if you’re working against them, you’re really not going to enjoy the sport much, are you; if you work with them, you can strategise and everything like that. (ARY 8).

Trust and reliability

- now I feel I can belt it out and I don’t feel self-conscious… and I feel I fit in (SC 2)
- the Choir for those people is a constant isn’t it, you know, in the midst of all these changes (MHC L3).

**Dimension 6: Well-being**

As identified in the two previous chapters, well-being refers to:

- the presence of positive emotions and moods…the absence of negative emotions… satisfaction with life, fulfilment and positive functioning
  
  (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2013: np)

Well-being, as defined above, is impacted by the satisfaction of all the other dimensions discussed in this chapter. However, the research data clearly suggests that it requires stand-alone status as a focus and concern in and of itself. As such, the theme of Well-being emerged as the third most prominent of the nine group member-identified themes discussed in Chapter Three, the highest-ranking theme emerging from the leaders’ data in Chapter Four, and as the most prominent of the six dimensions of successful community music activity under discussion in this chapter. Analysis of total sample using both collation of qualifying comments for each dimension, and averaging of proportionate representation across all the individual case-study cohorts, position Well-being as the most prominent dimension of successful community. With this chapter functioning as the third of three main data
presentation chapters, and this being the final section of that data presentation, it is clear that Well-being has emerged as an overarching theme of the study. It is both a prominent aspect of perceived sociocultural benefit for group members and leaders in the community music groups studied, and the most prominent consideration in compiling successful community music environmental provisions.

Analysis of case-study data generated nine subthemes that conflate to formulate the dimension of Well-being. These subthemes (Table 13) capture Well-being-relevant comments that reference participant concerns and concepts such as: ability; activity and purpose; confidence, self-esteem and social capability; connection to place and orientation; emotional and spiritual benefit; physical and mental benefit; positivity and resilience; safeness; and transformation or transcendence. The data set that constitutes justification for this dimension is detailed in the following section, with case-study community breakdown being AI, six comments; RHWC, twelve comments; WW, thirteen; ARY, fourteen; NH, twenty-seven; MHC, forty-two; and the SC, forty-eight. The distribution of data across subthemes is: Ability, 16; Activity and purpose, 13; Confidence, self-esteem and social capability, 21; Connection to place and orientation, 11; Emotional and spiritual benefit, 22; Physical and mental benefit, 49; Positivity and resilience, 23; Safeness, 3; and Transformation or transcendence, 6.

Ability

- (I’ve had) Cerebral Palsey since birth, when little, parents got me a drum kit, thinking it would be good for me…physical exercise, and they had no idea it would take off the way it did (AI 3)
- I’ve come away amazed and inspired, doing what they do. We’ve all just thought about the music, there’s been no disability here, just ability. We felt forced together initially. Like you’re disabled people and able people, you’re not, you’re here to facilitate. Like no, we’re just here to make music together. Level playing field (AI L3)
- most valuable piece of information I’ve taken away from this…just learning how other people with very serious visual disability can cope in a musical environment, it’s sort of raised my awareness of things I can do, of ways of hearing and listening to music in terms of interpretation and feel (AI 7)
• and the interesting thing about the music is that it’s extending them, it meets all the goals that our programs are supposed to meet, but it’s also a little bit different because it’s, um, promoting something they’re good at, that nobody else is really recognising (WW L1)

• (participant) was making wrong choices with the people she was hanging out with, and the activities they were getting up to and she soon realised especially through music. She had this ability and talent that others were exploiting that she could grab a hold of and make it into her own, she learnt how to own it… I think learning is about ownership and being able to take those skills and transfer them to others situations and other environments. It’s a very grown up thing to do. And she’s doing it, she’s doing it (ARY L2).

Activity and purpose

• and they feel like it’s such a big thing, like they get on assembly and they do an item, and like it’s such a big thing for those kids, like they’re not the kids that are ever going to succeed academically, and there, it gives them that outlet, whether they’re brilliant at it, or they’re the one that’ll sing the one note the whole time, it’s just going with the flow, you know, but at least it gives them that sense of purpose… (WW 1)

• When my parents retired, and I was seeing all their friends in retirement, it looked to me like there wasn't enough to really do, that there was a lot of watching TV, for some people, it was playing golf, and, uh, not too many years later they died. And so, I thought it would really be good if they could have an opportunity to do things that are challenging and give a sense of accomplishment. In the mid-nineteen-eighties, I started thinking about how good music would be for retired people (Dooley 2014)

• when they (the choir) go out… there’s a sense… of something a bit special about that and it carries a degree of cred and status… (MHC L3)

• trying to broaden… the MH service model, around how we do our core business, that, we talk about rehabilitation, but … often , as you can imagine, a lot of these people probably sit around doing nothing, and don’t fill their hours much, and, you’re not going to get well that way (MHC L1).
Confidence, self-esteem and social capability

- having improved my singing and having managed to perform in front of an audience has given me the confidence to look for the next challenge no matter what it might be. It has shown me it only takes half an hour per week of commitment to achieve a lot of personal growth and add some fun into the day to day activities (RHWC 4)
- a sense of recognition, a sense of value... they feel like it’s their turn, a little bit... to be in the spotlight (WW L1)
- it’s a self-esteem thing, like, kids that aren’t the confident ones, that are never good at anything, are the ones that sit back (WW 1)
- got like the accomplishment and more confidence and self-esteem (ARY 5)
- I’m actually feeling more confident then I was before I started (this program) (ARY 18)
- (going out to perform) on their overall capacity, it’s a really lovely thing to do. In fact I’ll never forget seeing (particular residential patient), someone you would never get saying ‘boo’, walking around with a tray of sandwiches handing them around... and you think - that’s amazing, quite amazing (MHC L2)
- he’s (inpatient) lost control of his tongue because of the medication and stuff, but if you listen, there’s a conversation to be had, and he’s happy to talk, and I’ve just seen a real, um, shift in his ability to converse, and relate to others (MHC L2).

Connection to place and orientation

- I have tremendously dedicated people... been with me for very many years... and these rehearsals and concerts are sacred to them, where they can come to get away from stress... my philosophy is if it’s stressful, don’t come. It needs to be fun and that's it. No stress, no pressure, and that’s the way it’s been (NH L9)
- I remember when we used to play in small groups in Iowa city, and we used to go to nursing homes and there were people who were totally out of it, I mean, they were in a stupor, and when we played they would (Barb: their foot would move) start to become part of the scene, it was amazing (NH 21)
• for the people that are the residents of the campus out here, that live here, it is their home, they would spend most of their time here, they’d rarely go out, so, to, it makes sense, well if it was happening outside, somewhere else, the logistics of getting them involved would be phenomenal and they wouldn't be involved. It wouldn't happen. So a huge advantage of being on campus is that. But also, it’s then an activity that’s part of their life here, it’s like walking to your neighbourhood hall or something… that’s the sense of it (MHC L1)

• from the choir’s perspective, the hall is absolutely their base, and they feel like ducks out of water when they have to go somewhere else- I know I do. We go to (other venue) as an alternative, when we get turfed out for whatever reason, because, you know, we’re not important enough and we get usurped, we go somewhere else, and the rehearsal will go OK, but it doesn't feel right, and people get more agitated, and those rehearsals are bit tougher to get through. The hall, (on the MH hospital campus) the hall in particular is the heart and the soul of the choir (MHC L2).

Emotional and spiritual benefit

• such a great time-efficient way to do something enjoyable for body, mind and soul. Having to be in charge all the time in my job and being often involved in the organisation of activities in my small community it was soo relaxing and refreshing to be a participant and having not to worry about any logistical problems (RHWC 4)

• (klezmer has appealed because) the feel of the music, that’s it, ethnic music, I think any ethnic music is, for lots of people, very attractive, because it.. bypasses the… thinking processes, right to the body (NH L9)

• there’s a little bit of motivational stuff behind that, and whilst it might not be totally obviously – it certainly is subconscious and it is… taken it on board, people do listen to the lyric, they do listen to the lyric, whether consciously or unconsciously (MHC L4)

• singing is good for the soul, really good for the soul, I’ve been singing for as long as I can remember … it’s primal, singing is absolutely primal, and I hate about western culture that we have this this person can sing and this person
can’t, it’s bullshit, we can all sing…and it’s only because we’re told we can’t that we don’t. (MHC L2)

- somebody engaged in a creative activity, um, it can be quite spiritual and it can be quite powerful for them in terms of a range of developments (MHC L1)
- it sort of lifts you up and I float out of here…I do, I feel all lifted up and euphoric… float out of here, I love it. I miss it when I can’t come… (SC 2)
- I suffer massive depression and for two or three hours a week I get a kick out of singing, non-judgemental (SC 16).

Physical and mental benefit
- fitting the lessons into what was already a hectic schedule took some juggling but was well worth it. I felt so much better after that ½ hour – probably equal to a good work out at the gym (without the sweat and need to shower)
  For that ½ hour I just needed to empty my head and think music. True therapy (RHWC 5)
- what I am trying to affirm here is that the whole process is validated as a tool for mental health (RHWC 6)
- physically - after our half hour sessions I would always feel better than before I started. For example I would be feeling tired and I would finish feeling refreshed.
  mentally - it enabled me to rise above stress at work. If everything was a bit much I would go off humming a song and I felt instantly better as if nothing else mattered (RHWC 7)
- and I think for seniors especially it can be an important part of keeping healthy (NH 15)
- the reason I started playing again was that I was diagnosed with 2 forms of cancer…and it reminded me back of high school and how much I hated school other than band (NH 23)
- I’m never going to be young again but it sure makes me feel young again…(NH 18)
- you don't quit playing ‘cause you get old, you get old because you quit playing…and it’s a great recruitment thing, cause people, nobody wants to get old…so join the band.. eternal youth (NH 17)
• research we’ve done here, there are huge health benefits, as well as social (NH 28)
• I think it's an extraordinary program. And, um, it has given a new life to a lot of people (Dooley 2014)
• as a senior, I encourage other seniors, you know this music stuff is the best thing for your brain. It uses all aspects of your brain. And for seniors who have the opportunity, we need to develop our brains and keep our brains active going into old age. When, if we don't they'll atrophy. They'll deteriorate (Dooley 2014)
• somebody who might be having problems with articulation, or with breathing … singing is just so beneficial. Somebody who might be aphasic, having trouble with their speech, can actually sing, quite often they can sing, they can’t talk but they may be able to sing, and I’ve had quite a few examples of that. We have one particular client who wasn’t here today (at rehearsal) who excels with her breathing when she’s singing and she’s sitting up straight with her chin up, ah, posture… so there are all the additional, little benefits, besides the socialisation and the enjoyment and the, well not only the enjoyment but the sheer joy of being able to sing (MHC L4)
• the physical nature of singing I think is really beneficial… you know your.. lady here had a few tears, I think that, music and singing can really tap into, different parts of people’s brains (MHC L3)
• it’s a shift from that biomedical approach to MH care. Rather than, take your pills, see a psychiatrist, see your psychologist… this is a pleasurable activity that they want to be involved in that has those outcomes as well, but is separate from what goes on in their day-to-day lives of managing their mental health (MHC L2)
• (I belong to the group) to help with my breathing problems (SC 1)
• at the beginning of the year they said I had to get a pacemaker because my heart beat was only 39 or 44 beats per minute…, I don't know whether it's the breathing and the singing and the exercises and getting here and all this, and talking to people, but my heart rate now is up to 65 or 66 … it’s probably, um, must have done something to help … when I told the doctor he sort of looked surprised to think that that had happened…it doesn't just happen… (SC 18)
• I’ve got Parkinson’s disease, as you might all know, and the speech therapist that I saw about three weeks ago…she was saying that the very best thing that I can possibly be doing for my voice is to… doing the singing that I’m doing because usually with Parkinson’s disease you begin to lose volume, you know you get softer and softer and softer so you… and I’ve still got a really good volume, with voice, and she said while ever you’re singing, she said, that, keep doing it… with the patients they get in, one of the exercises that they get them to do is go ahhh at the top of their voice, and she said, so keep singing… you know you just keep singing, and keep doing it… so I mean there’s all sorts of benefits that you don’t even think. (SC 8).

Positivity and resilience
• little did I know at the beginning of this journey that I would remember who I am through this experience. Having now returned to my work environment the session was so…necessary to then deal with the situation within that environment (RHWC 6)
• it was and remains a pleasure to be involved in such a profoundly positive experience (RHWC 8)
• I had the best time in my whole life (WW, Youth week event acquittal 2009)
• always positive, and they ran a huge risk by performing at the Youth Week live music event, because they got up on stage, there were 120 kids (in the audience) there, it could have gone really bad (laughs) but it didn’t . All their peers, and it was outside of school, waved their arms and cheered – they were their heroes; even though (one of the busking project participants) leant down and said – if you don't clap I will eat you…(laughs), and for people like (her) (reported as having difficulties connecting socially), it’s very much something that makes her happy (WW L1)
• and being able to do something you didn’t think you could do, and actually achieving it … that’s a positive outcome (ARY 5)
• it’s (singing in a choir) actually a normal session, that normal people do, and normal people like going and singing in groups, and normal people like, and so it’s more… building somebody’s experience and confidence, with interacting, um, and challenging and stretching themselves and all of that, but
particularly in a social type environment where people are learning skills, about, you know, just basic living skills (MHC L1)

- I suffered a nervous breakdown 2 years ago, and I didn’t know where I was going – I was diagnosed with deep depression, and I heard about the singing group, and I’ve improved marvellously since then (SC 9)
- I may feel down and depressed when I arrive at 10:00am but I always leave the building with a smile on my face and a spring in my step! (SC testimonials).

Safeness

- I felt that I could be free and be myself without being bullied (WW, Youth Week event acquittal 2009).

Transformation or transcendence

- We all know how music changes your life, I mean, you're sitting in a quiet room and all of a sudden a beautiful song comes on and it transports you to a different area. I mean, it can lift you out of any kind of mood, it can change your mood (Dooley 2014)
- I get a buzz when I see people grow and develop, and, I look at (inpatient), she’s someone who – she’s transformed, she’s absolutely transformed (MHC L2).

Analysis of relevant data

This section analyses the proportionate representation of case-study data that supports this chapter’s assertion that there are six identifiable dimensions of successful community music activity, each one presenting as a requisite consideration for the establishment and maintenance of a successful community music environment. Attention is given to the apparent hierarchy of community music participant perceptions and expectations, constructed by the rankings and ratings ascribed to the six dimensions by the weightings of the coded participant data constituting the dimensions. The method used to assess the rankings is a triangulation of the sample statistics, specifically, factors of sample size, type, and proportionate case-study representation within the total sample. The information set out in Tables 17, 18 and 19, and Figure 13, informs that process by:
• identifying the proportionate representation of the case-study cohorts within the total sample (Table 17),
• rating the Six Dimensions of Successful Community Music Activity per case-study cohort, and averaged across the total sample (Table 18),
• ranking the proportionate significance of the dimensions across the total sample (Table 19), and
• illustrating the significance of each of the six dimensions within each case-study cohort, compared across case-study cohorts, and in reference to the sample-wide averaged proportionate significance (Figure 13).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case study</th>
<th>Participant sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(no.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WW</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHC</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARY</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AI</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHWC</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NH</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Sample</strong></td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 17: Proportionate representation of case-study cohorts within total sample.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case study</th>
<th>The six dimensions of successful community music activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WW</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHC</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARY</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AI</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHWC</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NH</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>averaged rating</td>
<td>5.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ranking</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 18: Six dimensions of successful community music activity rated per case-study cohort, and averaged across the total sample.*
The chapter then considers the comparative significance of the dimensions between individual case-study communities and contrasts those with the total sample.

It goes on to give broad consideration to the six dimensions of community music activity - with the apparent hierarchy of participant-perceived significance as discussed above – as they articulate with and compare to the nine themes of sociocultural benefit established and explored in Chapters Three and Four.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case study</th>
<th>The six dimensions of successful community music activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WW</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHC</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARY</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AI</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHWC</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NH</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>averaged total</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ranking</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 19: Proportionate significance of the six dimensions averaged across total sample and ranked.

Figure 13: Comparative significance of each of the six dimensions by case study, between case-study cohorts, and with reference to the averaged proportions.
### Table 20: Articulation of ranked themes and sub-themes of socio-cultural benefit with the six dimensions of successful community music activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of social and cultural benefit</th>
<th>Environmental elements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(what aspects of social and cultural development result directly from community music programs)</td>
<td>(how is such development best effected)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group member perspective:</strong> nine themes of sociocultural benefit</td>
<td><strong>Leader perspective:</strong> prioritising six themes/sub-themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal enjoyment #6</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Well-being</strong> #3</td>
<td><strong>Well-being</strong> #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation #8</td>
<td><strong>Identity and empowerment</strong> #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Musical or artistic motivation &amp; achievement</strong> #2</td>
<td>Creativity #6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group musicking #5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skill development &amp; personal challenge #4</td>
<td><strong>Lifelong learning and intergenerational engagement</strong> #5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social engagement</strong> #1</td>
<td><strong>Social engagement &amp; equality</strong> #3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Support</strong> #7</td>
<td><strong>Support</strong> #4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Contribution #9</td>
<td>Support #5</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion**

While the previous two chapters necessarily differentiate between community music group members and leaders, this chapter is concerned with the total sample, comprising individuals from both these otherwise mutually exclusive groups. It necessarily comprises numerous sections of discussion to draw together and interpret
the information from people engaged as community: it considers implications and ramifications of government policy and approach, participant and supporter perspectives, and the emergence from all of these of a model for analysis of community music. Of the two principal research questions underpinning the study, it is the second - *How are the aspects of sociocultural development that are identified as resulting from participation in community music activity best effected?*, to which this chapter attends. The discussion and analysis it contains are necessitated by the foci of the previous two chapters and the emergent and apparent relevance of environmental context as the third of three lenses through which to study the community music experience as articulated by participants of the seven case-study communities that constitute the sample.

Chapter Two’s analysis of the historical development of the three tiers of arts and cultural policy in Australia, and the current, cross-tier policy landscape, provided a policy and public support context for current community music practice in this country. Chapter Three examined the perspective of community music group members and identified nine emergent themes of sociocultural benefit, articulating aspects of perceived and anticipated benefit that presented frequently across responses to the participant questionnaire. The forty questionnaire respondents represented two of the six Australian case-study communities and the one North American cohort, included for comparison and offering a high degree of similarity with the Australian cohorts. Chapter Four tested the nine themes against interview and focus group data from the 24 leaders, representing all seven case-study communities involved in the study. The result of that testing was that while not all of the nine themes featured in leaders’ perspectives as prominent considerations relating to the social and/or cultural benefits derived from group music activity, there were no prominent aspects reported by them that fell outside of, or conflicted with, those themes. In addition to the leaders’ identification of what the aspects are, some insight is evidenced through the semi-structured nature of the interviews with leaders into reasons why the aspects were significant. The emergent element of *why* provided a logical conduit to, and supported the rationale for, this chapter and its focus on the environmental context within which community music activity can thrive.
With a substantial contribution to the question of what aspects of social and cultural development result directly from community group music programs? afforded by the data investigated in Chapters Three and Four, and a connective thread of why this is the case provided by the discrete leaders’ data in Chapter Four, this chapter addressed the second research question of How are the sociocultural benefits that are identified as resulting from participation in community music activity best effected?. It did this through analysis of cross-sample semi-formal and informal data from individual and focus group interviews, participant testimonials, unsolicited third party reports and media.

This chapter identified six dimensions of successful community music activity that emerged from the cross-sample data as: Hospitality; Support; Leadership; Personal expectations and self-view; Membership; and Well-being. With a total number of 611 data items, each a discrete quote from one of the cross-sample contributing participants, there was a non-significant other category that comprised non-trending comments. Those comments were detailed early in the chapter, in the interest of transparency and robust analysis, and do not challenge the validity of the six-dimension model. The six dimensions discussed in this chapter speak to a comprehensive and overarching environment of requisite considerations for successful community music activity, collating and distilling 37 subthemes (Table 13). The dimensions, defined for the purpose of this thesis as fundamental measurable aspects that conflate to present a multi-dimensioned whole, comprise tangible or concrete aspects, as well as those that are intangible or abstract. Cross-sample data indicates that although there is an awareness of the importance of the tangible aspects of a successful community music environment, with considerations such as facilities and physical resources; public relations; logistics, organisation and governance; and financial assistance emerging as subthemes, the majority of the subthemes that contributed to the dimensions, 34 of the 37, relate to intangible aspects around capacity, attitude, expertise and emotion.

While the overall research strategy utilised in the study is a qualitative one, there is an element of numerical reckoning to be considered as it applies to the indicative comparative significance of the dimensions. The purpose of the research was not to develop a league table of themes, dimensions or perceptions, however there is some
supportive value in recognising different weightings across case-study cohorts and the sample as a whole. The significant disparity in number of participants across the seven case-study communities poses a challenge in determining a robust model for meaningful indicative ranking, and triangulation of three methods was applied to arrive at the ranking. By utilising and overlaying the raw cumulative numbers of dimension-qualifying coded data, the averaged discrete case-study rankings, and the averaged case-study proportionate rankings, the chapter observed that the dimensions were ranked in the following order from least prominent to most prominent: Hospitality, Support, Leadership, Personal expectations and self-view, Membership and Well-being. It is worth noting that all three methods of quantifying the dimension data presented Hospitality, Support, Leadership and Personal expectations and self-view in the same order; only the rankings of Well-being and Membership varied, with Well-being ranking second in the averaged cohort-specific ranking method. The significance of this element of the study is the recognition of the importance of Well-being as a demonstrated consideration in the provision of a successful community music environment. This chapter is the final of three in which raw data from the case studies of this research is presented, analysed and discussed; the following chapter is the conclusion to the thesis.
Chapter 6: Implications for community music activity in non-metropolitan Australia and the emergence of a model for community music research

Introduction

This chapter, the final of the thesis, retraces the parameters of the study and clarifies its purpose, structure and design. It sums up the discussions introduced, considered, and progressed in the body of thesis, and connects these to the overall findings and implications that constitute the results from the research on which it is based. Interpretation of the study’s substantial and complex bank of community music participant data is predicated using the contextual lens of government policy and polity, the subject of Chapter Two, and the autoethnographic perspective discussed in Chapter One and expounded on in the next section of this, concluding, chapter. These two lenses, while deriving from discrete positions of articulation with the subject matter, share some jurisdictional concern in relation to community music infrastructure, both physical and conceptual, and general support mechanisms. They also bring into focus the questions of why non-metropolitan?, and is there a difference between the conditions of metropolitan and non-metropolitan community music environments? Finally, a three-tiered analytical model that emerged during the research process is outlined and proposed as a template for broader application in community music research.

This final chapter is set out in the following way. First, the researcher’s autoethnographic position and perspective are described, offering an orientation to the study and outlining both the rationale and benefit of the chosen research strategy. Next is a discussion of the place and relevance to the study of Australian government policy, its development in relation to community music activity, and the significance of successive administrations’ approaches to sharing responsibility and support across the federal, state and local tiers. Both policy and polity, particularly at the local government level, are discussed in the context of the official legislative backdrop they provide to community music participation and facilitation in non-metropolitan Australian communities. Following the section on government policy, the chapter identifies structural and organisational factors that have a greater impact on community music organisations in non-metropolitan communities, alternatively referred to as rural and regional, than they do on groups and activities in larger, metropolitan and urban
centres. These factors are then considered in terms of comparative significance to the broader condition of community music participation and facilitation. The chapter continues by identifying two limitations of the study, then proceeds to describe the emergence from the study of a three-tier model for studying community music activity; proposing that the model is sufficiently robust, balanced, and comprehensive in its approach to data gathering and analysis to be considered applicable for use in the study of community music environments more broadly. The thesis concludes by presenting the four main findings of the research.

The author as participant observer
The opening chapter of this thesis identifies and discusses the element of autoethnography as it relates directly to the author’s role as participant observer in six of the seven case-study communities that participated in the research. That discussion concludes that consideration of the researcher’s professional orientation as a music educator and community music facilitator in non-metropolitan NSW, his motivation as such for engaging in the research, and his first-hand observations in the field are relevant contextual elements for the research and its findings. At this point of the thesis, where threads of conclusion are to be drawn, I will adopt the first person and engage in a brief description of my background and experiences with the seven case study communities, and reflect on the indicators of sociocultural development that I observed across the cohorts, adding my own personal voice as music educator and facilitator in the community music sphere.

In each of the six Australian case studies, my involvement was as either musical/artistic leader of the ensemble, facilitator, consultant to the group, initiator and project manager or a combination thereof. My roles at the time of data collection were as follows:

1. West Wyalong: CEO of partner organisation (partnering with local regional music organisation and Bland Shire Council), conductor and consultant,
2. Mental Health Community: CEO of partner organisation (partnering with local mental health authority), artistic director and conductor,
3. Seniors’ Choir: CEO of partner organisation (partnering with Musica Viva), temporary conductor and consultant,
4. At Risk Youth: CEO of partner organisation (partnering with local youth services organisation) and workshop leader,
5. Ability Inclusive: CEO of host organisation, initiator, project manager and participant, and

I relocated from a major metropolitan centre to a small regional city, with a population of 40,000, in 2001. My music education activity in the metropolitan setting had been a mixture of one-to-one teaching and ensemble direction, in both adult and youth, non-formal (non-school) and formal (school-based), environments. The move to the small, regional NSW city of Orange, was to take up the artistic leadership and development role in a community owned and operated music school. This school operated one-to-one and small-group lessons, early childhood and music appreciation classes, musicianship and composition classes, in-school programs, programs for seniors, and a handful of community ensembles. Over a period of ten years, the number of community ensembles more than trebled, as the broad-community group music engagement model that represented the most tangible connection between organisation and community. In addition to the regular programs, involving individual enrolment in ongoing lessons and activities, the organisation also developed a number of one-off or shorter-term projects that gave access to, and for, different affiliation groups such as those based on culturally distinct, age-based, socio-economic status, and physical and mental health ability parameters. Other community-based outreach activities involved projects with community theatre and dance, visual arts, and isolated individuals and communities. As artistic executive officer, and then CEO of the organisation, my policy on involvement with and development of its community-based programs and projects was to have a personal connection. In many cases, I took a direct leadership role.

The principal motivation for embarking on research that investigated perceptions, experiences and conditions of community music in non-metropolitan Australia, with a focus on regional NSW, was the immediacy of impact, and the overt quality of
community at play in the environment within which the community groups rehearsed, and lived out what I observed as member-ship, support, mutuality, and status and identity mobility and transformation. Within that non-metropolitan community music environment, the first of its type that I had encountered, groups established, shaped and reshaped qualities of affinity. What struck me as particular to the regional, non-metropolitan setting, was the apparent greater degree of impact that the group music activity had on the individual participants, and the establishment and ownership of space and place as significant to group identity. The immediacy of impact on individual and group, and the heightened atmosphere of ownership elevated my awareness of non-musical benefits, experienced by participants of successful community music activities - activities from or within which participants perceive ongoing or cumulative personal benefit – activities that appeared to be organised, and directed, facilitated or led, with sufficient competence for group members to feel and communicate high levels of satisfaction. Another significant result of my exposure to and involvement in the activities, was the impact on my own practice. I began to experience heightened levels of satisfaction as a leader, and this contributed in turn to an increase in my sense of purpose as a contributor to community.

Increasingly apparent to me as a musician, facilitator, educator and manager working in a smaller community were the sense of connectedness between group members, and between members of different groups under the auspices of the one organisation, and the qualities of the non-musical interpersonal relationships that developed as social cohorts. A simplistic, albeit genuine, assessment of the dynamic I experienced in the non-metropolitan community music environment would be that the community/music nexus was weighted towards community development and cohesion, whereas my experience of similar activity in the large metropolitan setting is that it favoured the achievement of musical goals and development. While identifying that assessment as simplistic, it does, however, accurately describe my perception and at the same time does not suggest a binary concept or equation. The matrix of personal membership and participation motivation, perceptions of qualities and contributing experiential factors, and personal value systems that apply to the generic community music participant, is a multi-faceted and nuanced one, as is evidenced in the data presented and discussed in this thesis. That said, it is the condensed impressions, simple and vernacular expressions of motivation for, and willingness to, contribute and share the community
music experience, that are typically communicated and expressed to the leader, facilitator, and in this case, researcher.

Initial and informal observations as leader/facilitator of the community music activities within my professional remit indicated that certain identifiable sociocultural benefits resulted from membership. Anecdotal evidence recorded in my own notes suggested:

- increased pride and self-esteem of community music group participants,
- community pride in, and esteem of, participants,
- increased social capability for participants, and
- increased community acceptance of stigmatised sectors represented in community music programs and activities.

These initial themes, supported by repeated and consistent anecdotal evidence over seven years of regular activity in and beyond the same community, provoked the formulation of the two principal research questions that orientated the study:

1. What aspects of social and cultural development result directly from community group music programs?, and
2. How are the aspects of sociocultural development that are identified as resulting from participation in community music activity best effected?

The research commenced in 2008, and during its conduct I delivered presentations and papers on the developing themes and initial findings of my research at thirteen symposia, colloquia and conferences (Appendix 9). Foci of research output during candidacy included music education, arts and health, remote health and mental health. I have one article published in the International Journal of Community Music (Sattler 2013), and the final report on my New Horizons International Music Association fellowship (2011) is included as Appendix 10.

My dual roles of community music facilitator and not-for-profit CEO necessarily involved regular and intensive negotiations with government representatives over
access to community funding and in-kind support structures, performance and public awareness opportunities, official organisational recognition, public validation or endorsement where practicable, and opportunities for engaging in community cultural planning, advocacy and activity. The next section of this chapter provides a final elaboration of the relevance of government policy and polity to the focus of the thesis.

Government policy and its articulation with community music
Chapter Two of this thesis comprised an historical overview of the development of Australian arts and cultural policy from federation at the beginning of the 20th century until the present. It followed successive governmental approaches to the recognition and importance of arts and culture to the Australian people, and situated music, and the responsibility for its support and provision as an asset and activity in the developing governmental agendas. In charting policy development the chapter investigated connections across the three tiers of Australian government, being federal, state, and local, to locate cross-tier policy connections and consistencies, and to identify devolved responsibility for provision and support of community arts activity. The rationale for that chapter was to provide policy and polity background for the investigation into the perceptions, expectations and conditions of community music in Australia.

All six of the participating Australian case-study communities connected to, and benefitted from, government funding assistance in some way. Therefore, there was a clear imperative to interrogate both policy evolution and the status quo that led to a funding environment that allowed for subsidy, whether direct or indirect, for such activities. The nature and detail of the connections to and conditions of the government support enjoyed by the six Australian case-study community music programs or projects (the case-studies represented a mixture of short, medium and longer-term activities) varied in as many ways as there were cases, with indirect funding applying to the majority. Mechanisms included composites of the following: direct, in-kind support from local government (provision of facilities at no cost); local government funding of a short-term youth project; direct state government funding of a project; federal project funding devolved through a state agency; state government education funding; state government health funding; state government arts funding; and federal government health funding.
In investigating the developments, intentions, agendas, and environments effected by intergovernmental arts and cultural policy and attendant cross-tier requirements and expectations over more than a century, it became clear that there is no effective consistency, no cross-tier articulation, and no systemic, systematic or synergistic linkage. The clear conclusion in relation to the effect of government policy at any and all levels on community music activity, is that such activity operates, survives or fails and/or continues to reinvent itself in spite of, rather than due to, government policy. This is not to say that there is no assistance or support given by government, as the opposite is evidenced by the acknowledgement of a wide range of one-off support mechanisms, including financial contribution, in the previous paragraph. It is however apparent, that that grants and other support mechanisms for community music activity in Australia are not guided or driven by cross-tier government policy continuity or accountability principles. Political whim and favour, however honourably founded, takes purposeful and processual precedence over policy development, consistency and vision.

Local government in Australia is a construct of State Government, and although the New South Wales *Local Government Act* (1993) identifies local government as being responsible for the ‘provision, management or operation of cultural, educational and information services and facilities (and) sporting, recreational and entertainment services and facilities’ (*Local Government Act* 1993: np), it is not required to plan or develop policy for community arts, cultural or music activity (DLG 2013). Neither state nor federal Australian governments currently have integrated arts or cultural polices. The critical point to make here is that all levels of Australian government do, and have historically, contributed to community music activities. What is equally clear is that there is no connected policy provision, on or across any of the three tiers, for a consistent or identifiable support structure or mechanism for community music activity as a genre or activity per sé. The next section of this final chapter of the thesis articulates with this discussion of government policy relevance, or the paucity thereof, in its identification of contrasting conditions and settings of community music in the rural/regional/non-metropolitan environment with those of urban, metropolitan Australia.
Contrasting the non-metropolitan Australian community music environment with the metropolitan setting

Following the preceding discussion of government policy impacts on community music activity in non-metropolitan environments with small to medium-sized Australian cities and towns as the particular focus, is the inextricably linked consideration of comparative prominence and identifiability of local government in small communities. Rural and regional small cities and towns in Australia, those with communities that are identifiable generically as non-metropolitan, are typically serviced by a single local government area (council) jurisdiction with councillors who are more overtly and visibly present, and identifiably involved, in the community. Small communities typically have fewer resources proportionate to larger populations, and less, or no, choice of service providers and infrastructure support. Collits (2000) comments on the metropolitan/non-metropolitan resource disparity as follows:

There are obvious economies of scale and scope that can be enjoyed in larger population centres, such as those associated with access to support services. This translates into real productivity benefits to city locations. In the Australian context, the State capital cities have had a clear advantage with respect to agglomeration economies compared to the non-metropolitan regions. To the extent that size leads to additional growth, there are powerful forces at work that disadvantage the regions in a relative sense.

(Collits 2000: np)

Regional, non-metropolitan communities can be sufficiently resourced for successful, supported, community music activity. Sources for artistic and/or other support are necessarily fewer than those in major population centres, however. The case study of NSW Regional Conservatoriums (Chapter Five) and their very existence as primary community music education providers to New South Wales regional centres (Cahill 1998; Reeder 2006; Klopper & Power 2012; Schippers & Bartleet 2013) illustrates a propensity for the concentration of human, artistic, educational and intellectual resources into single organisational entities. In providing access to semiformal, nonformal (and increasingly, formal) music education programs in rural and regional centres, these community music organisations constitute a richness of resource for
community music support and facilitation, limited to one highly visible organisation. This is a dynamic that is less likely in a major metropolitan centre. Infrastructure systems, conceptual and physical, are more apparent and publically identified in non-metropolitan communities due to the single- or few-provider service provision environment operating in smaller population centres. Similarly, the sole prospective source of no- or low-cost premises, auspicing for insurances and other legislative requirements (Cahill 1998; Bartleet et. al 2009), access to grant programs, connections to community services and allied interest/activity groups in the (physical) community is more likely to be the local council. This heightens and highlights the prominence and profile of local government as a key partner in non-metropolitan/regional community music activity.

In both a physical and strategic sense, the six case-study communities that constituted the sample operated through a triumvirate of structural elements. Each was formulated for, and succeeded through, the interest and engagement of the group members; each was artistically and pedagogically orientated by leader/facilitator(s); and each relied on the provision of physical, logistical, and organisational support that would not have been within the participants’ own resources to provide. Again, independent organisations - government, private and not-for-profit - were involved to varying degrees in contributing to that final element. This triangular aspect of the community music infrastructure, overt in the non-metropolitan locus of the research, functioned as progenitor for the emergent three-tiered analytical model that was applied in the data analysis process, and is articulated in the next section of the chapter.

**Limitations of the study**

There were two limiting factors to the study, and they were outlined in Chapter One in the Data analysis and coding, and Sample sections. These limitations related broadly to the breadth of demographic represented by the total sample, which comprised participants of significantly differing levels of physical, social and psychological capability, and a large age range. The first of these was the engagement, and in some cases, capability to engage, in the various data collection instruments, which meant that achieving a balanced volume of data across the group member and leader cohorts presented difficulty. This manifested in a disparity of respondent numbers and case-study cohorts that engaged in the questionnaire instrument (40 participants and three
case-study communities) compared to the semi-structured interviews (135 participants and seven case-study communities). The second limitation of the study related to raw data collection from the Mental health community. Due to the ethical considerations that apply to the majority of the mental health consumer cohort, interview data was collected from the small number of community leader/group members only.

The emergence of a three-tiered analytical template

Data analysis for the study took the form of an inductive, grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Glaser 2002; Charmaz 2005; Stake 2005; Corbin & Strauss 2008; Creswell 2013). Through the process of coding and conceptual development, utilising raw data from the questionnaire, interview and testimonial sets, it became apparent that there were three distinct perspectives to consider, and three layers of perception and expectation from which to build theory. Those three perspectives, indicating three layers of perception and expectation, aligned with the three structural elements discussed in the previous section – group members, leaders and cross-sample consideration of the environmental context. From that alignment would emerge a structural representation of the condition of community music in non-metropolitan Australia as represented by the case-study communities, and with the comparison that the North American case offered. From this emerged the three-tiered analytical template, offering a duality of application. It first serves to recognise, with clarity, three differentiated perspectives from two constituent cohorts that operate in the community music environment with operational and philosophical unity; group member experiences and expectations, group and community leader experiences and expectations, and total sample perceptions of the environmental context within which community music operates. In this way it organised the data for analysis and presentation in a logical, defensible and broadly meaningful format. Second, at a meta-level, it presents a robust and versatile method of analysis for application to other community music environmental studies and projects.

The analytical model, having emerged in concert with the thematic characteristics of the coded cross-cohort data, aligns a practical way to study community music with the study’s community music data itself. With this consideration in place, the thesis’ overarching progression was:
(1) The establishment of nine emergent themes of sociocultural development as defined through the community music group members, in response to the research project participant questionnaire;

(2) The observations and considerations of the community music leaders who are connected to the case-study communities, reflecting on the nine themes and providing insight as to their sociocultural importance, sourced through semi-structured leaders’ interviews, informal testimonials and related third-party interviews and reports; and

(3) The compilation of a set of defining dimensions of successful community music activity, formulated and prioritised as requisite environmental provisions, through the analysis and coding of data collected from across the sample through a range of qualitative data collection instruments including interviews, testimonials and reports.

**Conclusion**

This thesis was about group music activity and the community milieu. It explored the perceptions, experiences and expectations of those who participate in community music activity as group members, and those who provide leadership in a variety of ways, including artistic, logistic and organisational; and with advocacy, resourcing, legal advice and public relations. The thesis identified, through the development and application of a three-tiered analytical model that addressed the two principal research questions underlying and orientating the research, nine themes of sociocultural benefit and six dimensions of successful community music. Further, by triangulating the two frames of analytical outcome, and considering the flow from group member-identified themes through the group leader-focus subset to the whole sample-identified environmentally contextualised dimensions (Table 15), it found that Well-being is the overarching and guiding consideration in relation to the orientation of successful community music. The achievement of Well-being, as defined in Chapter Three and discussed in Chapters Three, Four and Five, encompasses several elements and requires various approaches, attitudes and actions, but does not emerge from the data as an all-inclusive theme. The emergence of Well-being as a prominent feature of participant awareness, desire and experience did so as a discrete and identified theme and dimension, through robust coding and triangulation of data.
The thesis concludes by distilling results of the multiple case-study ethnographic investigation of perceptions, expectations and conditions of community music activity in non-metropolitan New South Wales (Australia) into four principle findings:

First, that aspects of sociocultural development that result directly from participation in community music activity can be identified as the following nine themes: (1) Contribution to community; (2) Recreation; (3) Support; (4) Personal enjoyment; (5) The experience of group musicking; (6) Well-being; (7) Skill development and personal challenge; (8) Social engagement; and (9) Musical or artistic motivation and achievement.

Second, that the nine themes of sociocultural benefit, identified above, are best effected through the deliberate provision and maintenance of the following six dimensions of successful community music: (1) Hospitality; (2) Support; (3) Leadership; (4) Personal expectations and self-view; (5) Membership; and (6) Well-being.

Third, the overarching consideration for successful community music activity, and the environment in which operates, is a conscious and deliberate orientation of Well-being.

Fourth, and finally, this study’s emergent three-tiered analytical template, comprising the lenses of group member perspective, leader perspective, and the environmental context within which the activity operates, presents as a robust, flexible and reliable model for broad application in the study of community music.
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Southcott, J. E. (2009). 'and as I go, I love to sing': The happy wanderers, music and positive aging. *International Journal of Community Music, 2*(2&3), 143-156. Doi: 10.1386/ijcm.2.2-3.143_1


APPENDIX 1:
Participant questionnaire for group members 12 years and under
Socio-cultural development through music programs - Questionnaire for children, 12 years and under

Section One – Participant information
(please fill in the details below to tell us how old you are; whether you are a boy or girl; what you play, or if you are a singer; and some information about your group or ensemble (including how long you have been a member)

a. Gender     Male ___ Female ___ (please tick)

b. Age ...........

c. Instrument (if you are a singer, write “voice”) ........................................

d. Type of ensemble (band, orchestra, choir, other) ........................................

e. Name of ensemble .........................................................................................

f. Approximately how long you have been in the ensemble? __ weeks, __ months or __ years

g. Your musical background (any other musical activities you are, or have been, involved in)
............................................................................................................................

Section Two – Opinions
Please rate each of the following statements by placing a tick in the column whose heading best describes your opinion: 1 (SA) = strongly agree; 2 (A) = agree; 3 (ND) = not decided; 4 (D) = disagree; 5 (SD) = strongly disagree

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<td>Being a member of the ensemble has helped my musical ability</td>
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<td>Becoming a member of the ensemble has helped me socially (getting on with other people)</td>
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<td>I only see other members of the ensemble at rehearsals and performances</td>
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<td>I see some members of the ensemble outside of rehearsals and performances, but only at occasions that have to do with the ensemble</td>
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<td>I see some members of the ensemble socially, at occasions that have nothing to do with the ensemble activity</td>
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<td>People in my community think that being a member of my ensemble is a good thing</td>
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<td>Music is thought of highly in my community</td>
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<td>If I were to leave the ensemble, I would miss the activity</td>
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<td>I think of the ensemble as a community in itself</td>
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<td>The ensemble is just an activity</td>
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<td>If the people in my ensemble were to change to a different group of people, I would have to think again about being a member myself</td>
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<td>I have found that I am happier at school since becoming involved with the ensemble (if you are home-schooled, don’t answer this question)</td>
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<td>Sometimes I am too tired to bother going to a rehearsal</td>
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<td>I have to be really sick to miss a rehearsal</td>
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<td>I would recommend membership in my ensemble to my friends</td>
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<td>I would recommend membership of my ensemble to anyone</td>
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<td>If I were to move I would look for a similar ensemble activity</td>
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<td>If I were to move I would think about starting an ensemble activity myself</td>
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<td>My ensemble activity is my hobby</td>
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<td>My ensemble activity is more than just a hobby</td>
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<td>Being in my ensemble is a part of who I am and where I have come from</td>
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<tr>
<td>Music is thought of more highly in my community than it used to be</td>
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<tr>
<td>Since being involved in the ensemble, I think of music as more important than before</td>
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Development through ensemble music

How did you become involved in your ensemble?

Why are you a member of the ensemble?

What effect has being in your ensemble had on your life?

What effect has being in your ensemble had on your family?

What effect has being in your ensemble had on your group of friends?

What reasons would you make suggest an ensemble activity to another person?

Why is the ensemble music activity important to you?

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Senior Ethics Officer, Ethics Administration, University of Sydney on (02) 9351 4811 (Telephone); (02) 9351 6706 (Facsimile) or gbriody@usyd.edu.au (Email).
APPENDIX 2:
Participant questionnaire for group members (over 12 years)
Socio-cultural development through music programs - Questionnaire

Section One – Participant information
a. Gender Male ___ Female ___ (please tick)
b. Age

c. Instrument (if voice, indicate voice type if known)
d. Type of ensemble (band, orchestra, choir, other)
e. Name of ensemble
f. Approximate length of membership in ensemble __weeks__ months__ years

g. Musical background

Section Two – Opinions
Please rate each of the following statements by placing a tick in the column whose heading best describes your opinion: 1 (SA) = strongly agree; 2 (A) = agree; 3 (ND) = not decided; 4 (D) = disagree; 5 (SD) = strongly disagree

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<td>1. Being a member of the ensemble has developed my musical ability</td>
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<td>2. Being a member of the ensemble has helped me socially</td>
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<td>3. I only see other members of the ensemble at rehearsals and performances</td>
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<td>4. I see some members of the ensemble socially, but only at occasions that are directly related to official ensemble activities, such as suppers, working bees etc.</td>
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<td>5. I see some members of the ensemble socially, outside of official ensemble-related activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Ensemble activity is thought of highly in my community</td>
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<td>7. Music is thought of highly in my community</td>
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<td>8. If I were to leave the ensemble, I would miss the activity</td>
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<td>9. I consider the ensemble to be a community in itself</td>
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<td>10. The ensemble is just an activity</td>
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<td>11. If the membership of the ensemble were to change dramatically I would reconsider my own membership</td>
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<td>12. I have found that I am happier at school or work since becoming involved with the ensemble</td>
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<td>13. I sometimes feel that I am too tired to bother going to a rehearsal</td>
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<td>14. I have to be really unwell to miss a rehearsal</td>
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<td>15. I would recommend membership in my ensemble to my friends</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. I would recommend membership of my ensemble to anyone</td>
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<td>17. If I were to move out of my area I would look for a similar ensemble activity</td>
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<td>18. If I were to move out of my area I would consider starting an ensemble activity</td>
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<td>19. I consider my ensemble activity to be my hobby</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. I consider my ensemble activity to be more than a hobby</td>
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<td>21. My ensemble plays a part in defining/identifying my cultural identity</td>
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<td>22. Musical activity is thought of more highly in my community than it used to be</td>
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<tr>
<td>23. Since being involved in the ensemble, I consider music to be more important than it used to be</td>
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</table>
Socio-cultural development through music programs

How did you become involved in your ensemble?

Why are you a member of the ensemble?

How would you describe the effect your ensemble membership has on your life?

What impact has the ensemble activity had on your family life?

What impact has the ensemble activity had on your existing social network?

What reasons would encourage you to suggest an ensemble activity to another person?

Why is the ensemble music activity important to you?
Development through ensemble music - PhD Research Project

OPTIONAL SECTION

If you are willing to be interviewed and to contribute to this project in greater depth, please provide your name and contact details below, and an email address if you have one.

Please note, this is entirely optional

Name ........................................

Gender  Male ___  Female ___ (please tick)

Age ..............

Telephone number(s) ........................................

Email address ........................................

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Senior Ethics Officer, Ethics Administration, University of Sydney on (02) 9351 4811 (Telephone); (02) 9351 6706 (Facsimile) or gbriody@unsw.edu.au (Email).

Page 3 of 3
Appendix 3:
Participant interview questions for ensemble members
Socio-Cultural Development through music programs

PhD Research Project
Graham Sattler, PhD student
University of Sydney
Tel: 0412 507 597
Email: gsat9051@mail.usyd.edu.au

Interview Questions

For Ensemble members

* Why do you belong to the ensemble?
* What is the nature and purpose of the ensemble?
* What do you get out of the ensemble experience?
* Is it what you expected?
* What are 3 good things about the ensemble?
* What 3 things you would like to change?

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Senior Ethics Officer, Ethics Administration, University of Sydney on (02) 9351 4811 (Telephone); (02) 9351 6706 (Facsimile) or gbriody@usyd.edu.au (Email).
Appendix 4:
Interview questions for ensemble and community leaders
Socio-Cultural Development through music programs

PhD Research Project
Graham Sattler, PhD student
University of Sydney
Tel: 0412 507 957
Email: gsa9041@mail.usyd.edu.au

Interview Questions

For Ensemble and Community leaders

* What, if any, changes have you perceived in the members’ pride and self-esteem through participation in the ensemble?

* What, if any, changes have you perceived in the community’s pride in, and esteem of, the participants?

* Has there been a change in community pride and sense of identity, which you would attribute to the existence of the ensemble program?

* Has there been any change in social/antisocial behaviour within the community, attributable to the ensemble program?

* Has there been any change to attendance levels at school, work etc?

* In what way has community perception of the place and importance of music changed as a result of the existence of the ensemble program?

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Senior Ethics Officer, Ethics Administration, University of Sydney on (02) 9351 4811 (Telephone); (02) 9351 6706 (Facsimile) or gbriody@usyd.edu.au (Email).
Appendix 5:
University of Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee
research protocol approval
26 August 2008

Associate Professor Peter Dunbar Hall
Sydney Conservatorium of Music
Building C411-
The University of Sydney

Dear Associate Professor Dunbar Hall,

Thank you for your correspondence dated 14 August 2008 addressing comments made to you by the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). After considering the additional information, the Executive Committee at its meeting on 20 August 2008 approved your protocol entitled *Socio-cultural development through music programs in identifiable communities*.

Details of the approval are as follows:

Ref No.: 08-2008/11131

Approval Period: August 2008 to August 2009

Authorised Personnel: Associate Professor Peter Dunbar Hall
Mr. Graham Sattler

The HREC is a fully constituted Ethics Committee in accordance with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans*-March 2007 under Section 5.1.29

The approval of this project is conditional upon your continuing compliance with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans*. We draw to your attention the requirement that a report on this research must be submitted every 12 months from the date of the approval or on completion of the project, whichever occurs first. Failure to submit reports will result in withdrawal of consent for the project to proceed.

**Chief Investigator / Supervisor’s responsibilities to ensure that:**

1. All serious and unexpected adverse events should be reported to the HREC as soon as possible.

2. All unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should be reported to the HREC as soon as possible.

3. The HREC must be notified as soon as possible of any changes to the protocol. All changes must be approved by the HREC before continuation of the research project. These include:-
• If any of the investigators change or leave the University.
• Any changes to the Participant Information Statement and/or Consent Form.

(4) All research participants are to be provided with a Participant Information Statement and Consent Form, unless otherwise agreed by the Committee. The Participant Information Statement and Consent Form are to be on University of Sydney letterhead and include the full title of the research project and telephone contacts for the researchers, unless otherwise agreed by the Committee and the following statement must appear on the bottom of the Participant Information Statement. Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Senior Ethics Officer, University of Sydney, on (02) 9351 4811 (Telephone); (02) 9351 6706 (Facsimile) or gbridgdy@usyd.edu.au (Email).

(5) Copies of all signed Consent Forms must be retained and made available to the HREC on request.

(6) It is your responsibility to provide a copy of this letter to any internal/external granting agencies if requested.

(7) The HREC approval is valid for four (4) years from the Approval Period stated in this letter. Investigators are requested to submit a progress report annually.

(8) A report and a copy of any published material should be provided at the completion of the Project.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Professor D I Cook
Chairman
Human Research Ethics Committee

cc: Mr. Graham Sattler Rocklynne, Boree Lane, Lidster NSW 2800

Encl. Approved Updated Participant Information Statement
Approved Updated Consent Form
Approved Parental Consent Form.
Approved General Information Statement
Approved Interview Questions for Ensemble and Community Leaders.
Approved Interview Questions for Ensemble members
Approved Questionnaire
Approved Questionnaire for children, 12 years and under.
Appendix 6:
Greater Western Area Health Service Human Research Ethics Committee
research project approval
31st August, 2009

Associate Professor Peter Dunbar-Hall
Sydney Conservatorium
Building Code C41,
University of Sydney  NSW 2006

Dear Associate Professor Dunbar-Hall,

Greater Western Area Health Service (AHS)
Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC)
Project No. GW2008/16

Socio-Cultural Development Through Music Programs in Identifiable Communities

Thank you for responding to the HREC's request for clarification and further information for the above project. The HREC Executive reviewed your responses on 24th August, 2009.

The Greater Western AHS HREC is constituted and operates in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council's National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research and the CPMP/ICH Note for Guidance on Good Clinical Practice.

I am pleased to advise that the HREC has granted ethical approval of this research project. The following documentation has been reviewed and approved by the HREC:

- HREC Application – As resubmitted 23/2/2009
- Review of Literature – As submitted 23/2/2009
- Participant Information Statement – Mental Health Community – As submitted 21/4/2009
- Consent Form – Mental Health Community – As submitted 21/4/2009
- Parental or Guardian Consent Form – Mental Health Community – As submitted 21/4/2009
- Questionnaire – As submitted 18/10/2008
- Questionnaire for Children – As submitted 18/10/2008
Please quote HREC Reference No. GW2008/16 in all correspondence.

The HREC wishes you every success in your research.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Suzanne Degiorgio
for
Dr Thérèse Jones
A/Executive Officer
Human Research Ethics Committee
Greater Western Area Health Service

cc  Mr Graham Sattler, PhD Student
Appendix 7:
Data coding matrix
<table>
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<th><strong>Data coding matrix</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>comment is/contains</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>literal reference</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>key words</strong></td>
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<td><strong>euphemism(s) for key words</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>key words</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>euphemism(s) for key words</strong></td>
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<td><strong>and/or vernacular indicates meanings</strong></td>
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<td>- cultural</td>
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<td><strong>personal</strong></td>
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<td><strong>and/or context indicates meanings</strong></td>
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<td><strong>- personal</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>Contribution to community</th>
<th>Recreation</th>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Personal enjoyment</th>
<th>Experience of group musicking</th>
<th>Well-being</th>
<th>Skill development &amp; personal challenge</th>
<th>Social engagement</th>
<th>Musical / artistic motivation &amp; achievement</th>
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1 demonstrated, observable, immediate community (location and group-specific) vernaculars, where there was a high level of researcher-familiarity with the culturally-specific subtlety of meaning, or even distribution into contiguous themes, where there was not.
Data coding matrix criteria

a. are there more than two occurrences of participant comment that have a clear commonality of meaning and intent,
b. are those comments made by more than one participant, and,
c. are those comments more meaningfully grouped under a discrete thematic descriptor (meeting criteria a. and b.) than another identified theme.

Theme definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contribution to community</th>
<th>Participant identification of their (or others') contribution to the ensemble or broader community, through their membership or active involvement, as a deliberate and conscious gesture.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>Activity done for enjoyment when one is not working. It is treated as a mass noun and refers to (enjoyable) activity that involves relief or diversion from paid employment or routine chores. It describes purpose, structure, function and personal meaning of an activity. Recreation is an absolute concept in that an activity is either recreational or not.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>A sustained sense of being encouraged, affirmed, and/or facilitated in one's (group music) participation by one's social (family or community) group, partner or partners.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal enjoyment</td>
<td>The state or process of taking pleasure in something; direct references to the words (and concepts of) 'joy', 'fun', 'pleasure', 'love' and 'enjoyment' itself; responses that cite these concepts as the feature, or focus, of the comments.</td>
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| Experience of group musicking | The desire, pleasure, and attraction of being 'part of a bigger picture in music' (WW 13)  
The desire to, and satisfaction gained from, playing or singing in a band, orchestra or choir  
'The whole is greater than the sum of its parts ... the overall sound is amazing' (NH 2). The pleasure or desire not only of the performative musical act, but also more generally in terms of being a part of (the) group activity. |
| Well-being | The presence of positive emotions and moods (e.g., contentment, happiness), the absence of negative emotions (e.g., depression, anxiety), satisfaction with life, fulfilment and positive functioning. |
| Skill development and personal challenge | Aspects of technical capability and achievement, as distinct from those relating to the musical or artistic motivation and achievement. Terms and concepts presented in comments constituting the theme of skill development and personal challenge include learning, skill, development and improving. |
| Social engagement | Affiliation by common interest (in group musicking);  
group music activity as a necessarily collaborative, team endeavour;  
personal achievement, stimulation and satisfaction, within a shared, community sensibility. |
| Musical or artistic motivation and achievement | Musical or (in some cases, and more broadly,) creative artistic benefit from, or rationale for, group music activity; musical or artistic expression for its own sake. |
Appendix 8:
Remote Health Worker Choir recruitment flyer
Have you ever sung before?

Have you ever wanted to sing in a choir but never had the opportunity?

Do you think you can’t sing?

If you answered yes to any of the above questions then... WE WANT YOU!

The link between emotional well-being and choir singing is well-established. Bush Support Services and the Orange Regional Conservatorium is offering you the opportunity to participate in a unique and groundbreaking opportunity to form Australia’s first remote area health worker choir!

We are looking for participants of all abilities and experiences. All you need is motivation, good speed internet access, Skype or Facetime, AND importantly a commitment to attend the next CRANAplus conference in Darwin in 2013. You will receive 12 free singing lessons with a qualified singing teacher and the opportunity to perform with the CRANAplus Choir!

If you are interested please email Annmarie: scp@crana.org.au
Appendix 9:
Research output during candidacy
Research output during candidacy


¹ Award - Best Student Paper


Appendix 10:
Report, New Horizons International Music Association fellowship (2011)
Introduction and Overview
On March 4 I embarked on a 5-week musical study tour of North America. The purpose of the trip was to study a blossoming phenomenon in lifelong learning - a program called New Horizons. The philosophy behind New Horizons, is that you can, indeed, *teach an old dog new tricks...* The program was started in Rochester NY, by Professor Roy Ernst from the illustrious Eastman School of Music, as somewhat of an experiment in community music education. A class in instrumental music for beginners; but not just any beginners, specifically for retired adults. From that original group of 25 or so seniors who responded to the local newspaper ad in 1991, the movement has now grown to over 180 groups, each one a community in itself; comprising bands, orchestras, choirs and ensembles of pretty well every kind imaginable; but also forming a broad and connected community across North America, and increasingly, beyond. I was lucky enough to be one of 6 Music Educators from across the globe to receive a $US2,000 NAMM (National Association of Music Merchants) New Horizons fellowship, to assist with the costs of the trip. The fellowship award inspired the Orange Regional Arts Foundation – a local (Australian) Arts Support organisation to match the award, with another $AU500 contribution generously donated by an anonymous local supporter.

My 5-week tour took me to 9 communities from Ontario Canada down through New York State, across to Washington State, down to Arizona and then west to California. I spent time observing and connecting with several hundred passionate learners and ensemble directors for whom playing, learning, and contributing to the community via music, has become a major focus of their lives. So much more than just an *activity for seniors*, the broader NH community provides a learning opportunity, physical and intellectual stimulation, a growing social network, health benefits, *and* a strong support base for artistic and cultural awareness in communities that are increasingly hurting due to ongoing budget cuts to community and educational facilities across the continent. *Of course, revisions to public spending on community engagement and education are commonplace across the western world, and therein lies a key to the broader, international relevance of programs like New Horizons...*

Personal rationale and ‘fit’ for the fellowship
Having seen the call-out for expressions of interest from NHIMA, via the Australian Society for Music Education (ASME) web bulletin, I immediately saw great relevance for my community, and me personally. I am currently involved in PhD research in the area of socio-cultural development through group music programs, with a particular interest in community music activity and the non-musical, as well as musical, benefits that can result from such activity.
As Director of a community owned and operated, government supported, music education institution in regional NSW (and Vice-President of the Association of NSW Regional Conservatoriums – the peak body for 17 like-organizations across the state), life-long education and music activity is a key component of my daily professional life.

I have a local, and regional, responsibility for developing community involvement in (and appreciation of) music activity. My experience in establishing adult ensembles, including those involving beginners, contributed to my belief that I was ideally positioned to appreciate, and learn from, what I understood the New Horizons philosophy to be; a good ‘fit’, I felt, for the fellowship.

**Planning**

In initiating the planning stage of the trip, I nominated locations based on the desire to visit a range of community sizes and types, with a mix of organisational structures and ages of programs, and a variety of ensemble types and instrumentation. The challenge, then, being the formulation of a practical itinerary that allowed for adequate time in each community, with adequate down-time for reflection.

I had visited the United States only once before, in 2006 (and Canada, never), so I was largely reliant on the assistance and generosity of Roy Ernst in guiding the development of my schedule and in connecting me with a host of New Horizons ensemble leaders and/or co-ordinators.

The final list was as follows – London and Peterborough ONT; Rochester and Fredonia NY; Olympia, Tacoma and Spokane WA; Mesa AZ and Carlsbad CA.

The tour would bring me into contact with wind bands, swing, dance and Dixieland bands, at least one orchestra, a choir, various small ensembles, a Klezmer band and a bluegrass program. Communities would range in population from the 10s of thousands to the millions; and I would experience programs run independently by boards or committees, others as University community programs, and others as initiatives of retail organisations.

There would be plenty of variety, several models, and yet I also expected a significant degree of similarity - a unified commitment to the value of life-long learning as per the journal articles and NHIMA website information I had read in preparation.

The relationships I established, well in advance of departing from Australia, was the first hint of the level of commitment, enthusiasm and, dare I say it...zeal, demonstrated by New Horizon members in each and every location I visited.
Pre-conceptions and expectations

As mentioned above, I had a basic understanding of the NH Philosophy prior to the trip - its history, purpose and function - and I had deliberately made no commitment to the possible application of that philosophy to the Australian Environment. With only one existing NH program in Australia, and that being a modest-sized one from what I could ascertain, I had no preconceived notion of the likely desirability, acceptance or success of such a program ‘at home’. Cultural and educational differences between Nth America and Australia do exist; cultural features such as school and college ensemble activity, for instance (historically far more common in Nth America), present fundamental differences in preconditions for returning, as well as first-time, mature instrumentalists.

I was determined to embark on the journey with as open a mind as I was capable of maintaining.

Observations

Although I experienced a range of community sizes and organisational structures, and observed ensembles of varying styles and instrumentation, there were some very powerful consistencies and similarities; and with these, some surprising features of the overarching (New Horizons International) parent body and its articulation with individual programs.

I was not surprised to find that ensemble members were, across all the (31) groups I experienced, committed and enthusiastic.

Awareness, self and group esteem

I expected, and was pleased to find, that participants were, generally speaking, aware and convinced of the broad-ranging benefits of their involvement. In most cases they were happy to talk, at length, about the transformative experience of New Horizons membership. I was impressed, but again, not surprised, to find that 20 years since its inception, the philosophy, defined by recurrent phrases such as “your best is good enough”, “your seat is waiting for you”, “this is as much about the people as the music”, “these people are retired, they don’t want to be tied down (committed) to regular rehearsals” seems to be in tact, with successful branding of being the access point for adult beginners, and/or those picking up an instrument after an interval of 30, 40, or even 50 years.

I was surprised to find that, although it seems clear that the New Horizons International Music Association determines and promotes the philosophy, and has an active mentoring, advisory and oversight role; it seems determinedly laid-back in terms of expectations or demands of the NH groups and communities. Even considerations such as financial membership of NHIMA, use of logos etc. are treated casually. No big brother discipline.
This seems to me to be unusual, refreshing, and smacks of the wisdom of those with life experience and a reflective, strategic outlook.

_Peer learning and celebrating ‘community’_

One highly effective tool for engendering a sense of belonging to the broader, nation-wide community, is the Band Camp. There are a number of regional camps every year, with the main one held in October. These intensive, multi-day events are spoken of with great fondness, as both a rich social time and a time of great learning. Typically, the camps will include classes in a range of musical disciplines in addition to large and small ensemble rehearsals.

I was impressed, and inspired, by the work ethic of the groups I observed. Given some of the comments listed above, particularly those relating to _having fun_ and _not wanting to commit to a regular or restrictive schedule_, the rehearsals I observed were focused, effective, well planned and result-orientated. These people were there to enjoy each other’s company, sure, but also to learn, to achieve, to develop as a team. Having said that, whilst again and again I observed strong examples of team identity and group psyche, another fundamental dimension of the NH philosophy-in-action is the space for personal membership meaning. Individuals appear to be supported, by directors and peers, in their intent to either advance through levels from beginner to more advanced groups, or to identify with a particular group, regardless of its standard and technical/musical demands, and stay with it. Competitive attitudes do not figure as a major consideration for New Horizons communities, with peer support and celebration of participation being a more prominent, and consistent feature across the board. One NH member in California spoke of the competitive aspect that often comes with new members who are ‘returners’ to music. _...they can be concerned with issues such as which part they play, where they fit in the hierarchy - but typically, after a few weeks they “chill out”, adjust to NH “reality” where which part you play is just a matter of “which piece of paper you pick up”..._

...and the surprises

I have to say that there were, indeed, a few unexpected aspects of the program; and I would preface my outline of these points by saying that it is these that have had the greatest impact on me. They have already begun to reshape my view of life-long-learning as a principle and a practice; they indeed constitute the “Aha” value of the trip.

Whilst there was much to be gained by reading the press and publicity material describing the philosophy of the New Horizons phenomenon, and whilst the significant pre-trip correspondence with community leaders and organizers was a great source of information and insight into the broader NH community, it was only through direct observation and immersion in the communities that I believe I ‘got it’.
Not only were there countless casual chats over coffee or a meal, some formal and informal interviews, but I was also honoured in many cases by an opportunity to connect with groups as either a player or conductor (in some cases, both!). For a musician, of course, there is no purer, a human connection than making music together.

So what were the surprises? Firstly, it was impressed upon me several times, in many different conversations, that New Horizons was a social network. That the people were at least as important as the music. Many members of groups all over Nth America explained that they had developed strong friendships, often through annual Band Camps, with people from right across the US and Canada. These are not just casual acquaintances, but often strong support networks, in many cases replacing social networks that (naturally) deteriorate with aging families and the cessation of work-based alliances. I was not surprised at the social element of the activity, but that the networks become so strong, are so far-reaching and are actively sustained, even nourished. It was also stressed to me on various occasions that this strong social aspect of the program was unexpected.

A related element of NH membership I had not expected was that many ensemble members spend part of each year in a different community, either following or avoiding the cold or hot seasons, and play either regularly or occasionally with more than one community. Many players also commented to me that when they travel, they often take their instrument along and sit in with NH groups in the communities they visit. One big family.

Secondly, the longitudinal development aspect of membership in a Hew Horizons program was something that had not occurred to me. Many members have now been learning, or relearning, for over 10 years, some now 20. As time passes, and given that the upper ages of participants is well into the 80’s, more than a handful in their early 90’s, it is entirely possible that New Horizon learners could be intensively involved in practical music education for a 30-year period. This to me was staggering. At this point I think it is worth reflecting on the broadly accepted principal that it requires 10,000 hours of practice at an activity to achieve executive capability, and calculate that 6 hours per week over 30 years totals just that. I’m certainly not suggesting that such activity carried out by an individual in their 50’s and beyond will reap the same results as 10 years of 3 hours practice per day carried out be a youth.

It is clear, however, that many years of focused, committed, enthusiastic learning will certainly have profound results. From my experience of NH groups, up to 6 hours per week of instrumental learning activity is not unusual.

Indeed, in what other demographic (with the of exception of those preparing for, then achieving, a career in music) are we likely to find a cohort dedicating 20 – 30 years of their
life to honing practical musical skills?

Playing outside the generational square
Possibly the major Aha! moment for me relates to the intergenerational impact that the New Horizons movement appears to be having in and on communities. I expected to see age group-specific ensembles, impacting largely within that demographic. What I found in many cases was community ensembles weighted towards seniors, but open to younger adults (in one case, a genuinely all-age ensemble), rebuilding and refocusing society’s awareness of the value and wisdom of its elders.

I found New Horizons ensembles that share their rehearsal venue with a nursery school. In this case, at various times during rehearsals, pre-schoolers would enter the rehearsal space and dance or sway, responding spontaneously to the music.

In more than one community, where postgraduate university students operate as tutors, the New Horizons participants provide de-facto family networks for the students, attending student recitals and inviting them to gatherings on holidays etc.

Another example of the intergenerational influence is the growing practice of NH ensembles going into schools to demonstrate instrumental music and mentor elementary students. This last example offering a replacement for, or supplement to, diminishing in-school resources.

The final example relates to a recently commenced ensemble that, having advertised as a New Horizons ensemble, had a cross age-group attendance for the first rehearsal. Faced with this possible dilemma, the organisers decided to go ahead with the formation of the group within the NH family, confident in the belief that the awareness of the NH principles and philosophy were sufficient to preserve the integrity of the orientation of the group. Rather than setting up just another all-age community ensemble, this group could well be the all-age community ensemble with an explicit orientation towards older members as mentors, elders, community leaders.

Whilst this last example may be the exception to the rule, my feeling is that the broader community involvement in, and influence of, NH practice, as demonstrated in all three of the above examples, may well help to redress the increasingly entrenched western social phenomenon of youth-centric society.

Even in NH communities whose ensemble rehearsals occur during business hours, therefore less accessible to school-age and working folk, I repeatedly heard comments such as: ...if a 12-year old kid turned up and wanted to play, we wouldn’t turn them away... not that it’s likely for such a thing to happen given the average age of the NH band members...
In relation to the NH ensembles that rehearse outside of business hours, the notable differences between these groups and general community ensembles were more a matter of acceptance and fun versus ambition and exclusivity, than of age parameters. Several NH musicians I spoke to were also members of high achieving community ensembles and even honour bands. In response to my direct question as to why they continue to play in NH groups, the replies were: “because this is fun” and “(our director) treats us with respect. We are learning all the time and ...(he/she) doesn’t treat us like children”.

**The right direction**

It seems clear that the groups that really flourish are those that enjoy mutual respect with their directors (conductors); those who are confident in their director’s artistic ability and discretion; those with a director who can drive, cajole, amuse, encourage, inspire, and educate. For those directors who ‘get it’, as it was described to me on many occasions, the rewards are rich indeed; and from what I observed, the directors who ‘get it’ are those who are genuinely there for the members; who take pride in the ensemble’s achievements and strengths; who are patient, respectful, inspiring, musical, generous and humble.

To quote one truly inspiring band director from Washington:

“I was a high school band director for 40 years, and for most of them I was angry! ...now, I stand up in front of these (NH) folks and think – I’ve died and gone to heaven...they turn up early for rehearsal, no one’s mom has forced them to be here!... “I don’t ever have to play at another ball game” “It’s about the people more than the music” “I am so lucky...with my modest Bachelor’s degree, I’m here working with PhDs and professors””

My final observation is possibly not so surprising, but neither was it something I anticipated. A number of NH communities, I found, were themselves quite significant advocacy groups. It is entirely logical, of course, that intelligent, mature individuals, many of whom are highly educated with esteemed careers behind them - strategic thinkers with a unifying passion for ongoing learning and the joy of music making - constitute a pretty powerful cohort.

Whether applied to supporting a local professional orchestra, fundraising for a particular cause, redressing deteriorating resources for a school music program, or lobbying a university council for resources for that institution’s music department; the efforts of such a cohort is a powerful force for social good.

**Conclusions**

Following my experiences with the 30+ groups across 9 communities, my principle conclusions are as follows:
1. The New Horizons ‘brand’ successfully says: *accessible for older individuals, fun, your best is good enough, and we’re here for you* (not the other way around). It clearly represents and communicates the NH philosophy.

2. That clear, recognisable brand is beneficial for existing NH groups and offers an attractive, proven platform for prospective adult-focused ensembles internationally.

3. The movement is a positive step for social cohesion and inclusion. It clearly builds, and increasingly replaces (deteriorating) social networks; whilst offering a renewed sense of validity, empowerment and status for older individuals.

4. Successful evolution of the NH movement can result in ensembles becoming too advanced for new beginners to join. Programs with an annual new beginner group as part of the ongoing program are best placed to deal with this issue.

5. Pivotal to a successful NH program is a confident, qualified, Director. One who ‘gets it’.

*...where to from here*

As stated in the introduction to this report, I undertook the fellowship prepared, but with no preconceived notions of the likely application of the NH model in my organisation, community or region. Having now immersed myself in the NH culture, and having seen for myself the benefits as outlined above, I am convinced that the model, philosophy, and indeed brand, should be adopted here. Although we (at the Orange Regional Conservatorium) have an adult ensemble program that accommodates mature-age learners, by adopting the clear and identifiable NH model, with a connection to the broader international NH community, we could reinforce and highlight the sense of validity and empowerment for older Australians in our community. As far as tangible outcomes are concerned, my organisation has now commenced planning for its first New Horizons (International) Camp, to be held in Orange NSW across the week of January 22-26, 2013. The plan is for the camp to generate interest in, and indeed kick-start, the Orange New Horizons program. We envision stage one of the ONHP to comprise Concert Band, Beginner Concert Band, Percussion Ensemble and Beginner String Orchestra.

In closing, I need to give heartfelt thanks to Emeritus Professor Roy Ernst for opening my eyes to this transformative musical and social phenomenon; to the NAMM for the fellowship; and to all the wonderful folks who hosted my visits, looked after my family and myself, and truly opened my ears and heart to the power of New Horizons. Thank you. I hope to see you in Australia in 2013!