

Case study

Tambo Wool Truck

Details

What:

The Tambo Wool Truck is public art sculpture created by artist Christopher Trotter and installed in Tambo in Central Queensland.

The sculpture symbolises the region's sheep shearing heritage and the experience of the huge road trains passing through town.

The concept for the sculpture originated in 2012 during the *Arts in the Grasslands* public concept development project. An artist led process for developing public art concepts, *Arts in the Grassland* provided opportunities for all community members to discuss and have a say in the type of public art they would like in their town. The Tambo Wool Truck design was favoured.

Community members, including many who are not generally involved in the arts, supported and assisted Chris with the development of the artwork. The sculpture was constructed from local objects both found and donated by community members.

The work was installed on Main Street in Tambo in May 2015.

When:

August 2014 to April 2015

Where:

Tambo



Tambo Wool Truck has been installed in a prominent position as you enter town. Image Christine Bradshaw

Key stats:

- 320 attendees and participants
- 88% of attendees and participants rated the work as good or excellent
- 1 paid artist and 7 volunteers

Arts Queensland contribution:

\$25,050– Projects and Programs Fund

Contact for further information:

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Outcomes

- A significant public artwork was installed in a prime location in Tambo. The sculpture will see the inclusion of Tambo on the regional art trail raising the profile of the town and increasing tourism opportunities for the area.
- The project actively involved and engaged community members who are not usually considered to be members and participants of the arts. This has resulted in a high level of community ownership of the sculpture.

“Upon reflection the public art concept development project and the outcome of the sculpture installation was extremely successful because of the high level of community involvement and ownership; the community's views and opinions on public art for their town were respected.”



Unloading. Image: Richelle Johnson

Learnings and reflections

Strong relationships between the artists and community and high community awareness and engagement in the project were key factors in the success of the Tambo Wool Truck project.

“The Tambo Wool Truck was an outcome of the initial project, Art in the Grasslands, and the artist had already formed a strong connection with the community and the project co-ordinator. These relationships were strengthened during the development and implementation of the Wool truck sculpture. The on-site visits to source and identify materials for the project were more successful due to the level of awareness of the project that had already been developed. “

Officers at Blackall-Tambo Council also had the following reflections about what worked well in the project:

“For anyone considering a public artwork, we would recommend the utilisation of the Art in the Grasslands model which allows the community to have a very high level of involvement and ownership of their public artworks and spaces.

These projects also demonstrate how non-arts sectors of the community can be engaged with the arts; the community was provided with a strong sense of ownership of the project and the resulting artwork from the on-set. The initial project 'surveyed' the community and allowed them to select the preferred art concept for their town; arts and non-arts people's opinions were the defining factor in the selection of the final artwork.

The wool truck resonated with the community as it told 'community stories' and acknowledges significant moments of our heritage. The use of community property to create the sculpture was another avenue whereby the community was included and involved with the project.”