

Strategic Plan

2025 - 2027

Art Farm Birchs Bay is a not-for-profit association that fosters engagement between community, art and the landscape at Five Bob Farm in southern Tasmania (Lutruwita) through a sculpture prize, residencies, exhibitions, and events.





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Acknowledgement of Country

Art Farm Birchs Bay is based in Lutruwita (Tasmania), approximately 40 minutes south of Nipaluna (Hobart) and 10 minutes south of Putalina (Oyster Cove).

We acknowledge the traditional owners of this land, the Palawa people, and pay deep respect to elders past and present, and to the many Aboriginal people that did not make elder status and to the Tasmanian Aboriginal community that continue to care for Country.

Core Values and Vision

The purpose of Art Farm Birchs Bay is to provide a venue and organisational structure to:

1. Encourage dynamic engagement between community, artists, art and the landscape
2. Foster opportunities for artists to further professional development in the context of the landscape

Who we are:

We are a community sponsored, not-for-profit organisation situated on a working farm in the heart of the D'Entrecasteaux Channel region of Southern Tasmania.

- Our site spans a multi-use farm, an arts venue, and a regenerative native bush ecosystem across 100 hectares. Both our team and our community includes artists, gardeners, growers, tinkerers, farmers, and makers interested in sharing their knowledge.
- We are inclusive and intergenerational, with programming that supports makers from age 1-100 from all backgrounds and experience levels.

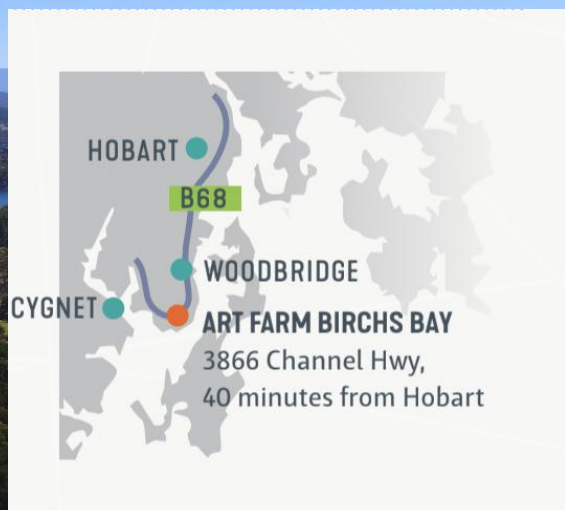
Our Vision:

In service of these core values, our vision for 2025-2027 is to nurture Art Farm Birchs Bay to become a **centre for creative ecology** in our region, increasing our capacity to support artists and connect audiences through multi-artform ecological practice. To achieve this, we aim to measure 4 key areas of **sustainable growth** in our programming.

1. more paid opportunities for artists
2. new partnerships
3. diversified funding
4. improve protocol towards culture and access

Background

About the D'entrecasteux Channel Region



The D'entrecasteux Channel Region is a unique part of Tasmania with significant ecological, agricultural, and cultural value. Driving down the Channel Highway, motorists pass stunning, 365-degree views of the water, Bruny Island, and the rolling contours of Woodbridge Hill. The region is home to many cottage-scale agricultural ventures, including things like Grandveve Cheese and Distillery, vineyards including Mewstone, Resolution, Trial Bay Estate, and Tinderbox, and numerous small market gardens and hobby farms. Although our region is home to many elder and retired people, it also attracts numerous young folk and families seeking affordable housing and opportunity. Sparsely populated, a major challenge in our region is the atomisation and isolation of individuals. COVID-19 and the 2019 bushfires contributed to this, sending many local businesses, gathering places, and ongoing events under permanently. In many ways, this region is still recovering from the 1967 bushfire, which levelled an astonishing amount of forest, private, and public land. With significant lack of ongoing cultural events and opportunities, this community is underserved in terms of its institutions. Many artists here work in private from their homes, or are confined in their imaginations to the scope of farmers markets or community halls. There is a diverse population of artists in this region, spanning traditional crafts people of skills like ceramics, woodworking, and metalsmithing, to contemporary and experimental artists working with state-wide and national venues and festivals.

Our region is also home to Putalina / Oyster Cove, a Tasmanian aboriginal heritage site home to its own festival and important cultural history. With such a critical mass of artists, it is time for our region to begin supporting its own creative identity, towards a future at the centre of rigorous contemporary making in Tasmania.

Five Bob Farm (home of Art Farm Birchs Bay)

Art Farm Birchs Bay is sited on Five Bob Farm, a 100 hectare property that supports an eclectic mix of agrarian businesses.

Five Bob Farm is the project of Chris Read, Tasmania's leading expert in the biology and botany of *Tasmannia lanceolata*, the island's native pepperberry. Chris started Five Bob Farm with the goal to prove that agriculture could support diverse and collective use of land, while providing ongoing economic, ecological, and social benefit to communities in Southern Tasmania.

In 2006, proprietor Chris Read started the Sculpture Trail with local ceramic artist, Wendy Edwards.



Art Farm Birchs Bay

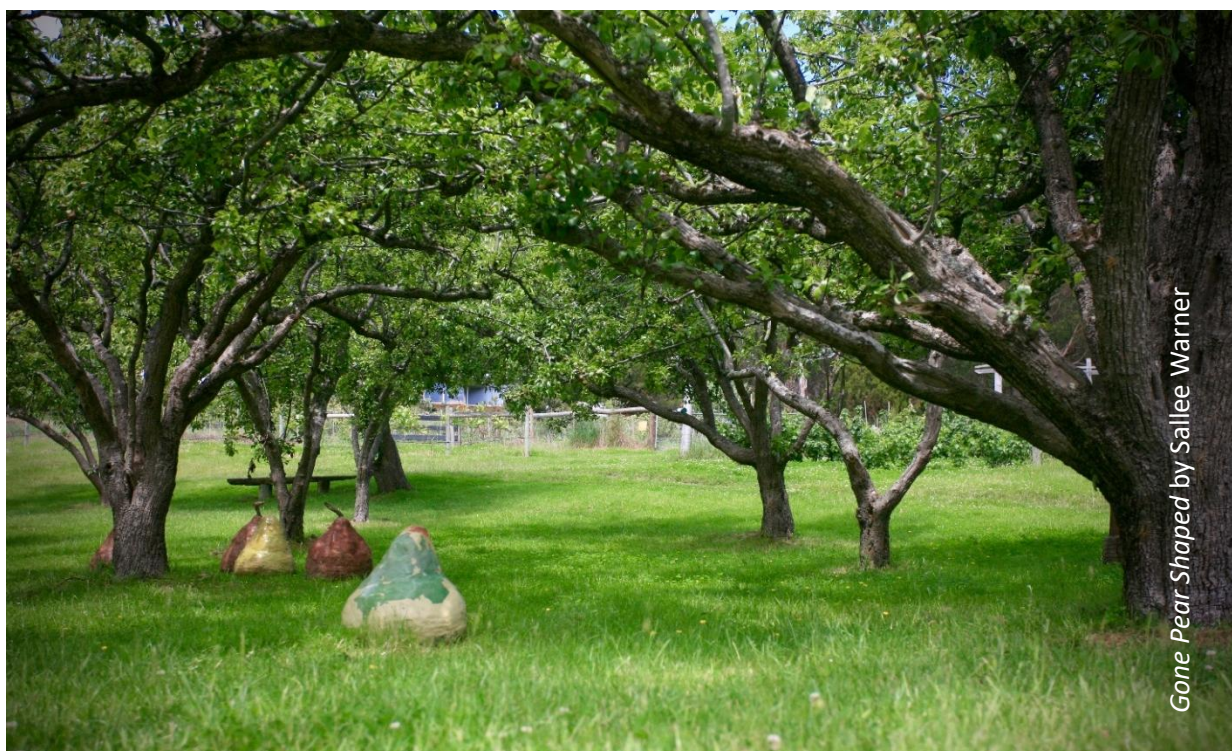
The first sculpture trail in 2006 introduced the idea of sculpted seating installations dotted along a bush track, to encourage visitors to wander the paths while providing them plenty of rest stops for contemplation. The Trail was originally dubbed 'Benchmarking Birchs Bay' and remained this for 9 years until Chris and the team saw the need to develop the vision, and thus in 2015 Art Farm Birchs Bay came into being.

Art Farm Birchs Bay incorporated as a not-for-profit, led by a board and financially sponsored by members of the community giving annual donations and an entry fee. Since 2015, our primary program has been the Annual Sculpture Prize Exhibition, a prize for outdoor sculpture works. For four months a year, entrants works are installed along our 2.0 km outdoor gallery trail, judged by a panel, and awarded from a pool of over \$10,000 in cash and acquisitive prizes, including an acquisitive prize sponsored by Kingborough Council. Works from this event are available for purchase, with profits going to artists.

Outside of the Annual Sculpture Prize, the sculpture trail remains open 365 days a year, showcasing a collection of over 40 permanent installations. Art Farm also supports workshops in a variety of art and craft disciplines and hosts exhibitions in 'The Old Distillery' a gallery and studio. Our calendar of live events includes an annual bonfire night, screenings, craft markets, and other community happenings. In addition to facilities for outdoor performances and events, in 2020 we added an indoor live performance venue to our infrastructure.

Art Farm Birchs Bay also collaborates with Five Bob Farm in a community garden, including an extensive orchard and collection of native, rare, perennial and annual herbs, flowers, and vegetables.

2026 will mark the 20th anniversary of the sculpture trail.





Sam's Boat by Dan Tucker

2025-2027 in summary

Our goal is to continue our trajectory of **sustainable growth** over the next two years, allowing Art Farm Birchs Bay to become a **centre for creative ecology** in our region that supports a range of artists through **development and presentation** of new work year-round

To achieve this, our four key aims are:

1. more paid opportunities for artists
2. new partnerships
3. diversified funding
4. better implementation of best-practice protocol towards culture and access

To achieve these goals, we have organised a program that builds on our current strengths. We are embracing new partnerships and forms of practice, while showcasing ourselves as an attractive and supportive venue for artists making rigorous work that engages with ecology.

To continue this trajectory, 2025-2027 will see continuations of these partnerships, with open-call opportunities welcoming additional artists to pursue project development and presentation. Our program will be spread year-round, with certain events appealing to more intimate audiences and certain events more broadly. We seek to continue to serve our loyal community of supporters, while also cultivating new collaborators and visitors attracted by more experimental and contemporary programming. This will help us work towards a diversified funding model: rewarding and growing our community sponsors and volunteers, while also funding ambitious projects through public local, state-wide, and national grants.

New programming will be supported by documentation and marketing strategies that will connect us with new audiences and increase our accessibility. Forms of documentation including photography and videography and some live streaming will help us get the word out and reach audiences who cannot travel. This will also benefit artists, with documentation support, producing support, tech support, and fees making working with AFBB an attractive and professional-calibre opportunity.

Other access measures, including Auslan interpretation and improvements to our physical campus, will help us reach artists and audiences of different ability levels. We will improve our commitment to cultural protocol by working with local Palawa communities and continuing to foster connections to regional elders and artists. These measures are undertaken for the sake of allowing our venue to better serve the people that constitute our community by demonstrating responsibility and accountability for cultural safety.

In celebration of 20 years of the sculpture trail, we will aim to create a new accessible leg of the trail which will be suitable for wheelchairs and prams, as well as people with low vision. We will try to secure funding to commission new touchable sculptures for this accessible trail.

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| 1. More paid opportunities for artists | <p>Principle Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement artist fees and on-costs for residency studio, programmed through open-call year round to support development and experimentation 2. Continue fair wage fees and on-costs for live performance, artists no longer take on liability 3. Reduce entry fees for Annual Sculpture Prize 4. Give Sculpture Prize finalists a fee each 5. Pay transport allowance for all artists and volunteers |
| 2. New partnerships | <p>Principle Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Foster more meaningful partnerships with local schools through creative programming 2. Look towards more partnerships with festivals and organisations |
| 3. Diversified funding | <p>Principle Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply for funding to support aspects of program 2. Encourage new community sponsors through new and increased points of contact, while continuing to reward existing sponsors 3. Explore viability and scale of box office through live program, towards self-supporting live events 4. Increase existing local government support and audience sales associated with Annual Sculpture Prize 5. Increase paid time for coordinator / producer role to allow more strategic approach to seeking funding |
| 4. Improve protocol towards culture and access | <p>Principle Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acknowledgement of Country and dual naming on publications 2. Continue to nurture developing relationships with local Palawa community and artists towards mutual collaboration 3. Include Auslan interpretation for live events 4. Support transport to and from Art Farm, including transport allowances for artists 5. Reduce application fee to Sculpture Prize and introduce finalist fees to break down financial accessibility barriers 6. Develop new accessible sculpture trail with wider, accessible path and sensory sculptures co-designed with local artists and communities 7. Adhere to the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations 8. Adhere to the Universal Principle for Aboriginal Cultural Safety |

About the Studio Residency

'From Farm to the Forest: Creative Ecology Residencies'

Building on the Perrenial Residency program established by Loren Kronemyer in partnership with Constance ARI and support from Arts Tasmania, the residency program will support residents through access to studio space, curatorial support, technical support, marketing, documentation, and residency fees to develop ambitious projects. They are encouraged to focus on creative research, including identifying skill share opportunities with our diverse community of local collaborators, which includes horticulturalists, botanists, mycologists, growers, entomologists, woodworkers, fishers, firefighters, ceramicists, and more.

Each residency concludes with a public event, in the form of an artist talk, showing, or informal gathering to showcase research carried out. Projects will be documented through photo and video recording.

For 2025, the studio residency will broaden to include other arts practitioners – from writers to musicians, as well as visual artists.



Emma Pinsent's open studio 2024

About the Annual Sculpture Prize

The Annual Sculpture Prize Exhibition is installed along our Sculpture Trail from October to January, showcasing new work from a wide array of artists. Each year the farm acquires a sculpture from the exhibition which becomes part our permanent collection. These sculptures are installed around the farm and on the trail for visitors to enjoy year-round.

The Annual Sculpture Exhibition offers over \$10,000 in both acquisitive and cash prizes. Since 2006, the sculpture trail has been a much-loved feature of the Art Farm Birchs Bay calendar and is designed to encourage both artists and the public to engage with art through the landscape.

Over \$10,000 in prizes (acquisitive and cash) are awarded to select works, supported by AFBB, Kingborough Council, and a passionate cohort of community sponsors. AFBB acquires one work per year, which joins the permanent collection open on our trail year-round, and Kingborough Council acquires a work which goes on permanent display in a public place in the channel region.

The Sculpture Prize Exhibition features work from a diverse range of artists, from emerging to established. Some are full-time artisans and contemporary artists, others are folks trying their hand at making for the first time. It always presents an eclectic and exciting range of works, a place where the passion of our region is showcased. Our opening event brings these people together to enjoy drinks and nibbles fresh from the farm.



Staff and Board

Art Farm Birchs Bay Committee:

- Abigail Byrne
- Chris Read
- Sue Small
- Daniela Sheppard
- Julie Stoneman
- Clare Pendrigh
- Caroline McGregor
- Loren Kronemyer
- June Sculthorpe

Art Farm Birchs Bay Coordinator: Dr Amy Jackett



