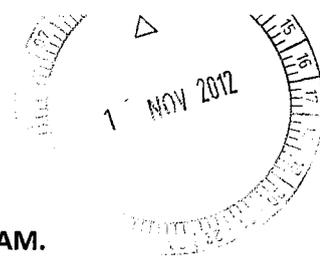


SUBMISSION TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE AND ENVIRONMENT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

RE: PETITION NO. 174 GREAT SOUTHERN INSTITUTE OF TAFE MUSIC AND ARTS PROGRAM.



GSIT's initial decision to no longer use public funds to run the music and arts programs in the Great Southern region came as a big blow to the current enrolled students and many community members. Students received letters in September stating that there would be no further publicly funded accredited arts or music courses in 2013. This meant that those students who had started Certificates II, III, IV or Diploma were not going to be able to finish their relevant qualification or continue to the next level.

There was a ground swell of community protest against these closures, including a petition with now close to 1200 signatures received by the Chief Petitioner, with up to 600 tabled in Parliament so far. Several Ministers have asked questions at question time in Parliament, a Facebook page and action group were set up with close to 600 participants and there is an online petition.

As a result of this action, GSIT have decided to run Cert II and III music and art in 2013 and allow those doing Cert IV to complete the course. However, there is no allocation for new enrolments for Cert IV or Diploma of Music. We have been told this is because there has been a decline in full time enrolments in these courses however there has been no evidence publicly shared to support this claim and we are still trying to obtain this information from GSIT.

GSIT have advised the public that the purpose for closing the programs is to set **industry skills** based training as a priority. Some of the **main industries for the Great Southern Region** are **tourism, wineries, music and art**, making these the **priority for skills based training in publicly funded courses**. GSIT website states that; *'a lack of formal training and qualifications may hold an artist back from gaining recognition and obtaining grants'*. This would suggest that the community and industry need to have accredited music and art courses to support the economic growth of our region? Many students, especially the mature aged ones, can utilise the Certificate IV and Diploma qualification by securing a future in teaching and performing.

There are currently four music Lecturers at GSIT Denmark campus and next year there will only be one. The reduction in lecturer's means there will be no Technical Sound units run next year. These units are an important aspect of the music program in regional towns where musicians need to be able to set up their own equipment unlike in the city where it is all done for them.

The music and art programs are extremely important for students with mental health issues. Research has shown that by participating in music or art training can build confidence, self esteem and help the student to become an active member of a healthy community and enhance their ability to get back into mainstream employment. The financial value of the programs cannot be measured sufficiently. How do we assess outcomes in financial terms when it's the individuals' well being; the well being of their families and the whole community that benefits? How do we calculate the money saved on reduced medications, less visits to doctors, specialists and other practitioners as a result of being engaged in the arts?

"Researchers now know that playing a musical instrument can switch off the stress response, improving physical and emotional health. When our senses detect a possible threat in the environment, the body undergoes a chain reaction in which genes within each cell switch on, directing the cells to produce chemicals associated with the stress response.

PUBLIC

*Playing music sets off an opposite chain reaction that switches these genes off again.....
Studies showing the de-stressing benefits of music-making are piling up: It reduced the prevalence of burnout in nursing students and long-term care workers, and improved the school performance and behavior of a group of inner-city, at-risk youth. Remember, Bittman says, that you should think of making music not as an end product, but as a tool for health and well-being."*

(WebMD 2005-2012, <http://www.webmd.com/balance/stress-management/features/how-making-music-reduces-stress>)

Denmark is vibrant and unique in that the **community itself** significantly supports the music and arts industries. However the Great Southern Region are also reliant on music and the arts to compliment other tourist attractions like wineries and other boutique outlets and the many festivals and fairs for which the region is renowned. The music and art programs are essential educational components for the whole community and have a positive impact on the health and well being of everyone.

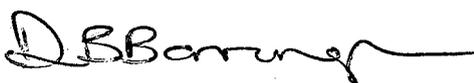
The current Government have tried to treat the Art and Music industry as 'dead wood' however, another option could be that we make them the "Treasures" of our beautiful region. These industries already supply income to the many wineries, galleries, shops and the tourist economy. They could further enhance all those local businesses and the community if they were placed as priority programs in this little oasis, people could come from all over to experience the programs in this unique environment. The trickle on effect for the local economy would be huge. I hope someone from the current government is foresighted enough to see this little 'gold mine' we are sitting on.

It has come to light that this issue is not just about the Great Southern Region. The Teachers Union have advised us that TAFE programs across the country are having their courses axed in 2014. This includes axing or making drastic cuts to the Aboriginal and prisons arts programs too. The most vulnerable members of the community have no one to stand up for them and the Lecturers are bound by contract to not discuss the issue.

Attached are submissions from members of the public with their personal stories of how the music and art programs have been of great benefit to them and their families and the wider community. Also attached are letters of support from: Denmark Chamber of Commerce, Denmark Arts, Denmark Tourism Incorporated, Community Living Association and Denmark Shire

This community would like to secure the future of our music and art programs. The courses need to be made a priority for future publicly funded programs, and your **urgent** attention is required.

With regards



Dawn Barrington
Chief Petitioner

31st October 2012

PUBLIC

TESTIMONY

RE: DECISION TO CLOSE THE DENMARK TAFE MUSIC PROGRAM

I started the Cert II in music at Denmark Tafe Semester 2 of 2011. I am currently enrolled in the course till the end of the year and would like to continue to Cert III and IV and even complete my Diploma in the future. However, I received letter in the post last Thursday advising that the course would no longer be running due to budgets cuts across the Great Southern Institute of TAFE.

I would now like to tell you my story because I need to help one of the decision makers to understand the impact of their financial cost cutting decision.

I am a mother of a 10 year old boy and my husband works as an Education Assistant, so we are considered a low income family. Until the age of 30 I had a very successful career and worked for the Ministry of Premier and Cabinet for the State government of WA.

I became very sick and was diagnosed with Type I diabetes (insulin dependent). I eventually had to finish my full time work because I was diagnosed with Clinical Depression and underactive thyroid. I continued to work part time and casual, but my energy levels were low and sporadic. I then became anaemic which I now have iron infusions for every 6mths and a week after I gave birth to my son I had heart failure, with an enlarged heart and three leaky valves things didn't look good for me. My husband had to give up his job to take care of our baby and I recovered slowly. I now have only one leaky valve. Regular work was no longer an option for me and I am now on a Disability Support Pension.

We moved to Denmark 18 mths ago in hope that a less stressful life with less of the pressures of city would enhance my health. I then joined the music program. I couldn't put into words how it has changed my life, there couldn't possibly be any budget counting software that could measure the outcomes from this course. Since starting the course I have been able to reduce my anti depressants successfully for the first time in 17 years. I have even felt like I could do a part time job again. So as you can see even though the financial outcomes are not immediate and obvious, it's the overflow effect it has on community members.

I couldn't have done this without the music course. Being in a room with a group of other musicians and a great music teacher for a whole day has given me purpose in my life again (it's just for me). My husband is extremely happy with the change in me and I am sure my son benefits greatly too.

PUBLIC

I would imagine that there are many more stories like this and if you came to visit Denmark you would feel the spirit of the people in the music and art that gives the town its vibrancy and appeal. Take the music course away and you will leave a large hole in the community.

Thank you for taking the time to read my story and please reconsider your decision and take a moment to think on a human level and not a monetary one the impact that this decision will have.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "DB Barrington". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Dawn Barrington

PUBLIC

PUBLIC

27.10.2012.

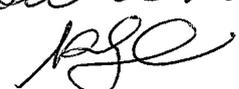
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This statement is in support of my signing of the petition to support music and visual arts programs at the Denmark TAFE Campus.

I am currently attending Cert II music and have reached a level of competency to perform with a newly formed trio at events for the local community.

It is vital that I continue to attend programs at a higher level as it is my aim to achieve a part time supplementary income in performance, sound technology and maybe teaching.

My personal well-being has also benefited as I was suffering from chronic depression which has been alleviated by music.

With grandchildren in Denmark who wish to pursue music in 5-8 years time I would not like to think music programs would not be available. Yours sincerely,  ROY STEWART LANCASHIRE

Once upon a time....

There was a girl who was home schooled so she didn't finish high school...she lived in the bush that's why.

But when she was 19 she went to Albany TAFE to do art and that way she got to university.

Lucky for me my spelling wasn't quite that bad, although maths and science knowledge had major gaps we were greatly encouraged in literacy and art. When I decided I wanted to enter formal education I began by **studying art at Albany TAFE** which was a wonderful introduction to formal education.

I learnt a lot of valuable visual art skills and was privileged to have lecturers such as Joan Campbell and Indra Geddes. I then went on to study adult education subjects and gained university entry and studied Social Sciences (Curtin University) and Visual Art - Textiles (Edith Cowan University) before travelling overseas..

After being out of the working world for six years as a stay at home Mum, ankle deep in nappies and toast crusts I decided to join the **Certificate II music course at Great Southern Institute Denmark campus** as a way to get out into the world and regain confidence. Part time study offered the flexibility which makes TAFE study a great option for people who have family and work responsibilities. However keeping **accredited** courses are very important as they can lead to study at higher level for young people and mature age students.

Music soon became not just a hobby...but a **consuming passion**. I reconnected with a long lost dream of being a **singer songwriter**. There is no way that would have happened without the excellent teaching and facilities offered at the Denmark campus.

I recorded a song (Pickpocket) with producer Nick Huggins as part of the **Diploma of Music(Songwriting) offered at GSIT Denmark**. That was an amazing opportunity and in 2011 the song was nominated for **WAM Song of the Year (Regional Category)**. I am now starting to gig locally with fellow ex TAFE student (now teacher) Susan Clarke. The confidence I have gained in music has also flowed into life in general and led to a job in a local office.

I have continued to study music part time but plan to study full time next year and am so grateful that the powers that be **have had the wisdom to listen to the community and reinstate the music and art courses at the Denmark campus**. However I am greatly saddened that many of the courses are in question as my life has been greatly enriched by the opportunity to study art and music and I would like to think that others will have the same opportunities.

In all my studies in the creative arts be it visual art or music I have learned that that the common thread is problem solving. **Creativity involves problem solving at its most flexible and hence most rewarding**. There are no rules and so the potential to come up with totally new ideas and ways of expressing those ideas is endless.

In the highest level of the corporate world it is creative thinking which is highly valued. In city councils such as Joondalup and Subiaco artists are being employed to try and bring culture and colour..to city scapes but in Denmark we have that naturally because of the people who live here and the support of a local TAFE campus that was originally started for that purpose.and has provided avenues for people to gain skills and confidence in music and art.

Creativity in all its forms dance, art, music, writing and performing is what makes Denmark such a rich place. This is **Denmark's cultural capital** and needs to be recognised as the huge asset it is. It

PUBLIC

brings people to the region and enhances life for the people who live here.

Importantly it gives young people a glimpse of what is possible, many of Denmark's younger generation have been inspired by the art and music all around them as they grow up. Through events such as Brave New Works, and other dance, theater and music events which abound in our town they are inspired. They head into the wider world to learn and develop and often return again **bringing still more skills and culture back to the community.**

So rather than reducing funding and support to art and music courses we need to be promoting and funding them to another level where people are drawn here to study and to work because of what is offered. To cut these courses is going backward. They need to become a draw card and an example.

Denmarkians have long been innovators and anarchists (in the best possible sense of the word) so while the rest of the country is cutting back all funding to arts and music courses we could do the opposite. We will soon have something not offered elsewhere and will become a showcase. I hope that GSIT will relise the value of this and become part of making such a vision a reality.

and then....they sang, danced, dreamt, thought, created, built designed, planned, played, sang some more, painted the town in colours rich and wonderful...till it was a place renowned throughout the land and people came from miles around to join in, sing along, watch and be inspired....

.....and they all lived happily ever after.

The End.

“Everything that can be counted does not necessarily count; everything that counts cannot necessarily be counted.” Albert Einstein 1879 -1955, theoretical physicist.

Jessica Dyer - GSIT student

PUBLIC

To Whom it may concern,

The GSIT website states that a lack of formal training and qualifications may hold an artist back from gaining recognition and obtaining grants. Is it not then, a community and industry need to have accredited arts courses to support the economic growth of our region?

When I was 15 years old I didn't fit with the conventions of our education system. I did not excel in any of my subjects and was terrible at sport. Continuing my education through year 11 and 12 didn't appeal to me at all. I was angry and disillusioned with the world. The option of going to TAFE was presented to me and I was accepted into the TAFE School of Art in Launceston, Tasmania. I spent three years studying my associate Diploma of Fine Arts. This opportunity saved me. I finally found something that interested me and something I was good at.

Jump ahead 25 years; I am an owner of a successful arts business in Denmark WA. My partner has been a professional artist and musician in this town for 10 years. We employ 2 casual staff who have completed the course in Arts Management at the Denmark campus of GSIT. We represent 8 local professional artists. Earlier this year I had the fabulous opportunity to be employed by Denmark Arts to direct the Brave New Works Festival. Without my training and qualifications from TAFE I would never have been able to do this job.

I have continued to progress my career at the TAFE (GSIT) at the Denmark campus over the last 5 years. I now have a Certificate 4 in both Photography and Photoshop and have begun studies in Music and Arts Management. All of this was on a part time basis as I had to work. This does not mean it was a hobby as has been implied by GSIT. I had hoped to continue with these studies in 2013 and envisioned that in the future, I could build on my professional career as an artist and arts worker by continuing with further arts studies at TAFE (GSIT).

This is just my story. One of many in our community of professional artists who learned and honed their craft at TAFE (GSIT)

I believe it is very good that GSIT has reconsidered the closure of all art and music courses in the Great Southern and are planning on keeping Cert 2 and 3 courses. However, artists and musicians need to be able to study to a diploma level, at minimum. I am upset that the Albany Prison is also losing funding for its art programs and the art program for aboriginal artists in Albany has already lost its funding.

Arts as a profession should be respected and valued for its contribution to our economy and community. As a tourism destination, visitors have come to expect the high level of live music at our wineries and art in our galleries. On a much higher level, arts and community arts have so many benefits for the mental health and wellbeing of a community, both for the artists and the audience/participants.

The GSIT website also states that; our region has natural inspiration and a wealth of resources and it is no wonder we produce so many creative - and accomplished - local artists and craftspeople. Why is this 'wealth of resources' not going to continue to support the many creative and accomplished artists our region 'produces'?

Sincerely,
Caren Blair

PUBLIC



Dawn Barrington<

Save Music and Art Courses

2 messages

melinda_lyons@

Thu, Oct 4, 2012 at 8:22 PM

To:

Hi Dawn,

Thank you for all the work to date by yourself and the rest of the team. Here is our story about how loosing a local music industry course will affect our family. Please share it in the petition.

My daughter Isla Sheehan was born at the Denmark Hospital in 1998 and has recently turned 14. She has been learning music since she was 6 (violin, piano and now guitar). When she was learning violin with Jude Iddison at the age of 8, she composed her own violin piece called 'Cowboy Blues' which is now a regular piece Jude teaches her other students. Isla also writes her own compositions on piano and guitar, including lyrics. Her song "Step by Step" (written when she was 9) was selected in the top 5 'under 14 songwriters' which was part of the WAMI awards in 2010 and as a consequence of this exposure was invited to sing at the South Perth Emerging Artists Festival in 2011. She performed her original composition at her Year 7 graduation last year and recently sang at the Blue Rinse Bingo Fundraising Night at the Denmark Civic Centre. She is a regular performer at the King River Open Mic Night and is studying music in school and outside of school. If she isn't playing music she is listening to it! Without a local music course to teach and inspire young artists like Isla, I believe we will loose some of the raw magic spark that such musicians bring to our many of the festivals and events - Festival of Voice, Market Days, Food and Wine Festivals, Christmas Street Festivals, Open Mic Nights, Sunday Music Sessions at Wineries ... There are some many local events which ride on the back of our GSIT students and graduates and in turn these events help them to get a foot up, grow confidence and who knows - gain an early following. I've always envisaged Isla completing high school and having a few more years locally studying at GSIT before going off to the big smoke. Imagine my shock at being told that the courses were not viable and to be cancelled. Isla was just as shocked when I told her and readily agreed that I could tell her story if it helped to change someones mind about who may be standing in the wings waiting to do the course.

Thanks again for the energy you have put into the campaign.

Regards
Melinda Lyons

Dawn Barrington

Fri, Oct 5, 2012 at 7:11 AM

To: melinda_lyons

Thanks Melinda

this is brilliant!!

I will attach it to the submission

Dawn

[Quoted text hidden]

PUBLIC

SUBMISSION BY KAREN JANE HARRIES

I am 43 years old, and have been working in the retail sector since 1985. I am burnt out. I have been at everybody's beck and call for too many years. I have not had much of a break from this routine. I have had enough.

Dreams of studying art have been put off year after year, as modern life wins out every time. There has always been a mortgage, a car upgrade, or something materialistic and, in my opinion, annoyingly stifling in the way. Now, is my time. Now is my chance to fulfill a dream.

After years of holidaying in Denmark, we are here, full time. We live here now, and I am free to study art. Finally, my dream can come true. But no. The day we are here to find a home is the day we find out it can no longer be. Art and music are to be axed. I had to hold back the sadness while looking at potential rental after rental. I cried hard on the inside. I cried all the way home.

My one dream in life was to study art. I want to hold up a qualification proudly, and show the people that are important to me that I set out to do something, and I did it, and did it well. That appears to no longer be an option. I have finally arrived in the community I know I belong in, but I cannot now live my one and only goal.

I know most people study art and music purely for pleasure, but I know I have a successful artist inside me. What better place than beautiful Denmark to aspire to that. Please find a way to help me fulfill my life long dream. Please, for me, and the artistic and creative people of the future, don't let these important courses disappear forever.

Karen Jane Harries

23rd October 2012

PUBLIC

SUBMISSION BY SARAH TURVEY

I have been a songwriter my whole life and never dreamed I would ever be able to play my own songs. Thanks to the Diploma of Music course, that I am currently enrolled in, I am now composing and performing songs on the piano, guitar, double bass and drums. I am astonished that I have come so far from knowing nothing about music theory. I credit my tutors and the excellent design of this course which has opened my world to myriad musical possibilities including a future career. My life has been truly transformed by this gift and I feel it would be an enormous shame if it were denied to future students. Please Save the Denmark Arts Programs.

Sarah Turvey

Denmark 6333

15TH October 2012

PUBLIC



1/81 Strickland Street, Denmark WA 6333
PO Box 148, Denmark WA 6333

P: 08 9848 2065 F: 08 9848 2063

info@denmarkchamber.com.au

Dawn Barrington
Save the Denmark Music and Arts Program
Denmark WA 6333,

Dear Dawn,

Thank for you contacting the Denmark Chamber of Commerce regarding the closure of the music and art programs at the Great Southern Institute of Technology (GSIT).

The Chamber of Commerce has a number of objectives to:

- Promote, encourage and assist the development of sustainable businesses within the Shire; and
- Encourage, sponsor and promote ways and means for businesses to develop and grow and provide facilities for the Regions' community and for visitors to the Region.

It is disappointing to learn that the music and art programs at the GSIT are to be closed. This will have an impact upon future training opportunities for those seeking to enter the creative industries and as such, may impact upon the creative culture of our community. The Chamber acknowledges the roll of music and the arts in the Denmark Community and its major contribution towards local businesses, the tourist scene, wineries and the events that make Denmark what it is.

We would like to lend our support in identifying ways to ensure that these educational pathways are retained within our community and Denmark can once again position itself as a centre for artistic training and development.

Please do not hesitate to our new general manager Liz Jack, if you would like to discuss this in more detail. She can be contacted at the Chamber office between 9am and 3pm each weekday.

Yours sincerely

Gail Guthrie
President
Denmark Chamber of Commerce

29th August 2012

PUBLIC

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

CLOSURE OF GSIT MUSIC AND VISUAL ART COURSES

Denmark Arts is very disappointed with the decision to close the music and visual arts courses at GSIT as of 2013.

The courses, in Music and Visual Arts, have provided a strong opportunity for many of our local people to enter this growing industry. In addition, they provide a whole range of additional positive benefits in the realms of health and wellbeing.

Students from the Music course have gone on to become contributing members of the Creative Industries in both Denmark as well as the region and state. Their training in these courses has led to a variety of employment opportunities as practicing musicians, mentors, teachers, band managers, event managers, booking agents, audio engineers ... the list goes on. Similarly, people completing the visual arts courses have gone on to establish professional practices, open galleries and become teachers.

Findings from a recent Government report read "National and international figures indicate that the arts and creative industries represent a very strong area of economic activity and are growing in importance". The report goes on to quantify the employment of people in the cultural industries as above national employment growth.

Denmark Arts Council pours over \$300 000 into our local economy each year. Whilst some of this is to local businesses, the majority is to people employed in the Creative Industries. It is our experience that the need for people trained in this industry actually outweighs the supply; and as such, we believe the move to close these Industry trainings is most short-sighted.

For all the above reasons, we support any moves from the community to forward training courses in the arts within the Denmark community and will endeavour to contribute to this within the limits of our current capacity.

Yours sincerely,



Vivienne Robertson
Artistic Director

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**COUNTRY+
ARTS+WA=**



Government of Western Australia
Department of Culture and the Arts

lotterywest
supported



DENMARK TOURISM INCORPORATED

73 South Coast Highway Denmark Western Australia 6333

Tel: 08 9848 2055

Fax: 08 9848 2271

Email: ceo@denmark.com.au

Web: www.denmark.com.au

ABN: 87 260 403 659 Lic 9TA 1373



21 August 2012

To Whom It May Concern

RE: Great Southern Institute of Technology Accredited Arts and Music Courses

Denmark Tourism Incorporated (DTI) would like to express concern regarding the cancellation of the aforementioned courses within the Great Southern.

The Great Southern Institute of Technology (GSIT) has a proven track record of developing and teaching arts and related programs which engage with a wide cross section of people living in Great Southern communities. GSIT is acknowledged in the Denmark community as an important cultural resource and an educational institution that contributes to the artistic fabric of Denmark.

These courses help tourism to creatively capitalise on what is unique about Denmark - its community, heritage, artistic and cultural life. These are unique selling propositions that attract visitors and create a better quality of life for those who live here. Arts and culture are a potent force in the life of both metropolitan and regional Western Australia and reinforce a sense of place and identity in the community. GSIT courses help to cement this ideal.

DTI certainly recognises the dynamic interaction between the arts, culture and the tourism industry and the role that GSIT plays.

DTI look forward to the reinstatement of the arts and music courses at the GSIT.

If you would like to discuss further please do not hesitate to contact me on 9848 2055 or at ceo@denmark.com.au

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Nagorski', written in a cursive style.

Justine Nagorski

Chief Executive Officer

Denmark Tourism Incorporated

PUBLIC

