

Making a Start

By Liz Zito, Cultural Partnerships Manager



Don't know where to begin with a Big Idea? It's exciting to know that you could create something fabulous, but frustrating when you just don't know where to start!

A useful exercise may be to discover what you have available to you within your community, and ways that you may be able to connect with others to combine resources and make partnerships. You could make a list, or draw a map.

Perhaps you could get together with some other members of your community and start listing all of the resources, groups, assets and individuals in your town. Once you have a few lists, you can re-convene with new people and continue to grow your map of your community and who and what may be in it. People in your town will be sure to have connections to a variety of groups or people who may help bring your community's dream to life, or at least start planning it.

You probably have a number of service clubs with dynamic people with exciting ideas and skills. Are there individuals or Indigenous, multicultural, church, theatre, senior citizens, youth or CWA groups that you should talk to about who or what they think should be on your town's map? The list is endless when you start to dissect your town – government agencies, industry, businesses, sporting clubs, artists, halls, schools and so on.

And what of the natural features in your town? Are you near a forest, bush, botanical garden, lake, river, swamp, or mountain range? Thinking about all the aspects of your town and mapping it continually through the process will help note changes, provide new and exciting ways to connect and help to create motivation, enthusiasm and commitment to whatever project you may be envisaging as a community!

LIZ ZITO is the Cultural Partnerships Manager at Regional Arts Victoria. Her work in the arts industry has included a range of positions in cultural and arts management including Acting Manager of Performing Arts and Conventions and Festivals and Events Coordinator at Greater Shepparton City Council; Manager, Theatre and Function Centre, COPAC Colac Otway Shire and Executive Officer, SheppARTon Festival.

Liz had been a Panel Member of the Regional Arts Fund administered by Regional Arts Victoria, and was a board member of Regional Arts Victoria prior to taking on her current role.

Liz is a Life Member of the Shepparton Theatre Arts Group Inc (STAG Inc), has an Advanced Diploma of Business Management and a Diploma of Tourism, but describes her qualifications as grassroots – learning on the job whilst living, working and playing in regional communities.

Recommended reading: Liz was inspired to write this article after reading [Appreciating Assets](#) by Tara O'Leary, Ingrid Burkett and Kate Braithwaite.