

The Benefits of Touring an Exhibition



This document has been designed to help individuals and organisations consider the benefits of touring their exhibition, to then generate an **impact statement** ready to present to councils or organisational leaders.

Why should we tour this show?

Touring an exhibition can provide important opportunities, exposure, experiences, and rewards. Below is a list of eight potential impacts of touring an exhibition:

1. Extending the life of an exhibition:

Touring an exhibition beyond its initial presentation allows the knowledge, effort, and resources invested in the show to have a longer lifespan. In other words, touring allows for a greater return for investment.

2. Audiences & Visibility:

Touring exhibitions both increase and diversify audiences. Reaching new audiences, whether that be across the region, the country, or the world, gives greater visibility to the ideas and efforts put into an exhibition. By ensuring that audience numbers, feedback, and photographs are provided by each venue for their iteration, both quantitative and qualitative records can be used to show how your exhibition is engaging with new people and building visibility for your organisation, council, partners, and/or practice to previously non-existent audiences. It also allows the telling of local stories to larger audiences, creating greater interest in a subject important to you.

3. Sector Partnerships:

Creating meaningful relationships with peers is a benefit of touring exhibitions. Reciprocal partnerships with creatives or organisations to generate the content of the exhibition can allow for varied perspectives and resource-sharing. Content partnerships can create more informed or targeted content, such as educational partnerships for learning content, or sponsorships to supply a specific specialty material.

4. Sharing a Collection:

For organisations that have a collection, touring exhibitions are a mode to expose the holdings of your organisation or community to a diversity of people and places. This increases the provenance of collection items and builds awareness of an organisation's impact on the broader creative landscape.

5. Diversifying Funding:

For exhibitions travelling nationally, there are dedicated touring grants available through the Office for the Arts. National and international funding can also be sourced through Creative Australia. In some states and territories, there are also unique touring funds available to tour within that area. These funding avenues increase the ability for an organisation or an individual to simultaneously diversify the reach of an exhibition and better resource its creation.

6. Creating Opportunities:

When exhibitions are hosted by various organisations, at times there is the opportunity for an installer, artist, creative, curator, or senior staff member to assist with install, attend an opening, or deliver a workshop. These opportunities to connect with peers, new audiences, and varied organisations in a meaningful way can lead to future collaborations, paid engagements, and work possibilities. New relationships can also form between creatives and communities.

7. Teaching and Learning:

Most exhibitions aim to share a cultural practice, a lived experience, an important historical moment, a curious story, or a thematic concern. The opportunity to educate broad audiences on an idea or an event that may relate to their own lives or educate them on the experiences of others in different ways can make touring an exhibition incredibly rewarding.

8. Value:

Most touring exhibitions do not generate any income, in fact they often come at a cost in finances and resources. Building these costs into the budget, whether that be internal or boosted through funding, is an important capacity consideration. While it is possible to make money through touring or the sales of items whilst touring, this is not common as most tour hosts do not have large budgets. In most cases, the value of a touring exhibition is not financial, but in where it has been able to travel, who has been able to experience it, how it has been engaged with at each location, and what opportunities it was able to generate.

Activity

Jot down what your touring exhibition would gain from the eight potential benefits of touring listed above. This activity can then be edited to create an **impact statement** to present to your council or organisational leadership teams to demonstrate why your proposed exhibition should travel.

Extending the life of an exhibition:

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Sector Partnerships:

Sharing a Collection:

Diversifying Funding:

Creating Opportunities:

Teaching and Learning:

Value: