

– Media Release –

First Nations CEO appointment will lead Artback NT into a new era

Artback NT welcomes the appointment of Shay Vigona-Goudge as their new Chief Executive Officer. This is a significant senior appointment of a local, First Nations woman to a nationally recognised arts organisation.

Vigona-Goudge has worked for many years in the Northern Territory arts and cultural sector and has an extensive understanding of the diversities, challenges and opportunities that make up the rich fabric of the Territory. She also brings a network of national and local connections to Artback NT.

“Shay’s appointment as a First Nations Chief Executive Officer of a nationally recognised arts organisation is a significant moment for the Northern Territory and the Australian arts and cultural sector” said Denise Salvestro, Chair, Artback NT.

Over the past two years there has been an increase in the number of arts and cultural positions for First Nations professionals, chief executive officers and equivalents in Australia. However, Indigenous people are under-represented comprising only 2.7% of the arts workforce with only 0.3% in senior leadership positions.

Marlene Chisholm, Committee Member, Artback NT said “This is an important appointment for Artback NT and the sector as a whole. As a board and organisation we are committed to ensuring equitable representation of First Nations arts professionals in key roles. The board is excited to be working with Shay and we look forward to her leading Artback NT and continuing to tell the rich and diverse stories of the Northern Territory and its peoples.”

Being born and bred in the Territory from a multi-cultural background with family in the Tiwi Islands, Vigona-Goudge is proud of the diversity and uniqueness of where she lives. As a passionate advocate for the arts, she is keen to build capacity for First Nations people in remote communities to realise their creative practice. With 33% of the population being Indigenous, representing an estimated 86 language groups, a focus for Vigona-Goudge will be on regional and remote communities to be front and centre in the organisations thinking and actions.

“As a child I regularly visited Melbourne to spend time with my non-Indigenous father’s family and travelled to other places. The naivety I





Artback NT

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encountered outside the Territory about the Northern Territory's demographics has instilled in me the passion to improve this and the power of arts and culture is one of the most effective vehicles to have the greatest impact on this across all spectrums – social, political and economic" said Shay Vigona-Goudge, Chief Executive Officer, Artback NT.

Vigona-Goudge has participated in a number of national leadership programs such as the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation's Milparanga Program and the National Gallery of Australia | Wesfarmers' Indigenous Arts Leadership Program. Being exposed to these networks and art codes has reaffirmed and inspired Vigona-Goudge's career direction.

"I am excited to be able to take on this opportunity and lead an organisation such as Artback NT. I first became aware of Artback NT whilst working with Arts NT and was impressed with the organisations ability to bring people together through the immersion in arts and cultural experiences. For me, there are synergies with my own aspirations for the creative industries. That is, to continue to build upon the organisation's strong connections to better service the Territory's creatives and in turn audiences. This will include pathways and outcomes for our remote communities in the Northern Territory" said Vigona-Goudge.

As a local applicant, Vigona-Goudge has comprehensive knowledge of the local arts and cultural sector that includes working with the Territory's multicultural communities, Arts NT and other Northern Territory Government organisations. This experience will lead Artback NT into its next phase as a member of the National Performing Arts Framework.

"Shay stood out amongst a strong selection of candidates. Her background and her awareness of the issues associated with delivering programs to remote communities were a consideration. She is also an enthusiast of work created in the Territory and where this is positioned nationally. As a board we look forward to working with Shay to support her in expanding the programming to further expose the broader national and international community to the unique stories of the Northern Territory" said Salvestro.

Shay Vigona-Goudge, Chief Executive Officer, Artback NT, is available for interview upon request.

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