Building Relationships with the Local Community: Approaches to Community Engagement at Australian Folk Festivals

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Certificate of Original Authorship

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Signature …….

Date …….

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the social dimension of event impacts, and seeks to provide insights into those approaches employed by Australian Folk Festivals to engage with their local communities from the point of view of event organisers. Over the past decade there has been an increased awareness of the impacts, both positive and negative, that events have on their host communities, and a recognition that community support can play an important role in the success and longevity of the event itself. While event-hosting communities are acknowledged as important stakeholders for festival organisations, little effort has been made to identify the spectrum of practices purposefully employed to seek their engagement and manage their relationship. This exploratory study has sought to go some way towards the understanding of a 'continuum' of community engagement within events and in so doing, provides event managers with a deeper appreciation of the approaches to host community engagement available to them during the planning and delivery phases of their events.

A qualitative exploratory research approach was employed, with the intent of providing insights into the issue of concern to this study, which was reflected in the enquiry's research aim:

Identify the spectrum of approaches and practices used by the organisers of folk festivals to engage with their local communities with a view to building relationships leading to both event longevity and positive community outcomes.

An extensive literature review was conducted, the results of which were employed to frame a series of in-depth interview questions, which were then posed to a number of festivals (20) listed, amongst others, on the Folk Alliance Australia calendar of events. The practices identified from the analysis of this data were then placed into one of three engagement categories - transactional, transitional or transformational. The practices within these groupings were then explored in terms of their intent. Those factors that served to facilitate or hinder them were also noted, along with the stakeholder groups linked to them.

The enquiry found that the practices used by event organisers seeking to build relationships with their communities are predominantly of transactional and transitional nature, with events acknowledging the importance of engaging with their communities yet retaining control of the process. Only a few examples were found of

transformational strategies. However, while the study provided an understanding of the strategies currently in use, it also highlighted that the community engagement continuum only partially reflects the diversity of experiences of folk festival organisations in this area. This suggests that the engagement process in the context of Australian folk festivals is a complex one, that could benefit from a strategic focus.

The significance of this study lies in its capacity to provide event organisers, both in the folk festival area and in the broader public events field, with a deeper appreciation of the range of potential practices available to them when seeking to engage their host communities, along with those factors that might impact such efforts. This appreciation in turn, should serve to 'sharpen' the strategic focus of such events in the community engagement area, and assist them in articulating their engagement efforts when seeking government support through public grants. In conclusion, the study identified opportunities for further research, specifically: the investigation of the insights emerging from this study in other public event settings; and the exploration of stakeholder perspectives on the effectiveness of the various approaches to community engagement identified here, along with their desired outcomes.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1.Introduction

The increasing popularity of festivals and events, together with their impact on host communities, has led to a growing body of research on the impacts of events. Although the subject has attracted researchers' interest over the past 20 years, much of this has been directed at establishing the economic outcomes of these events in their various forms (McCann & Thompson 1992, Mules & Faulkner 1996, Kim, Scott, Thigpen, & Kim 1998, Ryan 1998, Tyrell & Johnston 2001, Reid 2007). This research focus has, however, begun to shift in recent years towards the use of a "Triple Bottom Line" approach. This approach takes into account environmental and social outcomes in event hosting communities as well as those of an economic nature (Allen, Harris, O'Toole & McDonnell 2011).

This study focuses on the 'social' dimensions of event impacts, and deals specifically with approaches to, and issues surrounding, host community engagement during the planning and delivery phases of an event. Due to time and resource constraints its focus has been limited to a specific event type - folk festivals, a recurrent type of event common in many parts of Australia.

The concept of community engagement will be used in this study to refer to the process event organisers employ to build ongoing and long-term relationships with their host communities. It is the drivers of these relationships in the form of activities, strategies and processes, with which this study is primarily concerned.

It is noteworthy that this concept has been little explored in the literature to date, with the few studies that have been conducted identifying a broad range of potential benefits for both event organisers and their communities. These benefits include: the possibility of overcoming resistance and opposition to an event's continued operation and avoiding actions that could otherwise generate conflict (Derrett 2003, Fredline & Faulkner 1998, Haxton 2000); the creation of social capital (Moscardo 2007); fostering a sense of place (Derrett 2003); creating civic pride (Wood 2006); and the development of a volunteering culture in a community (Harris 2005). Conversely, failure to involve an event's host community in the planning and delivery phases of an event can lead to negative social impacts such as traffic congestion, excessive crowding, noise, vandalism and in certain instances criminal behaviours that can affect a local community' s

perceptions of an event and jeopardise its immediate or longer term future (Small, Edwards & Sheridan 2005).

In seeking to provide insights into the issue of concern to this study, it will seek to identify the range of community engagement practices currently in evidence, the community stakeholders linked to these, the outcomes sought through them and factors which may be serving to facilitate or hinder them. Given the limited research specific to these matters, an exploratory qualitative research design was employed that involved an extensive literature review and a number of interviews with key informants.

In this introductory chapter a background to the issue of community engagement in the context of events is discussed, before providing the study's central research question and associated subsidiary objectives. The enquiry's envisaged contribution to knowledge is then discussed before defining key concepts used in the study. The chapter concludes with an overview of the structure of the thesis, and each of its chapters.

1.2. Background

The importance of the role of local communities within the events sector stems from the acknowledgement that events affect the normal routine of local residents within a geographical area, sometimes in a positive way, sometimes in a disruptive one.

Consequently, the relationship between an event and its host community often plays an important role in determining the ongoing success of an event (Small et al 2005, Lade & Jackson 2004). It is therefore vital for event organisers to consider the host community as an important stakeholder in the planning and delivery of their events.

Viewed through the lens of 'stakeholder theory', the management of the relationship between an event and its hosting community can be seen as a key factor in its ability to achieve its objectives. Stakeholder theory argues that event managers need to identify and classify their stakeholder groups in order to understand their interests and take into consideration their needs, perceptions, inputs and ideas by making sure that all groups are given a voice and consulted (Donaldson & Preston 1995). An aspect of stakeholder theory particularly relevant in the context of the present study, is the importance of identifying ways to engage stakeholders in the management process, and associated with this, determining what barriers exist (if any) to the effectiveness of such engagement (Carroll & Buchholtz 2012).

The recognition of the host community as an important stakeholder in the planning and delivery process of events brings a number of benefits for event organisers that ultimately enhance the event offering itself and/or its longer-term future. In particular, the engagement of community leaders and representatives in the early stages of the event planning ensures participation, sense of ownership of the event itself (Delamere, Wankel & Hinch 2001) and cooperation and support (Queensland Police Service & Liquor Licensing Division 1999). Additionally, awareness of a community's local recreational interests and activities can help organisers in programming their events in ways that make them more appealing to a local audience (Reid & Arcodia 2002). Failure to include the host community in the different stages of event organisation can affect the community' s perceptions of the event and jeopardise its immediate or longer term future (Getz 2005, Small 2007, Ritchie 1984, Dwyer, Mellor, Mistilis & Mules 2000, Fredline, Jago & Deery 2003, Ohmann, Jones & Wilkes 2006, Gursoy 2002, Sherwood 2007). In recent years for example, the social and environmental impacts of major music festivals taking place in the Byron Bay area led to the introduction of an events policy (Byron Shire Council 2010) that introduced strict limitations to the number of major events (with more than 6,ooo patrons) hosted in the area. The policy was seen by many as controversial, as it impacted landmark music events such as the Byron Bay Bluesfest (Music in Communities Network 2012) and Splendour in the Grass (Splendour In The Grass Team 2010).

1.3.Research Question

Various researchers have identified the importance of residents as major stakeholders in the events hosted within their community (e.g. Reid & Arcodia 2002, Small et al 2005 and Getz 1997). Few studies, however, as noted previously have focused on how the issue of engaging residents within local communities can be addressed in ways that produce mutually beneficial outcomes (Harris 2005).

The present study therefore proposes to:

Identify the spectrum of approaches and practices used by the organisers of folk festivals to engage with their local communities with a view to building relationships leading to both event longevity and positive community outcomes.

In order to address this aim, a number of key objectives have been established to guide the study:

1. to identify, classify and describe the nature of community engagement practices currently in use by folk festival organisations;
2. to determine the range of stakeholders that folk festival organisations engage with through the practices identified in objective 1;
3. to determine the outcomes sought through the practices identified in objective 1; and
4. to identify those factors that serve to facilitate or inhibit the community engagement efforts of folk festival organisers.

1.4. Contribution to Knowledge

The success of festivals and events is linked not only to the economic benefits they generate, but also to their impacts on the social and cultural environments of the local communities where they take place. These latter impacts are heavily influenced by residents' perceptions, which in turn affect their willingness to engage with, and provide support for, the event and its management process (Gursoy & Kendall 2006). The present research aligns with a recent study by Mair and Whitford (2013), which identified the broad category of socio-cultural and community impacts of events as the most important topic for future research within the events field. This study also points out that community engagement is one of five key topic areas scholars in the event management field are currently focusing on[1].

While this study can be seen in the light of further serving to contribute to the broader effort by event researchers to develop insights into the under-researched area of socio-cultural and community impacts, in specific terms it seeks to do this by providing event organisers, both in the folk festival area and in the broader public events field, with a deeper appreciation of the range of potential practices available to them in the area of community engagement, along with those factors that might impact such efforts. This appreciation in turn, should serve to 'sharpen' the strategic focus of such events in the community engagement area.

[1] The other areas include event impacts and legacy, events and identity, events governance and events and inclusion.

1.5. Key Concepts Employed in the Study

The terms 'community', 'community engagement', 'folk festival' and 'event stakeholder' are used throughout this study. In order to clarify their usage they are defined below. It should also be noted that these terms will be examined in some detail in Chapter 2.

Community

The literature offers a variety of definitions for the term 'community', as there seems to be little agreement on what the term actually refers to. This study adopts a geographical perspective on community, with the focus being on the residents of a defined area bounded, as appropriate, by the jurisdictional coverage of a shire or council (Poland & Maré 2005).

Community engagement

Definitions of 'community engagement' can be found across a variety of disciplines and fields of study, such as public policy, natural resource management, social work and sports management. In this study, community engagement is defined in relation to the events sector, as a process by which an event organisation seeks to build long-term relationships with its host community through formal and informal interactions and different levels of involvement.

Folk festival

The term 'folk festival' presents ambiguities connected to the fact that folk festivals originated a long time ago and have developed in different forms throughout history and in different parts of the world. This study defines folk festivals as cultural events that interpret the traditional folk culture in a broad sense, i.e. including different genres of music, provided they share the folk movement's commitment to open and participatory cultural forms (Smith & Brett 1998).

1.6. Thesis Structure

This thesis is organised into six chapters. The first chapter provides an overview of the research issue, locating it within the broader context of the social impacts of events. It also discusses the study's contribution to existing knowledge as well as outlining and briefly defining the key concepts employed in the thesis.

Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature concerning community, community engagement and folk festivals. It discusses definitions and issues associated with these topics providing an understanding of the key concepts that underpin the research as well as highlighting the gaps in the literature in relation to the research issue. In this review, community engagement is described in its application to a variety of fields and disciplines, including events studies. The origins and development of folk festivals are also discussed and an argument is made to demonstrate that they can offer valuable insights into the broader issue of community engagement within the event context.

Chapter 3 introduces stakeholder theory as a suitable foundation for the development of the conceptual framework used to guide the study. It outlines the notions of 'stake' and 'stakeholder', both in general terms and in the context of their application to the events sector. Community engagement is then discussed as a targeted form of stakeholder management. Finally, the conceptual framework informing the study is presented, together with an outline of its elements and their relationships.

Chapter 4 addresses the research methodology and design used in this study. A qualitative exploratory design was employed and data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews with representatives of a number of Australian folk festivals. Interview data were also corroborated, where possible, through examining secondary data sources, specifically documentation from the selected events, events websites and social media sites. The chapter outlines the data analysis methods used and how results will be presented. Issues associated with the role of the researcher and the limitations of the study are also discussed, before addressing matters concerning the validity of the study.

Chapter 5 presents the research results in line with the research question and associated sub-questions. Firstly, it describes the practices used by folk festival organisers to engage with their local communities. Secondly, it moves to identifying the community stakeholders that these practices are targeted at. Thirdly, it outlines what outcomes festival organisers seek when engaging with their communities, and finally, it discusses a range of elements that facilitate or limit the community engagement of folk festivals.

The final chapter, Chapter 6, provides a discussion of the findings presented in Chapter 5. Additionally, it revisits the enquiry's conceptual framework in the light of the findings and proposes a more complete model of the community engagement process

that can potentially inform future studies. The thesis concludes by noting matters to be explored through future research.

1.7.Summary

Host communities are important events stakeholders, as their support is often crucial to determine the success, or otherwise, of the event itself. Community engagement efforts by event organisers can act to support the process of managing this important stakeholder group. This chapter sought to overview the present study, and by doing so provide an understanding of its origins, focus, research approach and outcomes. Additionally it has provided an overview of key terms used in this study and its contribution to knowledge. The chapter concluded by outlining the structure of this thesis.

Chapter 2: Community, Community Engagement and Folk Festivals

2.1. Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the literature germane to the study's research problem and objectives. It begins by examining the concept of community and then moves on to discuss the process of community engagement. The broad nature of this process is first described, along with various approaches to defining it. Broad guiding principles associated with its application are then described, along with selected models that seek to explain the process. Community engagement is then examined through the lens of stakeholder engagement, before going on to explore its use in specific settings – the public realm, tourism, events and regional/rural areas – deemed insightful from the perspective of this study's focus. The chapter concludes by discussing the nature, characteristics and origins of folk festivals, along with their development in the Australian context.

2.2. Community

Although widely used in a variety of contexts, the concept of community presents difficulties in its definition, as it is an abstract notion with many potential meanings (Minar & Greer 1969, Warburton 1998, Raj & Morpeth 2006, Gilchrist 2004).

From a broad perspective, 'community' brings together two separate ideas. One refers to the physical concentration of individuals in one place, while the other addresses the social structure existing among those individuals (Minar & Greer 1969). Traditionally, communities have been characterised by three elements: geography, interaction and identity (Lee & Newby 1983). Communities characterized by location are bounded in geographic space (e.g. a town), while communities of interaction are defined in terms of social relationships (e.g. friendships). Communities of identity are characterized by a sense of belonging amongst their members, with links flowing from culture, values, beliefs or interests.

While there has been a tendency for scholars in various contexts to focus upon place-based communities, communities built on interaction and identity are increasingly being considered as important players in the contemporary world (Dunham, Freeman & Liedtka 2006). This shift in focus can be attributed in large measure, according to Raj and Morpeth (2006), to globalization. They contend that in an increasingly globalised

world geographical boundaries tend to be of less significance in providing demarcations between communities. Additionally, in recent years people have also become more and more mobile causing the dissolution of strong ties with localities. In order to provide a definition of community that reflects these issues, Butcher, Glen, Henderson and Smith (1993) introduced the idea of 'descriptive community', which refers to the general idea of a network of people who feel and share a strong sense of belonging to the network itself.

As the previous discussion has made clear, various approaches to defining community are available to researchers. In the context of this study, the approach that is deemed most appropriate is that of a geographic perspective, with the focus being on the residents of a defined area bounded, as appropriate, by the jurisdictional coverage of a shire or council (Poland & Maré 2005, p.19). It should be noted, however, that the other types of communities noted previously will not be ignored, just that their significance, or otherwise, from the viewpoint of this study, will be contained to a specific geographic context.

2.3. Community Engagement

Recent years have seen significant growth in the number of studies and reports focused on the issue of community engagement. This growth in the volume of material dealing with this issue can, at least in part be seen as resulting from an increased desire by government at all levels to reflect public participation in policy development and implementation (Bowen, Newenham-Kahindi & Herremans 2010; Boxelaar, Paine & Beilin 2006), and by business seeking to pursue its corporate social responsibility objectives (Wood 2002). For this reason, the body of the literature dealing with the concept is mostly industry and practitioner based, with limited academic studies dedicated to the definition of community engagement, its principles and models. It is noteworthy that this literature is not confined to a narrow range of issues or disciplines. For example, community engagement has been explored from the viewpoints of public policy (Boxelaar, Paine & Beilin 2006), social work (Hashagan 2002), health (Russell, Igras, Johri, Kuoh, Pavin, & Wickstrom 2008), natural resource management (Larson & Williams 2009), education (Delaforce 2004), sport management (Schulenkorf 2010) and event management (Harris 2005).

Given the varying perspectives that have been employed to explore the concept of community engagement, it is not surprising that approaches to defining and modeling the concept have differed, and that there will be discrepancies in how associated terms have been employed. With regards this last point, Googins and Rochlin (2000) point to the varying ways that studies in this area have differed in the way they use the terms 'partnership' and 'collaboration'.

2.3.1. Definitions for community engagement

As mentioned previously, the literature focusing on the definitions for community engagement proceeds from governments' and practitioners' efforts to engage with their local communities. In fact, Australian governments at all levels have proven to be proactive in developing community engagement programs and policies within their jurisdictions (Cavaje 2004) and as per the examples below, have a similar perspective on the nature of the concept.

> "Community engagement is about involving the community in decision making processes, which is critical in the successful development of acceptable policies and decisions in government, the private sector and the community". (Local Government Association of South Australia 2008, p.1)

> "Community engagement refers to consultation, involvement and participation with residents and services users. These are the ways in which we find out the views of local people to inform the decisions we make". (Australian Capital Territory Government 2011)

> "Community engagement refers to the many ways in which governments connect with citizens in the development and implementation of policies, programs and services. Engagement covers a wide variety of government-community connections, ranging from information sharing to community consultation and, in some instances, active participation in government policy development and decision-making processes". (Queensland Department of the Premier and Cabinet 2003, p.5)

Moreover, community engagement is seen as the process that involves the building of a relationship between government and the citizens it serves (Cavaje 2004) to increase their well-being (Victoria Department of Sustainability and Environment 2005), or as

the "public processes in which the general public and other interested parties are invited to contribute to particular proposals or policy changes" (Planning NSW 2003, p.6).

The definitions given above confirm the Australian Government's commitment and effort towards a more inclusive decision-making processes within public administration in order to "enhance their work with communities" (Cavaje 2005, p.3). These views are very comprehensive in terms of the sectors they embrace as they refer to policy development, planning, decision-making, service delivery and assessment (International Association for Public Participation 2012b). In the specific context of events, Harris (2005) offered a more general understanding of community engagement, defining the concept in practical terms, as "the formal and/or informal interactions between an event and its host community" (p.291).

For the purpose of this study, community engagement will be defined in relation to events, as:

> A process by which an event organisation seeks to build long-term relationships with its host community through formal and informal interactions and different levels of involvement.

This definition incorporates the understanding that community engagement is a process that encompasses different levels of involvement and different kinds of interactions and aimed at creating long lasting relationships with the community.

2.3.2. Principles of community engagement

Within the practice-oriented literature available on community engagement it is widely acknowledged that there is a set of values and principles underpinning and guiding engagement efforts (Greet 2005). These principles and values emerge from a variety of experiences and are directed at practitioners in order to increase the effectiveness of engagement activities. They include:

- Clarity of objectives and goals for engagement efforts; flexibility to deal with the community changing needs; long term committment (McClonskey, McDonald, Cook, Heurtin-Roberts, Updegrove, Sampson, Gutter, & Eder 2011);
- Knowledge of the community culture and understanding of its internal dynamics; respect (Greet 2005);
- Appreciation for diversity and for the opportunities arising from it (Victoria Department of Sustainability and Environment 2005);

- Inclusiveness; transparency; enhancement of trust; capability and social learning (Petts & Leach 2000);
- Encouragement of community contribution (Brown & Isaacs 1994).

In his practice-based keynote presentation at the International Conference on Engaging Communities, Cavaje (2005) draws attention to additional principles that practitioners commencing engagement activities should bear in mind.

He highlights the importance, amongst others, of:

- Creating tailor made opportunities;
- Dealing with frustration and disappointment that might be caused by poor previous engagement;
- Developing a coordinated approach between agencies in order to avoid over-consultation;
- Leveraging existing connections.

These principles arise from community engagement approaches and they represent learnings from the current practice; as such they are not fixed, but they go hand in hand with the development and enhancement of the practice itself.

2.3.3. Community Engagement Models

As noted above, community engagement encompasses a spectrum of activities ranging from low and passive levels of involvement to active participation in decision-making. This continuum has informed a number of models developed within the industry and practice-based literature to guide engagement efforts and to achieve engagement goals.

The Queensland Government, for example, adopted the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) model. As Figure 2.1 shows below, it highlights three simple steps:

1. Information, which has to be accurate, relevant, timely and appropriate in its delivery, tailored and able to direct citizens to further information;
2. Consultation, two-way relationship in which the government seeks the feedback of citizens; and
3. Active participation (Queensland Department of the Premier and Cabinet 2003, p.6).

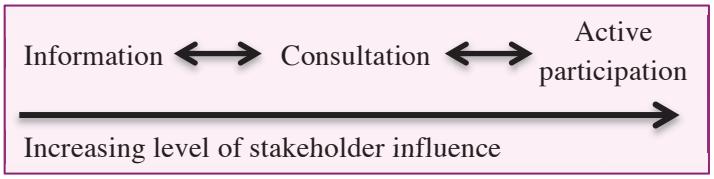

Figure 2.1. Engagement Model
Source: Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet (2003b, p. 6)

Building on the model above, the International Association for Public Participation' s (2012a) Spectrum for Public Participation acknowledges the processes of information and consultation as the bottom steps of the engagement continuum, and breaks down active participation into three further steps (involvement, collaboration and empowerment), as illustrated in Figure 2.2 below.

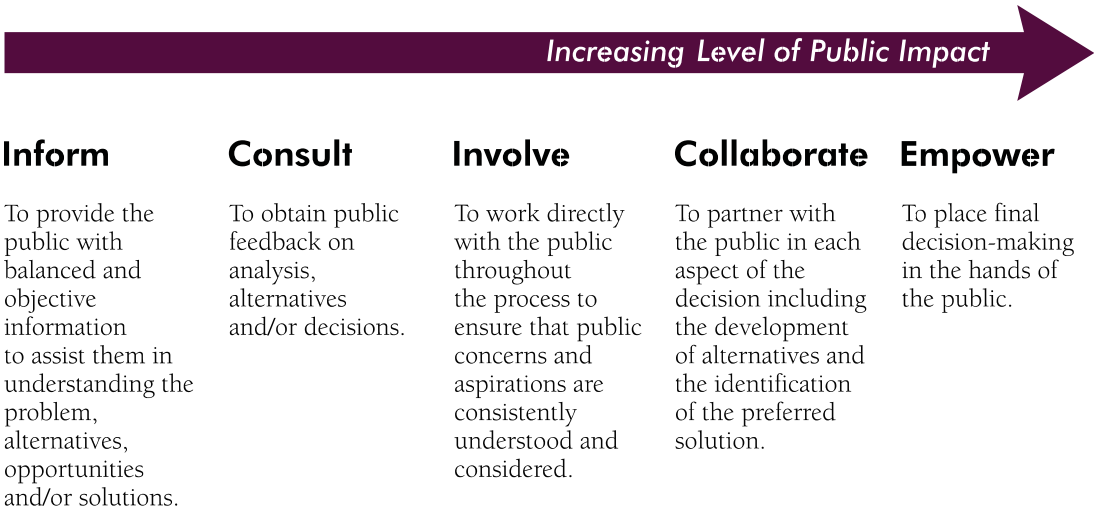

Figure 2.2. Spectrum for Public Participation
Source: International Association of Public Participation (2012a)

In these two models, community engagement tends to be viewed as a continuum, comprised of levels of public participation ultimately leading to a situation of community leadership and empowerment. However, while models are readily available within the literature, Hashagen (2002) warns against applying them in a prescriptive way, and suggests that community engagement be considered as a flexible and context-dependent process. Approaches and strategies have to be grounded on the understanding of the needs of the community, and have to be tailored to the capacity of its groups.

In particular, Hashagen (2002) introduces a classification of community engagement models that reflects the focus of different engagement efforts. In his view, consultation/ public participation models are placed side by side to:

- Asset-based/social economy models, focused on recognising the value of a community's physical assets and human resources and on trying to maximise the community control over, and benefit from, these assets;
- Community democracy models, setting out to extend local democracy into the community;
- Identity-based models, typically developed by ethnic minority groups as a means to finding and expressing a voice;
- Learning-led and popular education models, focusing on building community capacity;
- Service development models, providing direct responses to gaps in public service provision;
- Community organising, more common in the United States, involving building coalitions of action to challenge policies of companies and other institutions; and
- Regional and national networks, focused on sharing experiences among different communities across the territory.

A number of models with similar characteristics have been devised in a variety of disciplines and successfully used in order to guide the engagement process in education (Delaforce 2004), public health (Russell et al 2008), housing (Manitoba Family Services and Housing 2008), natural resource management (Larson & Williams 2009) and sport (Schulenkorf 2010).

While community engagement models represent the frameworks guiding engagement efforts, community engagement techniques are the specific means through which each step of the engagement process can occur. Information-sharing techniques include fact sheets, online information processes, education and awareness programs, newsletters, newspaper inserts, community fairs and events and advertising. Focus groups and interviews, surveys, public meetings, open days, workshops and deliberative polling are used mostly in the consultation phase as well as to encourage involvement, while citizen advisory committees, citizen juries and panels, ballots, and delegated decisions are methods employed to foster active participation and seek collaboration (International Association for Public Participation 2012a, Queensland Department of the Premier and Cabinet 2003).

2.3.4. Stakeholder Perspective on Community Engagement

The particular perspective this study employs to look at community engagement is stakeholder theory, as community engagement can be considered a strategy within an organisation's broader stakeholder engagement program. The views on community engagement offered in this study draw heavily from the key work of Bowen, Newenham-Kahindi and Herremans (2010), who undertook a systematic review of over 200 academic and practitioner knowledge sources available on the topic - some of which have been described above. This review highlights striking similarities between models developed in different areas, such as government, an international training association, the voluntary sector, a corporate toolkit, the community development literature and non-profit corporate alliances. In all these areas community engagement is seen as a continuum that moves from a one-way form of communication towards community empowerment through a two-way dialogue and partnership. The taxonomy emerging from the review draws from the leadership and governance literature and the following three groupings are offered as a comprehensive categorisation of types of engagement:

- transactional engagement: based on one-way communication from the organisation to the community and on the idea of "giving back" (p. 305) through the provision of information and investment in the community;
- transitional engagement: identified through a two-way dialogue where communication flows mainly from the organisation towards the community. This type of engagement includes the processes of consultation and collaboration; and
- transformational engagement: characterized by a balanced two-way communication mode that reflects authentic dialogue, as well as by joint project management, joint decision-making processes and a sense of co-ownership of projects.

Choosing this particular perspective on community engagement to investigate the research question and related sub-questions appears to be the most suitable, as it moves away from approaches related to particular disciplines and fields of study, while offering a map *super partes* of the intellectual domain and a comprehensive overview of the existing literature on the topic (see Figure 2.3 overleaf). Furthermore, the work of Bowen et al, (2010) explores how community engagement strategies benefit

communities and organisation, providing insights that will be useful in the investigation of outcomes of community engagement in the context of folk festivals.

In the following chapters, community engagement will be explored in its application within three different realms, from a broader context (public administration) to two specific areas within leisure studies (tourism and events). This review will offer a sound background for the investigation of the research questions.

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Figure 2.3. The continuum of community engagement
Source: Bowen, Newenham-Kahindi and Herremans (2010, p.304)

2.3.5. Factors influencing community engagement

A number of studies identified factors that can influence the success of engagement efforts in both the business and government contexts. For example, Cavaje (2004), in the context of public governance, identified "clues to good community engagement" (p.91) and provided a framework of critical success factors in good government-community engagement. The framework recognises genuine motivation, trust, leadership, decision-making, structures and procedures, accountability, skills, satisfaction and accountability as areas of the engagement process that a number of factors (e.g. continuity of contact, attitude and skills of leaders, equity) can support and

positively influence. This framework is very comprehensive in terms of illustrating areas and factors that government departments are in control of in order to enhance their engagement efforts. However, it fails to acknowledge aspects associated with the geographical or social context of the communities where engagement takes place.

Mattessich, Murray-Close and Monsey (2001), in the field of collaboration studies, incorporated these elements and identified twenty factors influencing collaboration through an extensive critical literature review of the research related to collaboration. These factors were subsequently classified into 6 categories:

- Factors related to the environment (e.g. a history of collaboration in the community or a favorable social climate);
- Factors related to membership characteristics (e.g. mutual respect, understanding and trust);
- Factors related to process and structure (e.g. clarity of roles and multiple layers of participation);
- Factors related to communication (e.g. open, frequent interactions and informal relationships/communications);
- Factors related to purpose (e.g. a shared vision and clear and realistic goals); and
- Factors related to resources (e.g. skilled leadership and sufficient funds, time and staff).

Lasker, Weiss and Miller (2001) conducted a similar review of the literature within the extensive literature on partnerships and identified similar categories that support the achievement of high levels of synergy[2] within partnerships. The categories identified are fewer than the previously described, and incorporate many of the factors illustrated by Cavaje (2004) and Mattessich et al (2001), such as resources, elements associated with the partners relationships and with the external environment.

Although these studies show discrepancies in the classification of the factors influencing the success of engagement, they agree in considering mutual trust and respect, skills associated with the leadership and adequate resources as important elements able to support engagement efforts.

[2] Synergy is defined by Lasker and Weiss as "the breakthroughs in thinking and action that are produced when a collaborative process successfully combines the complementary knowledge, skills and resources of a group of participants" (2003, p. 121).

2.3.6. Community Engagement and the Public Realm

The concept of community is particularly important when considering the public sphere and governance, as governments and local authorities are increasingly paying attention to the changing needs of their citizens and adjusting policies and decisions according to public demands and interventions (Rentschler 1997, Graham 1998, Wanna 2008). Community involvement and participation in policy and decision making has been contemplated by public authorities for a long time (Gilchrist 2004), however a number of authors have pointed out that recently community engagement is "enjoying a revival" (Craig 2003, p. 2), as it has returned to be a strong focus on governments' agendas (Head 2005, Mowbray 2005, King & Cruickshank 2012).

Only relatively recently has there been a movement towards creating practical mechanisms and processes to stimulate members of the public to engage in policy and planning decisions that can affect the whole community (King & Cruickshank 2012). A number of reasons have been identified to explain why community engagement has returned on governments' agendas, they include:

- the role of technology, that allows improved access to information (Head 2005, p. 5);
- the popular perception, especially in rural and regional areas, that governments follow their own agendas without acknowledging and acting upon their citizens' needs and requests (King & Cruickshank 2012, p. 6);
- increasing community demands to be involved in government decisions (Cavaje 2005, p. 2); and
- in a business context, the acknowledgement that community engagement and good community relations can enhance business operations (Cavaje 2005, p. 2).

Community involvement within the public realm is not only related to practical matters, but is underpinned by a political framework that emphasises participation and creates opportunities for all members to contribute to the decision-making process (Haxton 2000). Participatory democracy is a theoretical model acknowledging that in recent times society has become more aware and knowledgeable, demanding decision-making processes that are not only informed by expert considerations, but also incorporate more elements of public involvement (Fagence 1977). This request can only be fulfilled by increasing levels of interaction and collaboration between the governing authorities and the public (Haxton 2000). That form of collaboration can happen only after the acknowledgement by local authorities and city planners that their communities are

fundamental stakeholders of their decisions and activities (Jamal & Getz 1995, Foley & Mcpherson 2007). As stakeholders, citizens are directly or indirectly affected by policies and plans, or more generically by the approaches used to solve issues and problems (Gray 1989). They might have an active interest in the matters discussed and applied by councils, or they can simply have different views and perspectives that could potentially improve programs and projects.

Jamal and Getz (1995), in the context of tourism planning, propose an approach to deal with engagement, which draws upon Gray's seminal work on collaboration theory (1989). Here, collaboration arises from the stakeholders' awareness of the potential benefits and mutual advantages proceeding from working together and refers to the "process of decision making among key stakeholders of a problem domain about the future of that domain" (Gray 1989, p.227). In other words, collaborative governance provides a forum for citizens and stakeholders to influence the decision-making process according to various degrees of involvement (Haxton 2000).

Other advantages encompass:

- better knowledge and understanding of community issues (Wanna 2008);
- capacity building (Queensland Department of the Premier and Cabinet 2003);
- the possibility to identify solutions informed by different perspectives and views;
- an increased sense of community ownership of the decisions taken;
- agreement and acceptance (Allen et al 2011); and
- the improvement of the decision-making process and its outcomes (Johnson, Glover & Yuen 2009).

The primary element for collaborative governance to be effective is public participation, which refers to the public or community capacity to influence decisions. Haxton (2000) draws a distinction between community involvement and community participation, pointing out that the two terms are often used interchangeably in the existing literature, even though they are in fact different concepts. Community involvement refers to "the general ability of communities to influence the outcome of development projects that may have an impact upon them" (Haxton 2000, p.40), while participation is a more pragmatic notion, as it addresses the process through which communities actively affect the process.

As Johnson et al (2009) note, citizens' and community participation in the public arena has a recognised value and in certain contexts is not any longer considered an opportunity granted by the governing authorities, but a fundamental part of local governance (Graham 1998). However, public participation poses some challenges in relation to legitimacy (Jamal & Getz 1995), control (Wanna 2008) and accuracy of information (Keogh 1990). The literature has highlighted the lack of measures to define the effectiveness of public participation in decision-making processes (Rowe & Frewer 2000, Head 2005). In addition to that, practices such as producing information-based websites, providing grants, establishing regional bodies to streamline processes have been prioritised over more meaningful mechanisms, such as continuity and sustainability of good engagement and opportunities to address and deal with previous poor engagement (King & Cruickshank 2012).

It is also necessary to bear in mind that public participation can be time consuming (New South Wales Office on Social Policy 1994) and represents an arena for conflicts and tensions. Considering these shortfalls, planners and governing authorities often rely on the involvement of community representatives, who are volunteers from the community acting as intermediaries between officials and the rest of their communities (Johnson et al 2009). However, this is a role that requires great effort in negotiating the often-unrealistic expectations of communities and the bureaucratic structures of local governments.

2.3.7. Community Engagement and Tourism

The concept of event tourism has been gaining increasing importance due to the strategic use of celebrations by local authorities in order to develop and boost visitation. Tourism studies and events research have been considered closely entwined areas that not only share research pathways, but the experiences in tourism planning and management can offer insights relevant in the events field. For this reason, before analysing the topic of community engagement within events, it would be useful to touch on the literature that deals with the same topic but in a more tourism-focused context.

As highlighted by Cole (2006), the reasons why community participation and engagement in tourism development are widely acknowledged and accepted in the literature arise from the broadly explored issue of tourism impacts on the destination's residents. Social impacts have become increasingly prominent in tourism debate as

economic viability is no longer accountable for the success of a tourism destination. Moreover, community residents are increasingly recognised as vital contributors to the atmosphere of the place and their friendliness contributes to creating a positive image (Simmons 1994, Cole 2006).

Tourism planners are embracing public involvement and participation by local residents in tourism developments, as a necessary step to gain community support and acceptance of projects, as well as to ensure that the developments and their benefits match the community needs (Cole 2006). Community engagement can also assist decision-making processes so that better plans are achieved, as the community is more likely to know what works within local circumstances (Tosun & Timothy 2003). However, there are a number of concerns, mainly connected with public awareness of the tourism field and its practices, in that communities may lack knowledge and insight on tourism issues (Simmons 1994, Nyaupane et al 2005). Taking this aspect into consideration, together with the acknowledgement that tourism planning is a complex task that involves the management of different stakeholders, Jamal and Getz suggest the application of collaboration theory as a "dynamic process-oriented strategy" (1995, p.200) that can be useful in planning processes at the local level. An important aspect of this theory is the identification of facilitating factors and constraints to collaboration, in order to understand the circumstances under which the theory can be used to solve problems and further shared visions effectively (Jamal & Getz 1995).

As government policies align with the 'triple bottom line' approach, that considers environmental and social goals, together with economic gains (Allen et al 2011), the issue of community participation in tourism has to be considered as an integral part of sustainable tourism development (Okazaki 2008). In fact, sustainable tourism focuses on creating economic and social benefits to communities and is committed to the conservation of environment and cultures upon which the tourism industry is based (Tourism Queensland 2010). Community engagement in tourism planning is therefore a key element in order to achieve positive, sustainable outcomes from an economic, social and environmental point of view, both for the community and for tourism operators (public and private). Tourism operators can achieve greater community support and be recognised for their best practice standards, which will lead to better referrals and increased business. Outcomes for the community, on the other hand, include economic advantages - such as jobs, increased visitor spending in the community, economic

diversification and development of infrastructure - social benefits, as community identity and pride, and better environmental outcomes mainly related to conservation of natural resources (Tourism Queensland 2010). In other words, community engagement in tourism has three main goals: (1) industry development, (2) community development and (3) conservation (Ashley & Roe 1998).

Although the advantages of community involvement and participation in tourism planning and development are increasingly recognised, it has been argued that there hasn't been enough research about the practical actions required to encourage and promote it both in the tourism field and in the events context, due to the lack of a measure to assess the existing level of community participation (Okazaki 2008). However, forms of community engagement can range from passive involvement to active participation (Ashley & Roe 1998) and do not necessitate complex and costly activities, but a conscious effort towards the recognition of the importance of the community as a stakeholder. Examples of practical activities suggested include:

- support to the local community through employment of local people and sponsorship of local events;
- educational partnerships;
- collaboration and communication through direct consultation with community representatives; and
- responsible product placement and marketing, incorporating opportunities for tourists to support the local community and providing a positive image of the community in marketing material (Tourism Queensland 2010).

2.3.8. Community Engagement and Events

As noted previously, community engagement is defined in this study, as "the formal and/or informal interactions between an event and its host community" (Harris 2005, p.291). These can take a variety of forms such as encouraging greater participation by the community and community input into event planning and development (Molloy 2002), greater inclusion and provision of activities for specific community groups (Darcy & Harris 2003), and engaging local business (Lade & Jackson 2004) in order to establish an ongoing, mutually beneficial relationship. Events can take a variety of forms, from community festivals to music happenings, from food and wine fairs to sporting events, arts festivals, environmental events and public exhibits amongst others. Community engagement is closely linked to and will depend upon the type and form of the event, as well as to its aims and objectives (Harris 2005). Sometimes organisers may

seek to limit their involvement with the community to those actions necessary to conduct the event, whilst others may need a closer engagement with the community, especially if the success of the event depends on the extent and quality of community support and engagement. In some instances support and involvement of local communities is necessary, as in the case of mega events such the Olympic Games (Gursoy & Kendall 2006). In these cases, local residents not only might be asked to vote for tax increases in order to finance the building of new infrastructure, but are also the main contributors in turning a sporting event into a big urban spectacle (Hiller 1990).

Local communities can be directly or indirectly affected by festivals and events, and the outcomes can be positive or negative. Social impacts of events can be defined as "any impacts that potentially have an impact on quality of life for local residents" (Fredline et al 2003, p.26) and include elements that shape residents' perceptions and contribute to their reactions. Similar to social impacts in the tourism context, positive social effects of festivals and events include community identity (Small 2007), community development (Ritchie 1984, Faulkner & Tideswell 1997), sense of place (Derrett 2003) and civic pride (Wood 2006). On the other hand, negative impacts, defined by Dwyer et al (2000) as "social costs", include overcrowding, traffic congestion (Gursoy, Jurowski & Uysal 2002; Fredline et al 2003) property damage, noise and vandalism, in addition to increases in prices of goods (Gursoy, Kim & Uysal 2004, Fredline et al 2003), pollution and social misbehaviour (Ohmann et al 2006). Social impacts have direct consequences on community support, a key factor for events' success.

Some writers (e.g. Derrett, 2003, Fredline & Faulkner, 1998, Delamere, Wankel & Hinch 2001, and Haxton, 2000) have sought to identify the benefits of community engagement from an event organisers perspective. These authors, amongst other things, contend that involving a community in an event's planning (through such means as consultation, focus groups and committees) and delivery can assist in overcoming resistance or opposition, and avoid decisions that may otherwise cause conflict. Small and Edwards (2003) are of a similar opinion, noting that the long term sustainability of an event can be jeopardised if communities are not involved in event planning and conduct. Of particular note in this regard is the ongoing ability of an event to access the reservoir of energy and goodwill that exists within communities that can, amongst other things, generate a ready supply of willing event volunteers. Moscardo (2007), Ritchie (1984) and Faulkner and Tideswell (1997) also point to the power of events in building/

developing social capital by such means as strengthening social networks. Collectively, these types of outcomes, as several writers have noted (Small & Edwards 2003, Waitt 2003) contribute to the long-term sustainability of a given public event.

Community engagement in public events within regional and rural areas

It is important to consider that in the case of community festivals or other public events hosted in regional and rural communities, local residents are often both the producers and consumers of the celebrations (Slabbert & Saayman 2011). In these cases, community support and involvement can take different forms, such as engagement in the organisational structure, provision of volunteers and financial or in-kind support through sponsorship from local businesses (Molloy 2002), and it is also understood to be one of the events' success factors (Lade & Jackson 2004). Moreover, Moscardo (2007) notes that community involvement in regional events and festivals enhances social capital and community capacity.

A key characteristic of social capital is the creation of a network or system of relationships among individuals that promote social cohesion, trust, collective action and cooperative behaviour through participation in cultural life (Gould, in Flinn & MacPherson 2007). Community capacity refers instead to the learning component of festivals and events: it concerns the enhancement of skills, knowledge and problem-solving abilities of volunteers, participants, performers and organisers (Evans, Joas, Sundback & Theobald 2005). Both the creation of social capital and community capacity contribute to community well-being, through the creation and enhancement of a sense of place and identity, and to a positive regional development (Moscardo 2007).

Molloy (2002) examined 36 case studies of regional festivals and events, seeking to broaden understanding of how events contribute to regional development. In particular, she also investigated the relationship between community involvement and geographical isolation and, through the qualitative study of 12 regional festivals in South Australia, noted that the further away a community is located from major urban areas, the stronger the level of support and involvement of the community will be, especially in terms of volunteers.

However, it is vital to consider that even with regional/rural or relatively isolated communities, the process of engagement can take time and considerable effort, especially when challenging conservative behaviours and attitudes. This point is made

by Richard Bladel (2004), Artistic Director of Kickstart Arts, a Tasmanian community arts organisation which collaborates with Glenorchy Council in the organisation of the Works Arts Festival. Bladel argued that the main challenge to create a grassroots community arts festivals and the reason it took almost seven years to be acknowledged and supported in this sense, was the lack of funding to support detailed community consultation in the initial phase. Dredge and Whitford (2011) also support this point by stressing that due to short timeframes and tight deadlines, event organisers often have to opt for quick solutions rather than adopting the more time consuming process of properly identifying and addressing issues and creating a collaborative space to engage with their communities. This is an important point, as it highlights constraints specific to the event management process and gives an insight to the level of effort required by event organisers for effective community engagement.

Community engagement strategies in event settings

Various strategies are in evidence in the literature that can act to progress an event's efforts at community engagement. Fredline and Faulkner (2000), for example, believe the promotion of an event can have a major affect on its ability to engage with its community. In this regard a conscious effort, they argue, needs to be made to create and communicate a positive image if a community is to come to see an event in a favourable light. Mueller and Fenton (1989), in their study of the Americas Cup defence in Perth in 1987, also draw attention to the importance of an event's communication efforts in engendering positive community attitudes, stating that such efforts were central to creating a positive attitude towards the event. Small and Edwards (2003) also point to the value of giving consideration to a broader cross section of people when programming and designing events. They found that, in the context of festivals, there can be a tendency for them to become too specialised or too narrowly focused, and thus fail to connect in a broad based way with their respective communities.

A few writers have sought to propose specific strategies intended to drive the community engagement process. Fowler and Fowler (cited in Harris 2005, p. 289), for example, suggest public events give due consideration to the following:

- the capacity of groups within a community to pay for access to an event;
- provision of free/subsidised transport to an event site;
- provision of onsite facilities for specific groups, such as the elderly, children and disabled;

- radio broadcasts from an event's site so as to provide access to it for the housebound; and
- inclusion of specific groups (i.e. the aged, people with disabilities) in preparatory activities associated with the event (e.g. distributing posters and programmes).

Other strategies in evidence in the limited literature concerning community engagement practices are the use of shop fronts and incentives. Derrett (2003) argues that the former provide an ongoing publicly accessible connection between an event and its community, while Arthur and Andrew (1996) point to the potential power of the latter (e.g. inclusion of community organisations in promotion materials) in stimulating community interest in events.

A categorization of engagement strategies within public events has been attempted by Harris (2005), where strategies have been placed under seven basic groupings:

- participation facilitation, such as discounted or free transport, specific facilities and discounted tickets for selected groups, etc.;
- community input and feedback facilitation, through public meetings, festival workshops, community wide surveys, etc.;
- inclusive programming;
- incentives;
- outreach, not only confined to the period of and around the event itself. This can include extension activities such as free side-events, community grant programs, etc., involvement with schools and non-profit organisations, etc.;
- community development and capacity building, through internships, work experiences, volunteering opportunities, etc.; and
- local business engagement.

2.4. Folk Festivals

2.4.1. Introduction

Festivals are defined as "a public, generally themed, celebration of limited duration which is held periodically (e.g. annually) or on occasions as a one-off event" (Harris and Howard 1996). They are celebratory in nature in that they seek to meet one or more community needs in the area of leisure, by including cultural elements such as the arts, food and wine, music and community among others. They can be periodic or just "one-off", free or ticketed, cultural, charitable or cause-related, and conducted for the purpose

of attracting revenue, support, awareness, and/or for entertainment purposes and they can be organised either by the community itself or by professional event managers/public bodies.

This study concerns a particular type of festival, folk festivals, defined by the Folk Alliance Australia in its vision statement as:

> "Cultural events which encourage the understanding of folklore as the cultural bond that holds individuals, groups and communities together and provides their cultural identity by promoting the artistic expression of ordinary people through diverse art forms". (Folk Alliance Australia 2009b)

While this definition provides a clear understanding of the intrinsic nature of folk festivals, the limited literature available on the topic highlights the ambiguity of the term, which tends to include different kinds of events, especially in different cultural contexts and parts of the world (Walle 1993b). The term also refers to different experiences that are dependent on specific time frames and musical inclinations, as folk festivals in the 1920s and 30s can be considered different from festivals in the 1960s and 70s (Cohen 2008). In the context of this study, folk festivals are defined as cultural events that interpret the traditional folk culture in a broad sense, i.e. including different genres of music, provided they share the folk movement's commitment to "open and participatory cultural forms" (Smith & Brett 1998, p.5).

Throughout history, folk festivals can be seen as intrinsically connected to the history of folk music (Carlin 2006, Fahey 1999); a movement rather than simply an event with its own cultural forms (Thompson 1954, Cantwell 1992); a venue where concerns about ethnicity and social issues can be expressed and explored (Brocken 2003); and challenged by the tensions between authenticity and success (Wilson and Udall 1982). While these characteristics and concerns faced by folk festivals are noteworthy, they are not specifically relevant to the issue at hand and as such will not be revised in this study. Instead, this chapter seeks to bring clarity to what folk festivals are, providing an overview of the limited literature available on the topic and focusing on their historical development and the specific traits they acquire in the Australian context.

2.4.2. Complexity of Folk Festivals

Folk festivals have been traditionally identified as grass-roots cultural forms providing different ethnic groups with the opportunity to display aspects of their traditional life, such as crafts and costumes, as well as including participatory elements such as rituals and traditional games (Dorson 1976). In this view, an educational purpose was embedded in the fabric of festivals and was directed at cultivating and fostering the public's appreciation of traditions through participation (Thompson 1954). In recent years, however, folk festivals' focus shifted from tradition to music and ideology, being described as cultural performance venues for folk music and most importantly, as social expressions of the ideology of the folk community, grounded in participatory cultural forms, inclusive of women and ethnic minorities, making little or no distinction between performers and audience, and commonly involving a high level of voluntarism (Fahey 1999). In addition, folk festivals have been identified as "categories of cultural performance, which provide a framework of expectations and standard interpretations for events which occur within their bound" (Lewis and Dowsey-Magog 1993, p.199). In this view, folk festivals become aggregates of events characterized by the same ideology and cultural elements, yet different in nature, e.g. private and public, planned and spontaneous, formal and informal. This view is supported by Cantwell (1992), who further comments that they provide settings for folk culture and official culture to meet and enjoy mutual benefits. In the context of the United States, Walle (1993a) points out certain characteristics professionally produced folk festivals are associated with. They include:

- a production targeted at the mainstream population and as such conceived as tourist attraction;
- professional folklorists producers;
- inclusion of an educational theme, usually related to cultural diversity; and
- the development of a sense of pride in belonging to the folk community (p.44).

In summary, the aesthetic and social complexity of folk festivals has been widely recognised, and the ambiguity surrounding their nature can be partially explained by their evolution in history.

2.4.3. Historical Overview

Folk festivals have ancient roots in North American history, as they have evolved from small ethnic festivals in the XIX century, as celebrations were centered on the communal elements that built American society. They included not only performances celebrating the Anglo-American culture, but also a display of cultural traditions of all those ethnic immigrant groups that contributed to the diversity of American society (Wilson and Udall 1982). In the XX century, the focus of festivals started to shift towards the conservation of traditions and their transmission from generation to generation. Cultural forms included traditional songs, dance, theatre and literature, together with aspects of material culture. At the same time, these displays of traditional forms were gradually open to cultural outsiders and folk festivals started to have a commercial side, even if usually this aspect was not prominent (Cohen 2008, Cantwell 1992).

In spite of a decrease in folk festivals popularity during World War II (Walle 1993a), the beginning of the 1950s saw a new audience emerging, especially among university students who, after the war, found a sense of their lost identity and new meanings in traditional songs (Cohen 2008). With the growth of this new audience and more and more festivals held on university campuses during the 1960s and 70s, folk music saw a 'revival' in its commercial popularity, and came to express the concern for social and political issues, with lyrics calling for respect, social acceptance and political rights. The 'folk revival' was therefore the expression of the postwar youth, a reaction to the cultural landscape the war had left (Cantwell 1992). In these years, folk festivals expanded their commercial reach, increasing the variety of musical styles and combining pure folk elements with new music. The 1965 Newport Festival marked a case in time in this sense, as "no longer was there the resemblance of a pure folk community that resisted corruption by outside forces. Instead, distinctions were blurred" (Cohen 2008, p.95).

As the folk revival came to an end, and economic challenges affected states and folk organisations alike, local administrations started to view folk festivals as a viable option for encouraging tourism towards specific destinations, due to their appeal to different age groups and musical tastes (Walle 1993b). More recently, folk festivals in the United States have followed this development, catering for broader communities and often having intercultural agendas, but also raising issues of authenticity of their cultural

representations. Similarly, a reflection on contemporary folk festivals in Britain encompasses these issues and challenges (Brocken 2003), highlighting however the necessity for festivals to be open to "passive or even non-folkies" (p. 126) in order to be successful.

Furthermore, recent experiences of folk festivals see the concept of folk culture substituted by the concept of community as their *raison d'être* (Cantwell 1992). In this new perspective, the folk culture acquires meanings beyond the representation of peasant life and cultural diversity grounded in history and finds its place in a postmodern society where cultural boundaries are more fluid and individuals can find a sense of belonging in communities beyond the old racial stereotypes. Within the festivals' fluid communities, whether it is the audience, or the group of volunteers, or the participants, or the staff, folk culture finds a renewed meaning.

2.4.4. Folk Festivals in Australia

In a similar way to the evolution of the folk revival in Britain, the development of folk culture in Australia can be divided into three periods:

1. 1950s, the "radical nationalist period";
2. 1960s and 70s, the "folk boom and folk clubs period"; and
3. mid- 1980s onwards, the "folk festival period" (Smith 1999, p.4).

In the 1950s, intellectuals and cultural activists associated with the Australian Communist Party collected the old songs and ballads of the bush in a body of material that established the canon of Australian folk music (Smith 1999). These old songs traditionally represented idealised stories of outlaws as 'freedom fighters', and portrayed symbolically the spirit of autonomy and egalitarianism of the Australian society (Kapferer 1994). The 1960s saw the consolidation of the canon, as audiences increased in size and started to grow around coffee houses and folk clubs. Coffee houses offered venues where amateurs and professionals could meet and perform, as well as developing into a full network of folk clubs organised and administered by local enthusiast and activists in the 1970s.

As the popularity of folk clubs declined in the early 1980s, folk festivals emerged as crucial performance venues, where a greater variety of musical styles were performed, making folk performances more accessible to a broader public. As Smith (1999) points out, there are several elements that facilitated the increased popularity of folk festivals. First of all, as the generation of folk activists grew older, family-friendly events during

the weekends became more attractive forms of socialisation than pub-based entertainment. Secondly, folk festivals benefitted from a shift in public funding policies that from the mid-1970s facilitated collectively administered organisations managing cultural performance and the arts. Finally, individuals particularly active in the folk movement assumed roles in public administration, providing festivals with constant administrative and funding support. The folk festivals peak organising body, the Australian Folk Trust ceased to exist in 1996, when it's funding was withdrawn by the federal government. In its place, a group of folk activists and festival organisers created the Folk Alliance Australia, which grew to be a membership-based association of festival organisers, still operating today.

Contemporary Australian folk festivals display a wider range of musical styles, as folk music becomes a more inclusive genre that not only acknowledges the old Australian nationalist forms, but also incorporates more ethnic musical backgrounds from diverse racial communities that form part of the Australian society. Nevertheless, contemporary folk music still gives voice to ideals very similar to the ones that characterised the folk 'revival' of the 1960s, in particular:

- Its focus on inclusion;
- Its celebration of cultural production grounded in community;
- Its foundation in, and commitment to face-to-face and participatory cultural forms; and
- Its faith in the capacity of individuals to cooperate and act as a collective (Smith and Brett 1998).

These characteristics, together with the ideology associated with this type of festival, grounded in a commitment to "participatory cultural forms" (Smith & Brett 1998, p.5, Spicer 1976) prove the suitability of this type of event to investigate the research question and associated sub questions.

2.5.Summary

In conclusion, this review of the literature provided an overview of the concepts of community, community engagement and folk festival. The first significant observation emerging from this review is the difficulty in defining the concept of community, which can be examined under a territorial perspective – employed in this study - as well as according to the aspects of interests and identity (Butcher et al 1993). Second, the chapter provided an extensive overview of the literature related to community

engagement, outlining a range of definitions and models employed in a variety of sectors and disciplines.

Community engagement has also been presented in relation to the events sector, where it is closely interrelated with social outcomes of events. Within this area, rural and regional communities have been presented as particular cases, as residents are not only the consumers of the event experience, but also often its producers (Molloy 2002). In these instances, community engagement fosters the creation of social capital as a network of positive relationships (Moscardo 2007) and enhances community capacity in terms of new knowledge and skills. However, it is also clear from the literature that the process of community engagement also has some limitations, as stressed by Jamal and Getz (1995) and Keogh (1990), in that it can be challenging and extremely time consuming (Bladel 2004, Dredge & Whitford 2011). Moreover, issues germane to folk festivals were presented here in relation to their development in different geographical areas and timeframes. Additionally, the rationale for the use of folk festivals to explore the research question was discussed.

Chapter 3: Towards a Conceptual Framework for Community Engagement in Folk Festivals

3.1. Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of stakeholder theory before moving on to examine how this theory has been employed in various ways in the events field. In exploring its use in this context, the value of this theory in event organisational settings is described with particular reference to the theory's capacity to provide insights into approaches that can be employed to engage various groups within a community in a positive and mutually beneficial way. Drawing on the concepts and ideas described here, the chapter concludes by providing a conceptual framework that will be employed to guide this study.

3.2. Stakeholder theory

3.2.1. Background

In a competitive business context, stakeholder theory holds that the success of an organisation derives from other factors apart from the attainment of profit (Reid &Arcodia 2002). In particular, according to Carroll and Buchholtz (2012), to be successful, especially in the longer term, an organisation must acknowledge and address the legitimate needs and expectations of a range of organisations, groups and individuals that have an actual or potential interest in their operations. Such interests in stakeholder theory are referred to as a 'stake', while those deemed to possess such an interest are referred to as stakeholders (Carroll & Buchholtz 2012). Generally, stakeholder theory is concerned with explaining the structure of the organisation by considering the relationships it has with a number of entities (individuals and groups) with which it interacts (Carroll & Buchholtz 2012). It is also intended to guide the organisation's decision-making processes and operations (Donaldson & Preston 1995).

Originally detailed by Freeman (1984) in his seminal work *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Perspective*, stakeholder theory has been the focus of a large amount of studies (Roloff 2008). Given its business-management origin, most of the literature concerned with stakeholder theory is located within the corporate context (Freeman 1984, Carroll & Buchholtz 2012, Donaldson & Preston 1995). However, stakeholder theory has been successfully applied to a range of disciplines and contexts, e.g. natural resource management (Reed, Graves, Dandy, Posthumus, Hubacek, Morris, Prell, Quinn

& Stringer 2009), marketing (Polonsky 1995), tourism planning (Sautter & Leisen 1999) sustainable tourism development (Byrd 2007), public policy (Scholl 2002, Brugha & Varvasovszky 2000), and events management (Allen et al 2011). In these contexts organisations need to engage with multiple stakeholders in order to find a common approach to matters that are too complex to be addressed by a single entity (Roloff 2008). It is this particular approach to stakeholder theory that is relevant to this study.

3.2.2. Key concepts: Stake and Stakeholder

A 'stake' can be defined as an interest or a share in an undertaking (Carroll & Buchholtz 2012). A stake can assume the form of a preference, a contractual claim, a risk, ad exchange relationship, or an economic, moral or legal right (Mitchell, Angle & Wood 1997). Various approaches have been suggested as to the identification of an organisation's stakeholders, however, there appears to be little agreement on the issue, with Mitchell et al noting that "stakeholder theory offers a maddening variety of signals on how questions of stakeholder identification might be answered" (1997, p.275).

Some of these approaches present a broad perspective on who these stakeholders are, while others use a narrower, more focused approach (Mitchell et al 1997). Reflective of broader perspectives is Freeman's definition of stakeholders as "those who can affect or are affected by the achievement of the organisation's objectives" (1984, p.46). Narrower definitions, on the other hand, constrain stakeholders to those individuals or groups with a specific type of relationship with an organisation, such as those with a financial risk associated with an investment (Clarkson 1994), those with a contractual or legal relationship (Carroll 1993), or those with 'legitimate' interests (Donaldson & Preston 1995, p.67). Through the use of stakeholder identification and analysis, organisations can understand their stakeholders and their behaviours, intentions, agendas, interests and resources. This information can serve to guide an organisation's decision-making processes or the development of strategies to manage these stakeholders (Brugha & Varvasovszky 2000).

Various groups have been identified as being potential stakeholders by theorists. Freeman (1984), for example, includes diverse constituencies such as suppliers, customer segments, employees, various members of the financial community, consumer advocate groups and other activist groups, trade associations, several levels and

branches of government, political groups, unions, and competitors. Hill and Jones (1992) propose a not dissimilar list, identifying managers, stockholders, employees, customers, suppliers, the general public and creditors. Other writers, while providing similar listings, extend them to include the company itself, the media, various special interest groups and the community (Clarkson 1995, Donaldson and Preston 1995). Although constituencies such as "community", "general public", or "public stakeholder" are usually acknowledged as a key stakeholder group (Donaldson and Preston 1995, Hill and Jones 1992, Burton and Dunn 1996, Clarkson 1995), little effort has been made to deconstruct what the nature of those entities are and how they can be further segmented (Dunham, Freeman, Edward and Liedtka 2006).

3.2.3. Stakeholder classification

The prior discussion raises the issue of how various stakeholders might be classified so as to effectively manage and engage with them. The most common categorisation of stakeholder found in the literature is between primary and secondary stakeholders (Friedman, Parent & Mason 2004, Clarkson 1995, Carroll 1993). According to this classification, primary stakeholders are those who have a formal or contractual relationship with the organisation, while secondary stakeholders can either influence the organisation or be affected by its decisions and actions.

Another classification is suggested by Freeman (1984), who distinguishes between internal stakeholders, who have a relationship with the organisation's managers, and external stakeholders, who do not. A number of further approaches have been developed for classifying stakeholder roles, such as actual and potential stakeholders (Mitchell et al 1997), legitimate and derivative (Phillips 2004), and active and passive (Grimble & Wellard 1997). As these approaches share many similarities with those previously discussed, they are not expanded upon here.

The range of approaches to stakeholders' classification outlined above offers a number of alternatives that may be adapted for the purpose of this study. In this study community stakeholders will be grouped according to the following societal sectors: government, educational, private and not-for-profit. This breakdown is based on the discussion about community as a stakeholder presented in the next section.

3.2.4. Community as a stakeholder

Communities are heterogeneous in nature, as they are composed of many groups and individuals with different cultural, social and economic backgrounds, history and value systems (McClonskey et al 2011). As noted previously, the local community is usually acknowledged as an important stakeholder (Donaldson and Preston 1995), however little effort has been made to provide a narrower understanding of this constituency (Dunham et al 2006). McVea and Freeman (2005) argued the significance of a particularised approach for the purposes of stakeholder classification and management. In their view, organisations should move towards a "names and faces" approach that allows a highly specific appreciation of stakeholders, rather than understanding them as generic groups.

In their appreciation of community from a stakeholder perspective, Dunham et al (2006, p.36) agree with McVea and Freeman's perspective stating that "a more granular understanding of the many individual neighborhoods, interest groups, and communities of practice" needs to be developed. This view is also acknowledged in the context of events, with Frisby and Getz (1989, p.10) arguing that "a strategy should be developed to identify key organisations and individuals within the community and how they can contribute to the festival on an on-going basis". First attempts to segment the community can be found in the literature. In the business context, for example, Dunham et al (2006) suggest a broad classification of distinction between:

- communities of place, that originate from the physical proximity of their members;
- communities of interests, based on a common purpose and ranging from hobbyists to various groups centred on religious affiliation, civic activities and political action groups;
- virtual advocacy groups, characterised by an "oppositional" sense of identity and by heavy technology use; and
- communities of practice, whose members share a strong sense of identity, mutual obligation and an openness towards learning and development.

In the context of corporate social responsibility, Neil Jefferey (2009, p.45) offers a comprehensive list of those constituencies that are "examples of community and civil society stakeholders": contractors and suppliers, employees and their families, NGOs, community-based organisations, community development organisations, welfare and service organisations, tertiary, vocational educational and training institutions, health

organisations, family service organisations, local businesses and associations, religious organisations, ethnic and indigenous groups, traditional community leaders (e.g. councils of elders), political parties, local council and regional and national governments. Lasker and Weiss' (2003, p.124) identification of community stakeholders also include service providers and youth and low-income residents alongside formal and informal community leaders, academics and government agencies.

Another attempt at understanding community from a stakeholder perspective has been provided by the literature available on public policy focused on community engagement. A number of practice-based sources acknowledge that the identification of diverse groups within a community allows for a more inclusive approach. This is achieved by highlighting potential needs for tailored engagement processes and activities to enhance the capacity of particular groups or individuals to participate (McMillan 2005, McClonskey et al 2011). Because of the diverse and multicultural nature of the Australian society, particular emphasis has been placed on engagement strategies and challenges related to the following groups (Victoria Department of Sustainability and Environment 2005, Queensland State Government 2013):

- Indigenous groups;
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse groups (CALD);
- People with Disabilities;
- Young People;
- Seniors;
- Rural and Regional Communities; and
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) individuals.

A further segmentation for engagement purposes (.au Domain Administration Ltd[3] 2010) identifies four main groups within communities: local councils, potential stakeholders and business partners (e.g. local businesses and trade associations), local leaders and groups (e.g. sports and recreation clubs, services clubs, arts, cultural groups, other special interest groups) and community services such as tourism offices, health services and educational institutions. In the context of events, festival organisations should carefully identify community stakeholders in order to determine the benefits

[3] .au Domain Administration Ltd3 is the policy authority and industry self-regulatory body for the .au domain space. Within its operations, it supports community engagement and education initiatives.

these groups can contribute (Frisby & Getz 1989). The range of groups found to contribute to the staging of events include: churches, minor sport associations, high schools, Lions/Lionesses, horticultural societies, merchant associations, boy scouts/girl guides, and fire fighters (Frisby & Getz 1989).

Taking into account these approaches, this study introduces a segmentation of the local community based on the following broad societal groupings: Residents, Government, Educational Institutions, Private Sector, and Charities/Not-For-Profit. This segmentation of community acknowledges on one hand that community is composed of individual citizens, while on the other hand it also comprises regulatory and administrative bodies associated with local government, private businesses and associations and non-for-profit community groups. Although this segmentation provides a classification scheme for the community stakeholders folk festival organisers engage with, it is necessary to bear in mind that every community will be unique in its stakeholder profile.

3.2.5. Stakeholder management and engagement

Once identified and classified, it's important for organisations to respond to stakeholders needs, effectively manage them and engage them in positive ways. Stakeholder management brings attention to those relationships organisations establish and develop with their stakeholders (Savage, Nix, Whitehead and Blair 1991). Traditional approaches available to organisations seeking to engage with their stakeholders include direct or indirect engagement, manipulation, negotiation, accommodation or active involvement (MacMillan & Jones 1986, Carroll & Buchholz 2012). Batt and Purchase (2004) also mention that organisations can choose to grow, develop, maintain or abandon their relationships with stakeholders. Savage et al (1991) propose a similar approach based upon stakeholders' potential for threat or cooperation. According to the level of stakeholder's support, one of four strategies can be employed: (1) involvement of supportive stakeholders; (2) monitoring of those stakeholders who have a low impact on the organisation; (3) defence from the unsupportive stakeholders; and (4) collaboration with those stakeholders who have the potential to be a threat for, or to collaborate with the organisation (Savage et al 1991).

Over the past decade or so there has been a movement away from viewing stakeholders as entities that need to be managed, towards a more network-based, relational and

process-oriented view of company-stakeholder engagement, grounded on considerations of mutuality, interdependence and power (Andriof & Waddock 2002). The emphasis of these recent perspectives is on achieving full understanding of the complex needs and interests of stakeholders, rather than on control and manipulation (Jonker & Foster 2002). As part of this movement, there has been a greater acceptance of the importance of developing long-term mutual relationships rather than focusing on immediate financial or other outcomes (Jonker & Foster 2002, Morsing & Schultz 2006).

3.3. Stakeholder Theory and Events

Stakeholder theory has successfully been applied as a theoretical framework in various event-related studies. Specifically, it has been used in enquiries designed to identify factors enhancing events' long term and environmental sustainability (Getz & Andersson 2009, Harris 2010) and to investigate the social impact of events (Reid 2006). It is perhaps unsurprising that stakeholder theory has been used in this context as, just as in general business settings, events need to engage with a diversity of organisations and groups, and their effectiveness in doing so will likely impact, as Reid and Arcodia (2002) note, their long term sustainability.

The concept of 'stakeholder' within the field of event studies is defined in similar ways to that found in the more stakeholder management literature. Goldblatt (2001), for example, identifies stakeholders as those individuals with an investment, tangible or intangible, in an event, while Getz (cited in Todd 2010) views them as people and organisations with a legitimate interest in the outcomes of an event. A more comprehensive definition is proposed by Reid and Arcodia (2002) in which they draw a distinction between primary and secondary stakeholders:

> "Groups or individuals who are affected or could be affected by an event's existence. Primary stakeholders are those individuals or groups without whose support the event would cease to exist. Secondary stakeholders are those groups or individuals who although are not directly involved in the event can seriously impede the event's success". (p.492)

Primary stakeholders, according to these authors, are groups such as employees, volunteers, sponsors, suppliers, spectators, attendees and participants, while secondary stakeholders include government, and event's host community, emergency services, general businesses, the media and tourism organisations. The generalizability of this definition is, however, problematic as it does not acknowledge that groups can act as

primary or secondary stakeholders according to the role they assume (Getz, Andersson & Larson 2007). For example, the host community may act as a primary stakeholder in a community festival, serving to provide volunteer labour, supplies and patronage.

Larson (2002) identified a festival's stakeholders according to broader categories, e.g. the festival organiser, the music industry, the local traders, public authorities, associations and clubs and the media. She also went on to classify these groups as replaceable and irreplaceable stakeholders and to identify the category of "free-riders", composed by those establishments that benefit from the festival while not interacting with it in any way.

[Production note: The figure is not included in this digital copy due to copyright restrictions.]

Figure 3.1. Major stakeholder roles in festival networks
Source: Getz, Anderson & Larson (2007, p. 109)

Still another approach to classifying stakeholders in events settings is that of Getz et al (2007). Drawing on resource dependency theory and network theory, this approach acknowledges that managing relationships with significant stakeholders ultimately leads to securing support and resources, which festivals are dependent on (e.g. volunteer labour, financial support, outreach, etc.). Further, it employs a functional role

classification, with organisations/groups falling under one of seven headings: (1) the festival organisation, (2) co-producers, (3) facilitators, (4) allied and collaborators, (5) regulators, (6) suppliers and venues, and (7) the audience and the 'impacted' (see Figure 3.1).

This classification identifies festival co-producers as those individuals or groups actively and voluntarily involved in creating the festival experience; festival facilitators as providers of valuable resources such as grants, sponsorship or in-kind support; and allies and collaborators as the source of intangible support in the form of partnership. Further, local authorities and their agencies act as regulatory bodies, establishing legal requirements and monitoring compliance; venues and suppliers often become sponsors providing in-kind services; and finally the audience and the 'impacted' include discrete groups (e.g. charities), the community at large, or special interest groups. Further, the authors propose a model into which these categories are placed that seeks to show the relationships between them. This method aims to describe the dynamic and variable nature of stakeholder relationships in festival settings. In fact, festival stakeholders can play multiple roles whose boundaries are often not clear. For example, they can simultaneously act as suppliers, sponsors, co-producers and audience.

This model confirms Molloy's (2002) perspective on regional festivals (see Chapter 2), which acknowledges that in regional contexts residents are both the event producers, through community involvement, and the consumers of the festival experience. They therefore interact with the festival organisation in different capacities, offering different kinds of support, often simultaneously (e.g. financial or in-kind support, as volunteer labour, or as participation in the organisational structure).

3.4. Community Engagement as a Stakeholder Management Strategy for Event Organisers

As noted in Chapter 2, community engagement refers to the process aimed at building long-term relationships between an organisation and its local community (Russell et al 2008). In the events context these relationships are formed through formal and/or informal interactions between the event organisation and its host community (Harris 2005). Moreover, as the local community is increasingly recognised as a key stakeholder both in the corporate and events sectors amongst others, community engagement can be considered a strategy within an organisation' s broader stakeholder engagement program. In other words, community engagement is a stakeholder

management strategy specifically targeted to one particular stakeholder group, the community (Bowen et al 2010).

Concepts and processes associated with stakeholder management present several similarities with community engagement. For example, both appreciate engagement as a continuum ranging from one-way information sharing to full involvement and joint decision-making (Larson & Williams 2009, Carroll & Buchholtz 2012). Additionally, communication strategies associated with the different levels of the stakeholder engagement continuum are analogous.

For example, within a corporate context, Morsing and Schultz (2006) suggest a view of engagement focused on the communication strategies that organisations use. The first step of the engagement process is constituted by a one-way communication (information) strategy, where messages flow from the organisation to its stakeholders. Its purpose is to disseminate information, not necessarily with a persuasive intent. The second step (stakeholder response strategy) involves a two-way communication that flows to and from the public; in particular, communication from the stakeholders is received as feedback through opinion polls, networks and partnerships. The third and last step (stakeholder involvement strategy) implies a balanced relationship where both company and stakeholders can influence each other. This perspective is reflected in the literature associated with community engagement (International Association for Public Participation 2012, Bowen et al 2010).

Organisations' efforts directed at engaging community stakeholders can be affected, both positively and negatively, by a number of factors. As illustrated in Chapter 2, these factors have been extensively described by Mattessich, Murray-Close and Monsey (2001) and fall under the following categories: environmental, membership, process/structure, communication, purpose and resources. While this list is comprehensive of a broad range of factors efforts, some local governments also include facilitation of access and adequate timeframes as affecting engagement (Blayney Council 2012, Logan City Council 2009).

3.5. Conceptual Framework

In a general sense, the conceptual framework uses theory to provide the study with a solid rationale (Marshall & Rossman 2006) by identifying key concepts as well as outlining the links and relationships between them (Miles & Huberman 1994, Veal

2011). Additionally, it can be thought of as a "network of interlinked concepts" that offer a comprehensive understanding of the matter under examination (Jabareen 2009, p.51). It also provides guidance and focus to the researcher and represents a way to refine and further develop the research questions (Anfara & Mertz 2006). As such, the conceptual framework provides the researcher with a structure for the study, and specifies what is going to be studied and what is not (Gray 2009, p.174).

Drawing upon the concepts presented in the literature review, especially in relation to the models developed for community engagement, and using insights from stakeholder theory as described in the previous sections, a conceptual framework has been developed to guide the study. Key considerations from the viewpoint of the study relate to: the stakeholder groups within the local community, the practices used to engage them and their classification, the outcomes that festival organisations seek to achieve through this process, and finally the factors that impact this engagement. These considerations inform the sections of the framework and conceptually relate it to the research objectives.

The proposed conceptual framework is illustrated in Figure 3.2 overleaf. It will be further reviewed and expanded on in the light of the findings emerging from this enquiry.

The enquiry employs folk festival organisers' point of view, as it aims to provide insights from professionals who actively seek to engage their communities in a variety of ways. As festival organisations depend upon their local community for resources and labour, managers need to build those relationships that can secure that support. With this purpose in mind, stakeholders within the community are identified and segmented according to the broad groupings of: government, educational institutions, private sector, not-for profit and residents groups. The practices used to engage these groups are classified according to Bowen et al' s (2010) scheme as extensively examined in the previous chapter. This model sees community engagement as a continuum that comprises three main approaches:

- transactional engagement: characterised by one-way communication from the organisation to the community (information based);
- transitional engagement: identified through a two-way dialogue where communication flows mainly from the organisation towards the community (consultation and collaboration);

- transformational engagement: characterized by a balanced two-way communication mode that reflects authentic dialogue, as well as by joint project management, joint decision-making processes and a sense of co-ownership.

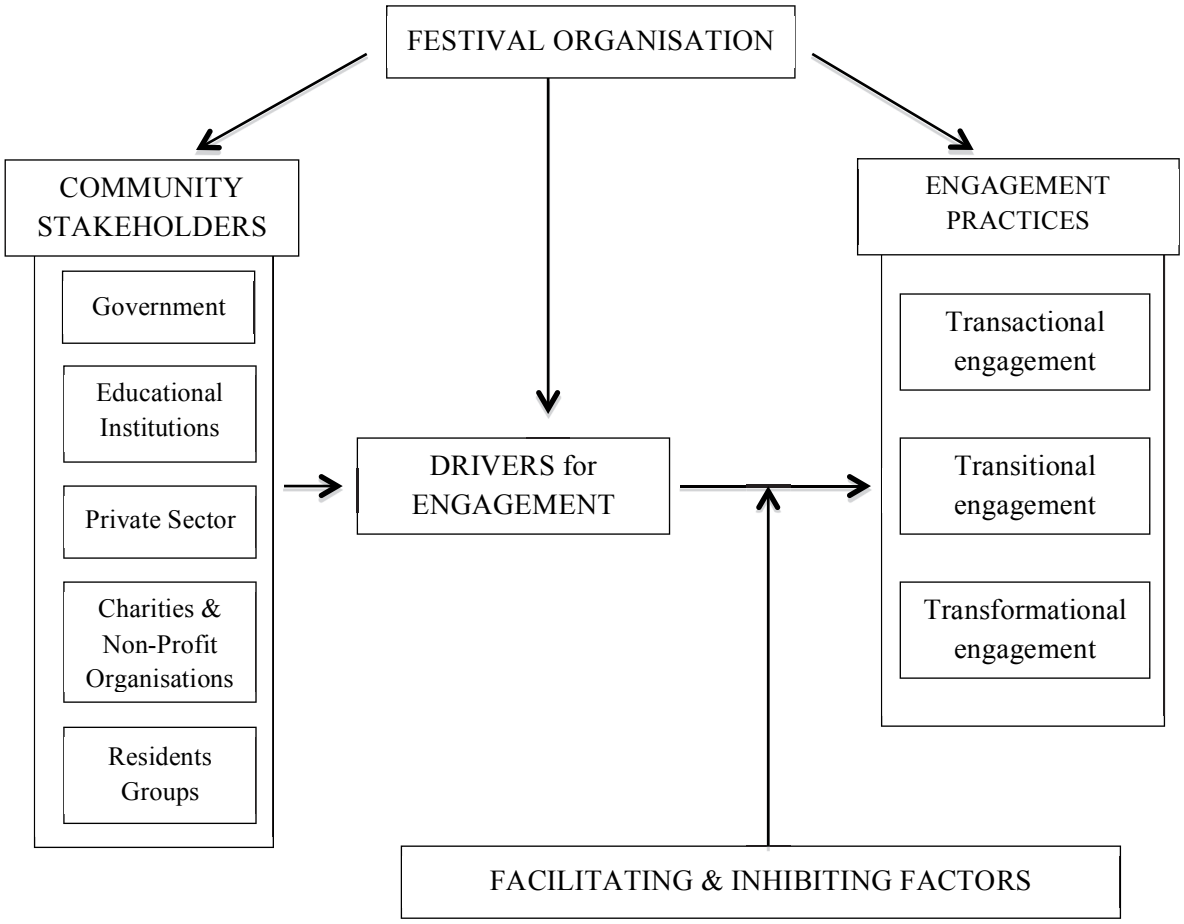

Figure 3.2. Conceptual framework

3.6.Summary

This chapter has laid the foundation for the development of a conceptual framework to be employed to guide the study. It has introduced concepts pertaining to stakeholder theory, specifically the notions of 'stake' and 'stakeholder' from a generic business perspective. It has then moved to analyse the use of stakeholder theory in the context of events, discussing the implications for event organisers. Within the broad stakeholder theory, the area of stakeholder management was examined, allowing for community engagement to be re-contextualised as a specifically targeted stakeholder management strategy.

The chapter outlined the commonalities in scope and concerns between stakeholder theory, community engagement and this research, and concludes with the presentation of the conceptual framework, which will be revised and completed in the light of the research findings.

Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1. Introduction

The issue of community engagement in relation to the events field has been identified as a topic in the research agenda for events studies (Getz 2000). However, the review of the literature provided in Chapter 2 established that the issue of community engagement in the events sector has been incorporated in studies focused on the social outcomes of events and only partially examined in relation to the stakeholders that organisers look to engage with and to the factors that can impact on the success, or otherwise, of engagement efforts. The present study employs a qualitative design and, as outlined in Chapter 1, seeks to:

1. identify, classify and describe the nature of practices currently in use by the folk festival organisations chosen as the research sample;
2. identify the range of stakeholders within the community that folk festival organisations seek to engage with through the practices identified in objective 1;
3. determine the intended outcomes of the practices identified in objective 1; and
4. determine those factors that serve to facilitate or inhibit the community engagement efforts of folk festival organisers.

This chapter introduces the research methodology and design. It commences by presenting the rationale for the use of an exploratory approach to investigate the research question and related objectives. It then describes the sampling approach, outlines the data sources and tools employed in the process of data collection and discusses how the data were analysed. The role of the researcher and the research limitations are also addressed here, before concluding with an examination of issues around validity and ethics.

4.1.1. Exploratory Inquiry

An exploratory approach was deemed the most appropriate as there is little information known about the research topic and the subject has not been investigated in depth (Patton 2002). More recently, Veal (2011) confirms the suitability of this approach in the particular areas of leisure and tourism, due to their relative newness as fields of study and to the changes their phenomena constantly undergo.

An appropriate definition for exploratory research that can be applied to the present study is found in the social sciences context:

> "Exploration is a broad-ranging, purposive, systematic, prearranged undertaking designed to maximize the discovery of generalizations leading to description and understanding of an area [...]. Such exploration is, depending on the standpoint taken, a distinctive way of conducting science - a scientific process - a special methodological approach (as contrasted with confirmation), and a pervasive personal orientation of the explorer". (Stebbins 2001, p.3)

The central aspect of exploratory research lies in the little or no scientific knowledge the researcher might have about the investigated topic, but there are reasons to believe the research will provide insights and elements worth discovering (Stebbins 2001). Exploratory research seeks to build a better understanding of a phenomenon and/or its changing nature (Veal 2011). It can provide new insights into a topic (Babbie 2010) or it can generate new hypothesis for further research (Marshall and Rossman 2006). This study employs an exploratory approach in order to develop an understanding of community engagement strategies and practices across a defined range of folk festivals, rather than determining the frequency of their use or evaluating their effectiveness.

4.2. Research Design

4.2.1. Sampling Approach

One of the first issues to be addressed when planning an exploratory enquiry is the sample size, as careful consideration needs to be given to the availability and feasibility of collecting data from the sample (Alasuutari, Bickman and Brannen 2008). The study focuses on a category of festival that arguably has been the most proactive in this area in the Australian context – folk festivals. In fact, the ideology associated with this type of festival, and with folk music in general, is grounded on inclusivity, on a commitment to "participatory cultural forms" and on the cooperation between individuals aimed at achieving a common goal (Smith & Brett 1998, p.5, Spicer 1976). The participatory nature of folk festivals proves the suitability of this type of event to investigate the research question and associated sub questions.

The sampling frame designed to produce insights into the research question was identified in a defined range of folk festivals listed on the Folk Alliance Australia website (Folk Alliance Australia 2009). The Folk Alliance Australia is the peak national

body representing performing folk arts in Australia. While membership to the Alliance is regulated by formal guidelines that limit folk activities in terms of inclusion (McQuarrie 2006), the event listing available on the website is inclusive of folk festivals and other events deemed to be aligned with this organisations goals (Folk Alliance Australia, 2009). At the time of the data collection, a total of 67 such events were listed in the Folk Alliance Australia website, inclusive of all the major Australian folk festivals. The choice of this sampling frame aligns with the acknowledgement that nowadays folk music includes a range of diverse styles and consequently, Australian folk festival are cultural events that interpret the folk movement and folk culture in a broader sense (Smith & Brett 1998, Duffy 2000). It is noteworthy that there are differences in the types of events listed in the Folk Alliance Australia calendar, with only 13 including the word folk in their title. It can nonetheless be observed that the remainder fall essentially into the category of music based events, or events where music is a key component.

As noted previously, this study employs an exploratory approach to investigate the research question. Specifically, a number of in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with a number of informants purposefully selected within the sampling frame. The selection of these "information-rich cases" (Patton 2002, p.230) was conducted following what has been defined by Patton as 'snowballing or chain sampling' technique (2002, p.237). Snowball sampling is a technique for locating meaningful samples through collecting data on a few informants and subsequently asking them to locate other individuals whom they happen to know (Babbie 2010). During the interviews, the informants were questioned in relation to the events they run, as well as being asked to direct the researcher towards other people or events within the sampling frame able to provide a contribution to the study. In other words, the interviewees were first questioned about the research problem itself, but they were subsequently asked to suggest other events/individuals that could inform the study. Initial interviewees (3) were chosen on the basis that their events were known to have been proactive in the community engagement area. This approach to initial interview selection, as noted by Babbie (2010), is an effective means of commencing the 'snowballing' process.

It was assumed that there would exist amongst events in the grouping an appreciation of the actions, particularly those of an innovative and strategic nature, of their fellow event

organiser efforts in the community engagement area. This indeed proved to be the case. It was further assumed that there would be a great deal of similarity in those community engagement practices in evidence amongst the events listed on the Folk Festival Alliance calendar, and that the 'snowballing' approach to interviewing would likely arrive at a situation where the level of repetition in terms of identified practices would be high, and there would come a point where there would be little value in undertaking further interviews.

The snowballing approach resulted in 20 festival organisations being interviewed. In these interviews there was evidence of a high number of repetition in terms of themes, hence this figure (20) was considered sufficient from the perspective of the research design. The researcher is confident that the study captured a large percentage of the community engagement practices currently in use.

4.2.2. Data Sources

In addressing the research issue, information was collected from multiple sources. The process of triangulation increases the validity of data interpretation by converging findings from different sources and allowing for similarities, differences and contradictions to emerge (Gray 2003). The study has employed mainly primary data sources, which in some cases were complemented by secondary sources.

The festivals' websites provided a general overview about the events, offering information about their program, their activities and target audience, the event organisation and their partners. Websites often included information about specific activities specifically aimed at encouraging participation of the local community. This information was employed during the interviews to stimulate ideas and further reflection. While festivals' websites served the researcher to get acquainted with the events, the in-depth semi-structured interviews provided the most significant contribution to the process of data collection.

In a number of cases, secondary data sources were used to complete and expand the information obtained during the interviews. These sources included: factsheets, reports and email communications aimed at further clarifying concepts expressed during the interviews.

4.2.3. Data Collection

Semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted over the phone were chosen as the most appropriate method to conduct the study, as they allow a comprehensive investigation of the research question and sub-questions through the complexities related to the uniqueness of each of the folk festivals chosen for the study.

The scope of the research does not allow for the use of case studies, as the research question directs the study towards a descriptive, exploratory type of enquiry that seeks information across a number of different events in order to identify the range of current strategies and practices for community engagement, rather than conducting an intense analysis of only a few events (Yin 2009, Stoeker 1991). Although case studies are increasingly being used to illustrate the perspectives of different stakeholders in festival making, it is necessary to remember that research is looking at the perspectives event organisers have on community engagement, the strategies they devise and what outcomes they can see arising from them. Community views on the topic are not being sought; however, a subjective interpretation of the way local community responds to engagement efforts is offered by the organisers.

In comparison with the vast literature about qualitative face-to-face interviews, the number of studies focused on the use of phone interviews for qualitative research appears to be limited (Novick 2008, Chapple 1999). The available literature, however, acknowledges that data collected through phone interviews is comparable with data gathered face-to-face (Miller 1995) and is appreciated as 'rich' (Chapple 1999, p.91) and high quality (Sturges & Hanrahan 2004). In the present study, phone interviews allowed the interviewer to reach a wider range of interviewees located across the country, whom would have not been possible to be reached otherwise, due to the time and financial constraints placed on the study (Opdenakker 2006).

The semi-structured interviews followed a list of pre-determined questions that delimited the topic and a series of themes to be explored. They also allowed for a systematic approach in the comparison of responses among different events/informants. In addition to this, the structure of the interview allowed for supplementary questions to be asked in order to refine the understanding of the topic with any further issues considered relevant in order to gain a deeper insight from the interview process. During the interview process, particular focus was placed on the development of the researcher's skills in formulating follow-up questions and listening actively to what was

said and how, in order to clarify meanings during the interview itself and deepen the mutual understanding of the issues addressed.

By way of process, the contact details of potential interviewees within folk festival organisations identified through the snowballing technique were obtained through a scan of the festival's website, where a phone number or an email address would normally be found. The first contact usually occurred through email, and an explanation of the research, together with an information sheet about the interview and the list of questions were provided. This email would be subsequently followed up by a phone call to clarify any potential issue and agree on a suitable time and date for the interview. The interviews were carried out over the phone using a teleconference line and details of how to join the line were provided upon confirmation of the interview time. A consent letter was also sent by email prior to the interview. This process of informing the interviewees about the purpose of the research, its overall design and the benefits and risks in participating in the interview aligns with the criteria for informed consent in that it allowed the participants to make an informed decision about their contribution to the research (Silverman 2010, p.155). While it is unlikely that the research would be controversial for participants, a few respondents chose to be de-identified, and therefore a coding system was devised to ensure their anonymity. The final list of interviewees, their title and the name of the events they represent are illustrated in Table 1 overleaf.

Interviews opened with a brief introduction to further explain the aim of the research and to contextualise the key concepts of community and community engagement. This introduction served the purpose of ensuring that the scope, purpose and outcomes of the interview were clearly understood by the interviewee. The interview process was undertaken according to what Kvale and Brinkmann call a "pragmatic craft approach" (2009, p. 17): interviewing is seen as a craft whose skills are learnt by practicing interviewing. Following this *modus operandi*, the more festival organisations were approached and interviewed, the more the researcher became familiar with ways to improve the formulation and sequence of the questions as well as gain confidence in the articulation of the contents of the enquiry.

Table 4.1. Interviewee list

Interviewee	Festival Organisation	Position
Amanda Jackes	Woodford Folk Festival	General Manager
Amy Moon	Corinbank Festival	General Manager
Carolyne Blyton	Numeralla Folk Festival	Festival Committee member
Chris Smith	Yackandandah Festival	General Manager
Graeme Fryer	Cobargo Folk Festival	Director
John Rollo Kiek	Mt Beauty Music Festival	Artistic Director
John Uren	St Albans Folk Festival	Former Festival Director
John Young	Port Fairy Folk Festival	Community Liaison Officer
Pam Lyons	Maldon Folk Festival	Manager
Peter O'Neill	Illawarra Folk Festival	Marketing & Media Coordinator
Peter Thornton	Fleurieu Folk Festival	Coordinator
Sebastian Flynn	National Folk Festival	Director
Stuart Leslie	Kangaroo Valley Folk Festival	Director
Una McAlinden	National Celtic Festival	Director
Participant 1	Dorrigo Folk & Bluegrass Festival	
Participant 2	Fairbridge Folk World	
Participant 3	Queenscliff Music Festival	
Participant 4	Man from Snowy River	
Participant 5	Turning Wave	
Participant 6	Apollo Bay Music Festival	

The interviews were also conducted keeping in mind the twelve aspects of qualitative research interviews, as a checklist for practice improvement (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009, p.28). In particular, the following aspects were found to be useful in refining the researcher's interviewing skills:

- 'deliberate naiveté': it was paramount to keep an attitude of openness to find out new and unexpected information, instead of having a preconceived idea about the interview outcomes;

- ‘ambiguity: it was beneficial to remember that inconsistencies could emerge; and
- ‘positive experience’: it was possible to assess the quality of the interview by the interviewee’s perception of the interview as a positive experience, that allowed the elaboration of information and new insights and ideas.

The interviews took between twenty minutes and one hour in length and were conducted between December 2012 and October 2013. They were digitally recorded and transcribed.

4.2.4. Data Analysis and Presentation of Results

Qualitative data analysis is defined as “a process of examining and interpreting data in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge” (Corbin & Strauss 2008, p. 1). Data analysis in the context of qualitative research has to be rigorous and it entails a search for relationships and underlying themes emerging from the collected data. It includes the activities of data description, analysis and interpretation (Wolcott 1994). The process of data analysis started with the transcription of the interviews, which allowed the researcher to get acquainted with the data, which was reviewed several times. In the transcripts margins were kept wide for notes and annotations; also, colour-coded groupings and post-it notes supported this process of familiarization with the data (Marshall & Rossman 2006), which led to the identification of the first codes and data categories.

Following this first stage of “immersion in the data” (Marshall & Rossman 2006, p.158), a coding process was undertaken, with the purpose of generating categories and themes. This phase is identified by Patton as “any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings” (2002, p. 453). While the analysis of secondary data sources was undertaken manually, the coding process and analysis of primary data were supported by the use of the NVIVO[4] software package. The NVIVO software allowed the information in the transcripts to be stored, organized into themes (nodes), linked to the identified categories and interrogated (Bazeley 2007). The resulting analysis was thematic in nature and generated a number of data categories, with some of these being suggested by the literature review, and others emerging from the analysis of the

[4] NVIVO is a qualitative data analysis computer software package developed by QSR International

interviews themselves. This data was then coded against Bowen et al's (2010) community engagement classification scheme noted previously. The use of the NVIVO software was found to be useful for retrieving the data and making it easily accessible for investigation (Coffey & Atkinson 1996).

The results of the data analysis process are presented in Chapter 5. They are divided into four categories, according to the relative research objectives they address: community engagement practices, community stakeholders, drivers for community engagement and facilitating and inhibiting factors. Tables and figures are used at the beginning of every section to provide a summary of the results as well as to facilitate the understanding of the analysis illustrated in the text.

4.2.5. Role of researcher

In qualitative research, the role of the researcher is substantially different from the part played by the researcher in quantitative studies. In fact, quantitative data is collected through a variety of objective instruments, while in qualitative investigations "the researcher is the research instrument" (Jones, Brown & Holloway, 2013, p. 163). This means that data interpretation is subjective and can be influenced by a series of factors including prejudices, beliefs, values and background.

It is important to acknowledge that English is not the researcher's first language. The researcher's level of spoken and written English was appropriate, however, to undertake this investigation. Moreover, despite a certain familiarity with the Australian culture and geography, the researcher belongs to a different culture and therefore her perspective is that of an outsider. The literature acknowledges that, despite being a challenge for the interviewer, interviews between members of different cultures are "intriguing and rewarding" and provide the researcher with a heightened sensitivity (Patton 1990, p. 338). It should also be stated that the researcher's background as a project assistant and coordinator, specifically in community-focused events supports this investigation by providing practice-based insights derived from experience.

4.2.6. Limitations and Biases

There are a number of limitations in relation to the present study, as in all research-based enquiries. The first of these limitations relates to the literature specific to the topic addressed by the research questions. Although the topic of community engagement is acknowledged as an important theme within the events studies agenda (Getz 2000),

previous research on current practices to enhance community engagement in events is only marginally discussed within the literature of social impacts of events (Reid 2007). As noted above, an exploratory approach was therefore considered appropriate (Patton 2002).

The second limitation concerns the sampling frame chosen for investigating the research questions. The research portrays only the perspective of event organisers, while no members of the community nor local authorities were consulted. This methodological choice is grounded in the research objectives, as the intent of the study was to identify the range of community engagement practices presently in use, along with their perceived outcomes from the viewpoint of folk festival organizers. While this choice might appear limiting, it opens the investigation to a higher number of events that otherwise, due to time and resource constraints, it would not be possible to reach. This methodological stance has also been successfully employed by Getz et al (2007) in identifying festival stakeholder roles.

Another potential limitation is related to the research methodology used for this enquiry, i.e. qualitative interviews conducted over the phone. Literature highlighted a number of advantages and disadvantages in relation to the use of phone interviews and in comparison with face-to-face interviews. In particular, the absence of face-to-face interaction during the phone interviews implies that the researcher is denied access to visual cues and a range of contextual data that can potentially enhance and complement the verbal aspect of semi-structured interviews (Opdenakker 2006, Novick 2008, Sturges & Hanrahan 2004, Jones et al 2013). However, while the lack of visual cues is unquestionable, the limited literature comparing telephone and face-to-face interviews confirms that researchers can leverage verbal cues, such as hesitation, sighs, voice intonation or hurried answers, to follow up with probing questions (Opdenakker 2006, Novick 2008). Moreover, telephone interviews allow the researcher to take notes without being noticed by the interviewee and to follow up certain paths of enquiry at a later stage in the interview (Sturges & Hanrahan 2004). This was the case in the present investigation. As far as the set of secondary data is concerned, it must be stated that some events had very limited documentation available to share with the researcher. This limitation had an impact on the extent of the themes that were explored. However, the information gathered though the primary data sources, as well as data found on the

events websites and on publicly available press releases and reports were rich and considered sufficient to investigate the themes.

A final limitation concerns the generalisability of the results. As noted before, community engagement is a process highly dependent on the specific characteristics, needs, and capacity of the individual communities (Hashagen 2002). Community engagement practices are therefore intrinsically connected to the communities where they are implemented. Consequently, it needs to be acknowledged that the findings of this study will unlikely be transferrable to other contexts. However, it will be possible to draw lessons and insights that can be employed in similar contexts (Cronbach & Associates, cited in Patton 2002, p. 584). In particular, insights arising from this study can be employed to investigate the issue of community engagement in the broader context of public events.

4.2.7. Validity and Action Orientation

The issue of validity refers to the extent the research method investigates what it sets out to investigate (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009). While in quantitative studies validity is established according to the rigour of the measurements and the proper use of the research instruments, the qualitative research literature provides a variety of perspectives on this issue (Jones et al 2013, Creswell 2003). Generally, validity in qualitative studies refers to the rigour of the research (Golafshani 2003), its methodological soundness (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009) and its trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba 1985).

A number of authors have identified strategies to ensure validity in qualitative studies (Lincoln & Guba 1985, Creswell & Miller 2000, Jones et al 2013, Yin 2009). In particular, the following techniques have been used in the present study to address the issue of validity:

- an ‘audit trail’ was developed to illustrate the choices and steps of the researcher during the study; the trail includes descriptions of the researcher’s approach to sampling and data collection, data coding and analysis;
- triangulation was used in order to seek convergence of data collected from a range of sources;

- peer review was sought in order to obtain feedback on the initial set of results[5]; and
- 'reflexivity' was incorporated into the research process, as the researcher acknowledged bias that might affect the enquiry.

While the techniques above were employed to ensure the validity of the study, the accuracy of the transcripts and notes were not checked with participants, due to time constraints and the very limited availability of interviewees.

A further criterion relates to the study's practical relevance or its "pragmatic validity" (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009). Pragmatic validity ensures that the knowledge created through research goes beyond theory, finds its application in reality by stimulating action and "instigate[s] actual changes in behaviour" (p.258). The present study was designed and conducted with a pragmatic purpose in mind: providing event organisers with a spectrum of practices they can tap into when seeking to engage with their local communities. To this purpose, the results of this research will be circulated within the Folk Alliance Australia network in the form of executive summary.

4.2.8. Ethical Considerations

The methodology used to gather data, and in particular the interview process, raises a series of ethical issues that need to be discussed in order to minimise their risk. Specifically, the issues to be considered in this case have to do with privacy and confidentiality, as indicated by a number of researchers, such as Patton (2002) and Lincoln and Denzin (2000). It is very unlikely that the research topic will be controversial, as it only analyses and describes practices and strategies that are already in place. In approaching the interviewees, the following was made clear:

- nature and purpose of the study;
- expected benefits to the events field;
- voluntary nature of participation;
- interview approach that will be taken;
- time involved;
- treatment of information obtained;
- intent to publish outcomes of the study in the form of a thesis, refereed conference proceedings and refereed journal papers.

[5] The conference paper "Building Relationships with Local Communities" associated with this study was accepted at the International Conference for Events in Bournemouth, UK, 2013. The paper was peer-reviewed on this occasion.

A signed form was obtained from each participant indicating their agreement to participate, also making clear they could withdraw such consent at any time.

In order to make sure that all the ethical aspects and risks involved in the present study have been identified and properly addressed, a formal Human Ethics Application form was submitted to, and accepted by the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Technology, Sydney (Ref No. UTS HREC 2012-386A). This application was necessary to ensure that the approach used by the researcher and the whole study in general observes and conforms to the university's own guidelines in the area. This application included details concerning the impact of research on the participants, data collection methods and rationale, data analysis, interpretation, storage and disposal, and privacy and confidentiality.

4.2.9. Summary

This chapter outlined the methodological choices made in conducting this study. It described the research design and found in the limited literature available on the topic an explanation for the use of an exploratory approach. The sampling frame was identified in folk festivals listed in the calendar of events included in the Folk Alliance Australia website. A range of data sources were used for the purpose of gathering information about the research issue, including in-depth telephone interviews, review of festival websites, personal communications and reports. The advantages and disadvantages of telephone interviews, the main data source, were discussed. The role of the researcher was then addressed in order to acknowledge and examine possible biases and devise approaches to limit their impacts. As in all research-based studies, a number of limitations were presented in relation to the present investigation prior to discussing issues of validity and describing the strategies used during the study to ensure trustworthiness. The chapter concluded with ethical considerations.

Chapter 5: Results

5.1. Introduction

This chapter addresses the research question and the four associated objectives by presenting the findings that emerged from the analysis of primary and secondary data sources, specifically in-depth interviews, relevant documents and festival websites. The first research objective concerns the identification, description and classification of the nature of community engagement practices currently in use by folk festival organisations. A total of 8 key themes emerged from the thematic analysis associated with this objective. These themes were classified according to the scheme proposed by Bowen, Newenham-Kahindi & Herremans (2010), which categorises community engagement into the three groupings: transactional, transitional and transformational engagement. It is important to note that while some practices have been categorised as being of a particular type, there may be some 'bleed' in terms of their function into other categories. Nonetheless, the distinction made here between the groupings is considered useful in understanding and conceptualising the data collected.

The second research objective seeks to identify the range of community stakeholders that folk festival organisations engage with through the practices identified. In determining these groups, their relationship with the festival organisation was described. The third objective identifies the factors driving community engagement practices factors in the context of the folk festivals interviewed. The last objective concerns the identification of those factors that might act to inhibit or facilitate the effectiveness of the community engagement practices identified. Quotes from the interview process have been selected to support the findings of this study, described in the following sections. Additional quotes have been included in Appendix B.

5.2. Community Engagement Practices

5.2.1. Transactional Engagement

The bulk of community engagement practices employed by the festivals interviewed were identified as transactional in that they were 'one way' in nature. Specifically, they involved the events developing and implementing various practices over which they had control.

The range of practices that fall within this classification category can be grouped under four broad headings: facilitation of community access, outreach, community capacity building/development, and local business engagement. All of these actions represent efforts by the events interviewed to build linkages with their respective communities that serve to create a positive operational climate. These practices are summarised in Table 5.1, and discussed in detail in the sections that follow.

Table 5.1. Transactional Engagement

TRANSACTIONAL ENGAGEMENT	**Facilitation of community access** ▪ Development and implementation of access plans for patrons with physical and hearing disabilities. ▪ Programming targeted at particular groups (children, elderly, young people) ▪ Provision of free/discounted tickets **Outreach** ▪ Wide distribution of event information & general publicity ▪ Use of social media to obtain community input/perspectives as regards festival content, and to seek feedback as regards any matters of concern linked to event conduct ▪ Organisation of, and participation in other events throughout the year to maintain awareness of the festival **Community capacity building & development** ▪ Provision of training ▪ Conduct of community arts projects/workshops leading to the creation of works for display or to performances within the festival ▪ Donations/ sponsorships/grants to community groups for specific projects/training initiatives ▪ Provision of opportunities for local organisations/charities to fundraise ▪ Relationship building between residents and artists/performers through the medium of community billet programs **Local business engagement** ▪ Buy-local policy ▪ Encouragement of attendees through marketing communication efforts to stay and eat at local establishments ▪ Local sponsorships

5.2.1.1. Facilitation of community access

Event organisers were found to employ a series of practices aimed at facilitating participation in their events by a broad cross section of their respective communities. These practices were:

Disability access plans for patrons with physical and hearing disabilities

Most of the folk festivals interviewed demonstrated a commitment to inclusion, and a high responsiveness to the needs of people with disabilities. Accessibility plans and services were found to be in evidence at half of the events examined for this study, with their intent being to provide disabled patrons with a more comfortable and relevant experience of the festival. This view is summarised by Amanda Jackes (2012, pers. comm., 28 November):

> "The festival is about access for people (…). What the festival is about is inclusivity and so it's trying to provide people that do have a disability the access to be able to have in a sense an ordinary experience, which is going to a music festival".

Included within these plans, depending on the event concerned, were: designated disabled camping areas where people with a disability could stay with their families and carers; access provisions for guide dogs; provision of accessible toilets, showers and parking; and ramps allowing access to all festival venues. In one instance, services associated with people who are deaf/ hearing impaired were also in evidence, such as the provision of sign language interpreters at specific performances or as requested by patrons. A carers' ticketing policy had also been developed by some events (3) that provided free access for those individuals providing support services for a person with a disability and were able to establish this by producing a companion card at the time of booking/entry.

By employing access plans, sections of an event's community that may otherwise be excluded from participation in an event, can attend thus allowing it to broaden its patronage base. It is noteworthy in this regard that some 35% of events interviewed for this study were making significant efforts to address issues associated with disability, access and inclusion. This compares with only one event (the National Folk Festival), identified as being proactive in this area in a 2003 study by Darcy and Harris dealing with festival accessibility planning.

Targeted programming

Inclusive programming was found to be a central aspect of the efforts of some interviewed festivals with the intent of growing participation by particular groups within their respective communities. For example, all festivals interviewed featured special performances, concerts, awards or workshops designed with specific audiences in mind. As Peter O'Neill (2013, pers. comm., 22 April) explains:

> "The main groups we target are families and children and youth and then the older people. With the families, we have targeted workshops and concerts and awards. There are 5 different awards to encourage youth participation in the folk festival. And we also have a particular venue, which is the children's tent – and it's where the local people put on children-friendly activities there and encourage children to be involved in all sorts of things, like at the music and arts and craft activities".

It was common for the festivals interviewed to feature youth programs in association with organisations that foster musical education through such means as providing mentoring opportunities. These programs, as with the numerous children's 'tents', are usually offered in a separate marquee or venue, where young musicians can perform for their peers.

Other groups specifically targeted through festival programming were found to be the elderly (30% of festivals) and indigenous Australians (15%). As regards the elderly, interviewees cited the use of poetry readings and some music genres (specifically jazz) as being key to their success in attracting this target group. Aboriginal people were engaged with by taking festival performers directly to aboriginal communities in nearby areas and encouraging their direct participation in the event program as performers, story tellers or artists. Indicative of the responses of interviewees with regard to seeking broad community participation, is that of one interviewee who noted:

> "It's all good to try and engage people but if we had, you know, if we had a lot of older artists playing, for instance, then a lot of the younger kids… you know, it wouldn't matter how much you tried to get them engaged, they wouldn't be interested. So we actually… you've got to put programs in there that they're going to like". (Participant 6 2013, pers. comm., 15 October)

This is consistent with Small and Edwards (2003), who point to the value of giving consideration to a broader cross section of people when programming and designing events. They argue that, in the context of festivals, there can be a tendency for them to become too specialised or too narrowly focused, and thus fail to connect in a broad way with their respective communities.

Provision of free/discounted tickets

The festivals' endeavours to enhance accessibility include the provision of free and discounted tickets to people with low income. Some volunteer programs, for example, are developed with this aim in mind, and involve the possibility to get free tickets to the festival in exchange for volunteer work.

A number of festivals (5) also offer concessions on the full price of tickets, providing pensioners in possession of a concession card, families, and students/ young people with the opportunity to attend the festival at a discounted rate. Additionally, in order to facilitate the participation of families, children at many of the events (13) are admitted free of charge. In two instances, a payment plan option has been implemented in order to enable those who find it difficult to purchase a ticket upfront to cover the expense over a period of time.

Free activities are also offered to promote access, as John Rollo Kiek (2013, pers. comm., 7 May) notes:

> "We always have a couple of free events for the local senior citizens who maybe not able to go out at night, or else can't afford to buy a festival ticket (…). So we have a special concert on the Friday afternoon, just a gold coin concert for the senior citizens and those who are not so well off… and there were quite a few of those in Mt Beauty as well who want to come and hear some of the music, and see some of the performances without having to spend a whole lot of money. So we take account of the conditions of the town in that sense".

Another use of free and discounted tickets was identified in the context of the Apollo Bay Music Festival. This event uses this practice to engage local teenagers with the intent of both educating them and keeping them from harm:

> "We also have quite cheap tickets for… well, 15 and under are free and 16 and 17 year olds can come in for 30 bucks for the whole weekend. And

> so the idea there is that rather than being disengaged and hang around outside the event, we've got them in an area where we can introduce them to music… all different styles and look after them as well". (Participant 6 2013, pers. comm., 15 October)

The facilitation of access through the provision of discounted or free tickets provides evidence that folk festivals take into account the particular socio-economic characteristics of their communities.

5.2.1.2. Outreach

Folk festivals were found to use a number of approaches to reach out to their local communities on an on-going basis and to provide opportunities for interaction with the public through a consistent use of social media and through the organisation of other events throughout the year to maintain awareness of the festival.

Wide distribution of event information and general publicity

40% of the folk festivals interviewed were found to be concerned with providing information about the event to their communities, through different channels so as to maximise community attendance. Local radio stations and newspapers were commonly used for this purpose, acting to provide information on festival programs and operational matters (e.g. parking, ticketing and traffic updates), as well as to create a sense of excitement and stimulate interest. With regard to this last point, Fredline and Faulkner (2000) argue that the promotion of an event can have a major effect on its ability to engage with its community and as such a conscious effort needs to be made to create and communicate a positive image if it is to be seen in a favourable light. Mueller and Fenton (1989) also draw attention to the importance of an event's communication efforts in engendering positive community attitudes, stating that such efforts are central to creating a positive attitude towards the event.

Local media were also used to call for volunteers and community billets, seek sponsors, promote the festival program and after the event, to acknowledge the contribution of patrons and volunteers to the festival's success, as the following quotes illustrate:

> "We do a little bit of print advertising in a local events magazine… like music and arts events magazine (…). We have an agreement with the local ABC local radio station where they'll play, in the lead up to the festival, they'll play one of our bands either once a week for four weeks, or once

every day in the week of the festival". (Amy Moon 2013, pers. comm., 29 August)

"We put out a call in the local newsletter… newspaper, in the school bulletins, we advertise on the local Alpine radio, which is a local community radio station to call for billets". (John Rollo Kiek 2013, pers. comm., 7 May)

Use of social media

While the use of social media is often positioned as transitional in nature, little empirical evidence confirms the use of social media is effectively interactive (Bowen et al 2010). This study found that all folk festivals interviewed used social media in both a transactional and transitional way. All 20 events held at least a Facebook account in order to provide up-to-date information about various aspects of the festival and its program. However, while the transactional usage of this practice was mentioned only by one interview respondent, a few event organisers (3) explained that using social media assists in engaging with their communities. Facebook profiles encourage input, feedback and perspectives as regards festival content and offer a platform to voice any concerns linked to event conduct and/ or its operational decisions. In particular, one festival organiser argued, social media can be used to encourage involvement of young people and recruit volunteers from different age groups as older volunteers often may not able to contribute anymore. The following quotes illustrate the dual nature of this practice:

"A lot of people are following the social media page, and yes it's a good way of getting information out to them. They can't comment directly on it, but they can comment on other posts that are on there. And we find they share the information. So if there's an announcement on the page people will share it. And that, again, helps get the word around". (Turning Wave 2013, pers. comm., 30 April)

"We try to engage people through our social media channels about, you know, who do you want to see on the bill this year? Even… we try to engage people on like major operational decisions like we would love for everybody to catch a bus to Corinbank but Canberrans just don't catch buses so we try to… we have in the past gone out to people and say, hey so we want to do free buses, would you catch them, what time would you want them?". (Amy Moon 2013, pers. comm., 29 August)

This finding confirms that the use of social media is a newly emerging mechanism to engage with local communities (Dozier, Hacker, Silberberg, & Ziegahn 2011). Benefits associated with employing social media as a strategy for community engagement include the possibility to reach groups and individuals that would otherwise be hard to contact (Bacon 2009). It also has the potential to provide a forum where ongoing communication and social exchange is encouraged (Dozier, Hacker, Silberberg, & Ziegahn 2011). As Bowen et al (2010) suggest, however, further research is needed to assess the effectiveness of this practice.

Organisation of, and participation in other events throughout the year

Some festival organisations (45%) suggested that efforts to engage with local communities normally extend beyond the festival time, in order to maintain awareness of the event throughout the year as well as to encourage people to join and enjoy activities related to the festival. In some cases, folk festivals are managed and coordinated by folk clubs, which often have been operating in the area for a long time. While folk festivals are the main event in the club's calendar, clubs also offer a range of activities that include concerts, sessions, bush dances, workshops and 'house concerts'[6]. These musical activities might be funded with the festival profits and can involve performers who already took part in the event for that year or local artists and musicians.

> "We also have a number of what we call festival fringe events across the year, and they're at local level across the Illawarra, which includes Kiama, Shoalhaven and Wollongong Council areas and they're designed to promote the festival but also engage people in local performances and musical activities". (Peter O'Neill 2013, pers. comm., 22 April)

One festival organisation indicated that, besides regular bush dances and concerts, the coordination of monthly markets is facilitating a positive interaction with their community. In some cases, festival committees were also found to be involved in the management of other big events and festivals in the area, that do not necessarily have a folk theme. For example, in one instance, the festival organisation coordinates a gathering of the local and wider community focused on the regeneration of the site where the event takes place. In this occasion, opportunities for learning and discussing

[6] House concerts are music performances of local bands and groups that take place in the house of local residents involved with the folk scene and the folk club (Illawarra Folk Festival).

environmental issues are also offered (Queensland Folk Federation 2013). A small number of events (2) were also found to participate in other events as stallholders in order to engage with an extended public and seek networking opportunities with other stallholders.

These activities allow the festival organisation to reach a larger public and to keep the awareness of the festival throughout the year, as one respondent noted:

> "I run them [workshops] under the Dorrigo Folk and Bluegrass Festival to try and get a continuing feel to, you know, to keep up the momentum". (Participant 1 2013, pers. comm., 4 October)

In one case, however, the engagement of the local community outside of the festival time has an environmental focus, rather than a promotional one. Monthly 'working bees' are organised in order to regenerate and maintain an environment suitable for wetland butterflies and other insects and native wetland flowers that are ultimately displayed during the event.

> "During the year we have people that are coming out once a month to work on the land and develop a butterfly habitat and things like that. And they are members of the South East Queensland region so they are people who are developing a huge ownership of the site. And they come together once a month". (Amanda Jackes 2012, pers. comm., 28 November)

These monthly working bees have a significant positive impact on the natural landscape of the festival site as the regeneration program attracts and maintains native species of butterflies, insects and plants that create a unique and sustainable ecosystem. Furthermore, it provides an opportunity for local people, who might also not be necessarily interested in the folk festival, to gather and work with a common goal, developing relationships and a sense of ownership to the festival site (Moscardo 2007, Ritchie 1984, Faulkner & Tideswell 1997).

5.2.1.3. Capacity Building and Community Development

Community investment in the form of capacity building and community development was found to be an important transactional approach through which folk festivals engage with their local communities. The present findings are consistent with those of other studies that suggest festivals are associated with the expansion of community

capacity, especially in regional settings (Moscardo 2007, Evans et al 2005, and Molloy 2002).

Provision of training

Demanding public liability insurance requirements, together with more rigorous council application processes have made training a central aspect of volunteer programs at folk festivals. Surprisingly, only one interviewee noted that volunteers who contribute to the construction of the festival sites often have to go through a full Occupational Health and Safety induction before accessing the site. As Allen et al (2010) note, this should really be standard practice at all events. Likewise, formal training is needed for volunteers performing safety officer's duties.

> "We are now registered in the Victorian Major Events register so that means we have to comply with all the work safe, OH&S, training regulations completely and so we ourselves we are having to do more training programs to be able to sign off on things, like the safety of venues, the safety of all our water and gas supplies, all that sort of things, just like imagine building properly, really". (John Young 2013, pers. comm., 4 January)

Such training, as one respondent noted, equips volunteers with skills that can be employed in other event settings. Volunteer training also occurs in areas other than security/ safety, which can be more informal and strategic in nature. Such training often leverages the abilities that volunteers already have or seeks to build new skills according to what is needed.

> "We'll target people for specific teams and then we will train those teams in areas that they need the training in. So it'll be targeted at specific people with the skills that we need for certain areas. And then other areas we will build the skills of people to match the needs of the festival so I guess it's twofold". (Una McAlinden 2013, pers. comm., 12 March)

Training programs targeting specific groups were also in evidence. The National Celtic Festival engages directly with students from event management courses. This event has developed a two-year program to facilitate the involvement of first and second year students in aspects of overall event and stage management. This program allows local students to consolidate and build their skills in event management through practical experience as well as providing them with the confidence to work in the events industry.

Another event, the Apollo Bay Music Festival, actively facilitates the engagement of young people at the production level as support for professional crews. This is achieved by including in tender documents a requirement for suppliers to provide training opportunities for young people. Additionally, at the time of the interview another event, the Maldon Folk Festival, was in the process of registering with Centrelink in order to encourage unemployed people over 55 to participate in the event by contributing volunteer work for 15 hours a week and fully meet Centrelink' s activity test requirements.

Community arts projects/workshops, informal skill sharing and performance opportunities

A powerful practice of a transactional nature used by folk festivals is the organisation of community arts projects/workshops, often leading to the creation of artworks or music performances to be displayed during the festival. Music workshops offered to community members appeared to be a popular feature of most festival, as well as informal sharing of musical knowledge. These practices express the folk ideals of participation and musical skills sharing on which these events are grounded.

> "It's providing an opportunity for people to kind of indulge themselves and find their own way, but also if they want to, to get some pointers from other people. I think most people they go through a stage of having workshops and then perhaps they search for their own voice, so it's really about encouraging people to use the resources or other people, or other artists and then to search for something of their own". (Sebastian Flynn 2012, pers. comm., 19 December)

The festivals interviewed during the course of this study approached this aspect of capacity building in a variety of ways:

- Conducting workshops in schools and community settings: these usually involve children, high school students and their teachers and are facilitated by musicians and performers who are part of the festival program. The workshops can run for several weeks prior to the festival in order to build up skills and create a performance act or they are concomitant with the festival and enable the best participants to be assimilated into specific professional performances at the end of the festival program.
- Organisation of a full program of music workshops, such as the 'Folk Summer School' run in conjunction with the Illawarra Folk Festival, which is aimed at

engaging the local community to increase their musical skills; once the participants have built on their skills, they are able to fully join in the festival activities. Additionally, the 'Folk Summer School' engages a variety of professional artists as well as local community volunteers/ musicians as teachers.

- Financial or in-kind support for local choirs and bands and encouragement to perform during the festival. In one instance, support is given through the funding of an annual mentoring program facilitated by the artists playing at festival.
- Strategic partnerships with:
    - Local not-for-profit music organisations, (e.g. the Canberra-based Music For Everyone); and
    - International initiatives (e.g. Ethno Australia[7]).
- General encouragement of participation in festival activities (sessions, busking, blackboard concerts) and informal skill sharing.

Workshops offered by festival organisations also include community arts projects. These projects are aimed at involving particular groups, such as a younger audience or people with disabilities. Fowler and Fowler (cited in Harris 2005, p. 289) drew attention to the inclusion of specific groups in preparatory activities as good practice for engaging communities in the context of public events. Community arts projects involve the creation of decorative elements to be displayed in town shopfronts to create a festive atmosphere, or at the festival site. Workshops are often facilitated by professional artists specifically engaged for this purpose. These activities are inclusive and act as entertainment for different audiences and groups within the community, fostering engagement, cultural enrichment and generally building capacity.

A small number of festivals (2) were found to incorporate a theme developed at music, visual art and crafts workshops and ultimately presented at the festival as a single, multifaceted piece of art. For example, the Fleurieu Folk Festival offers an intergenerational, multimedia project that includes:

- Mentoring young people to create a song of the festival;
- Engaging a visual artist to work with underprivileged (e.g. people with disabilities) to design and create a festival icon;

[7] Ethno Australia is a camp for young musicians from a variety of cultural backgrounds where they share and teach each other traditional folk songs from their culture (Jeunesses Musicales International 2011).

- Involving seniors to work with children to create shapes to decorate the icon and to create basic musical instruments (e.g. shakers); and
- Displaying all these elements in a parade scheduled to conclude the festival (Peter Thornton 2013, pers. comm., 8 August).

In this way, the festival offers a variety of activities that can appeal to different members of the community, but that also has a common goal.

Donations/ sponsorships/grants to community groups for specific projects/training initiatives

A number of festivals (45%) sought to engage with their local communities by channelling some of their profits back into community initiatives, projects and groups. Festivals were found to give donations to a range of organisations for a variety of purposes:

- To schools, to run children's activities, contribute to the purchase of musical instruments for use in lessons, and cover music tuition fees for students who want to learn to play an instrument;
- To local charities;
- To the Fire Brigades and NGOs, such as the Men's Shed; and
- To the organisation managing the festival showground, in order to contribute to the venue's facility management.

In one instance, the folk festival provides in-kind and financial sponsorships through an annual grants program, to which community organisations from the region are invited to apply. Projects funded with the festival grants include the provision of minibuses serving elderly people and operating to and from the hospital, contributions towards the construction and equipment of the local Men's Shed, and sponsorship of school trips/ events for the local school students. Similarly, in another instance, the festival recently started a community development fund that local groups can request to support their community projects. An Emerging Artists Grant up to $10,000 is also promoted by the festival organisation. This grant is offered to musicians in the South-Western Victoria Region for any development project they might need assistance with, such as recording an album, buying equipment, professional development or going on tour.

Provision of opportunities for local organisations/charities to fundraise

As Frisby and Getz (1989) point out, participation in local events provides an opportunity for local community groups and charities to enhance their profile within the

community as well as to raise funds. In order to facilitate these opportunities, a number of folk festivals were found to make free stalls available to such groups as the fire brigades and social clubs, e.g. Cancer Research Advocate Bikers, the local scout groups, and particular associations, e.g. Celtic clans, local pre-schools and charities amongst others. These organisations not only were found to fundraise through the sale of items during the festival, but they also often received remuneration by the event organisation for their participation and input. Community input was identified as a practice of transitional nature and therefore will be discussed in the next section.

Relationship building between residents and artists/performers through the medium of community billet programs

A common feature within folk festivals' efforts towards community engagement was found in the development of billet programs, through which local residents host festival performers and artists in their homes during the event. In some cases, billeting was driven more by necessity than by a conscious effort to engage with the event's community. However, it was found to serve to link those members of the community involved to the event in a deeper way. In fact, a number of events (5) developed billet programs primarily to provide for the lack of accommodation in small festival towns, where there is a paucity of facilities to accommodate both performers and the public.

> "We also do is given the number of performers that come to the town, we have to provide accommodation for them as well. The available public accommodation isn't sufficient so a lot of community people offer their houses to the festival to billet out performers to stay in private houses. That's a very big sector of every accommodation supply". (John Young 2013, pers. comm., 4 January)

In one instance, members of the community who acknowledged the lack of accommodation have approached the festival organisation to offer their support through billeting performers. In general, residents are inclined to billet performers, as the outcomes are positive for everyone involved, particularly for them as they get to meet the artists, build a relationship with them and in some cases get free entry to the festival. In fact, in the majority of cases, billets also serve to foster relationships between residents and artists, as residents are encouraged not only to provide accommodation to their guests, but also facilitate their stay.

> "They host the performers, they give them breakfast, they show them around the local area and sort of act as the unofficial guardians of the artists who are coming from overseas and interstate and they know the area…so they sort of look after them as well as let them stay in their houses". (Peter O'Neill 2013, pers. comm., 22 April)

However, in one case, billets were found not to be a feasible option to encourage engagement, as indicated below:

> "Now most folk festivals that are heralded in larger communities, billet the top performers as a matter of course. St Albans being a small village where there's very limited accommodation and that limited accommodation is worth money, we've never been able to do that. But it was offered to us". (John Uren 2013, pers. comm., 30 May)

5.2.1.4. Local Business Engagement

The engagement of local businesses responds to the commitment of folk festivals to deliver and retain localised economic benefits. The findings presented below are consistent with those of Lade & Jackson (2004), who found that support from local businesses is considered to be a key success factor in regional festivals. Additionally, they agree, sponsorships received from local businesses are significant in funding the festival production. The engagement of local businesses was found to create a collaborative atmosphere associated with the enhancement of the visitors' experience of the event (Simmons 1994, Cole 2006).

Buy-local policy

A small number of festivals (4) were found to commit to a buy-local policy, which ensures that festival supplies and services are purchased from local businesses as much as possible. The range of items acquired locally varies from simple materials, such as stationery for use in the festival office, to essential equipment for the festival production, such as marquees, staging and audio equipment. Additionally, fresh produce and beverages sold during the festival time are often sourced locally.

However, as folk festivals mostly take place in regional towns, not all supplies and services needed are readily available within the community, so organisers often extend the boundaries of this policy to their regional areas, including businesses that are not considered local, but are located within the region. Additionally, this type of engagement is challenged by the fact that some festivals have grown considerably in

visitor numbers in recent years and local businesses might not have the capacity to provide services for bigger events, which results in professional companies being contracted externally.

> "We had one group of people from a village in the west of us here – a group of men who became quite specialist in erecting what I'd call bigger scale marquees for the festival… As the festival has grown, these marquees have gone bigger and bigger such that last year we have to book two professional groups to come onsite and to erect these things in an efficient, safe and timely manner and we had to break our arrangement with that particular group, which was disappointing but it had got to the stage where they just didn't have the capacity to do it, both it manpower and in skill levels and it was causing us problems in terms of time". (John Young 2013, pers. comm., 4 January)

Encouragement of attendees to stay and eat at local establishments and use of local venues

Some events encourage their patrons to stay at local motels and bed and breakfasts and to eat at local cafes and restaurants. Local food establishments like coffee shops are often used as venues for parts of the festival programs, e.g. music performances and poetry breakfasts. Additionally, festival elements such as buskers or performances can be located close to local businesses, particularly food and beverage outlets.

> "We started a new thing this year; a festival fringe, whereby we had discussions with four of the local restaurants around the town, a little bit further up the valley to say 'look, we would like to engage you more in the festival… we've got some artists that can play in your venue from time to time (…) we'll provide some artists with their own little sound systems at times which are convenient to you'. And, hey presto, it all worked". (John Rollo Kiek 2013, pers. comm., 7 May)

In most instances, festival organisations engage with local pubs in order to use their premises as venues for musical acts, especially at night time. Local pubs offer a convivial environment for patrons to meet each other, listen to music and watch festival performances. The inclusion of these establishments as festival venues is a popular choice of festival organisations.

Local sponsorships

Festival organisations also seek to engage with the local businesses through sponsorship. Sponsorship programs were found to be employed by 6 festivals in order to target businesses in the community willing to support the festival in exchange for marketing exposure or incentives such as free tickets and invitation to special events. Targeted businesses include not only pubs and food outlets, but also shops and service providers, who acknowledge the value of the festival in bringing positive economic outcomes to the community.

Furthermore, sponsorship programs also include in-kind options, especially to support festival organisations with the provision of services, such as catering and accommodation, to their artists and performers.

> "We work out a deal with the cafes and things that they give us, vouchers and things – food vouchers and meals and things – so we give that to our performers, who add that to the hospitality of the town. And that builds that people connection and that good feel that our performers go away and think "wow, we really got looked after in that town and for that festival". (Una McAlinden 2013, pers. comm., 12 March)

This form of in-kind support not only allows the involvement of the local businesses in festival activities, but also allows the consolidation of the relationship between festival, locality and performers.

5.2.2. Transitional Engagement

The folk festivals interviewed endeavoured to engage their communities in a transitional way when:

- Efforts towards community involvement were driven by a commitment to build relationships with the community through the collaboration and consultation;
- Communication flow is two-ways, mainly from the festival organisation to the community; and
- The festival organisation retains control of the resources shared during the engagement process.

Table 5.2 illustrates the four key themes identified within this type of engagement, which summarise practices of transitional nature employed by the sampled folk festivals. These themes are: festival-driven community input, community meetings and

strategic partnerships. They reflect the organisation's efforts to involve their communities, through interaction, partnership and collaboration.

Table 5.2. Transitional Engagement

TRANSITIONAL ENGAGEMENT	**Festival-driven community input** ▪ Priority given to sourcing of local labour/businesses to: build/install elements of the festival site (e.g. stages, marquees, etc); operate food and craft stalls; undertake cleaning and waste management tasks; and provide crowd management services. **Community consultations and facilitation of interaction** ▪ Formal or informal meetings involving selected stakeholders e.g. residents, community groups, local councils, indigenous groups, and on occasions festival detractors ▪ Open-door policy for festival office in order to enhance access to, and encourage interaction with festival staff and management **Strategic partnerships** ▪ Formation of partnerships linked to the long term development of the event, with: o Local Councils o Tourism associations o Traders associations & local businesses (e.g. via sponsorship agreements) o Special interest groups (e.g. performance groups, charities) o Other festivals in nearby areas

5.2.2.1. Festival-Driven Community Input

All folk festivals interviewed were found to seek community input and support in a range of activities during the planning of the event as well as its delivery. Festival organisations reported that sourcing of local labour is usually given priority over hiring professional organisations. On one hand this practice limits expenditure and on the other, it encourages residents and community groups to actively participate in festival operations and feel part of a communal effort towards the delivery of the event. Community groups and volunteers collaborate with festival organisations performing a variety of tasks, some of which are listed below:

- Building/installing elements of the festival site, e.g. stages, marquees, etc.;
- Organisation of festival markets and management of campgrounds;
- Operating food and craft stalls, provision of supplies, e.g. water to various areas of the festival site;

- Undertaking cleaning and waste management tasks;
- Decoration of festival site and creative contribution to festival activities;
- Provision and management of parking grounds, management of transport to and from the festival site, e.g. shuttle buses;
- Provision of first aid through local community emergency response team (CERT);
- Provision of crowd management services and access management to festival site; and
- Design and production of festival T-shirts.

In the majority of cases, the involvement of community groups and volunteers in these tasks is remunerated through a donation, which offers an incentive to continue being involved and to maintain a relationship with the festival. A small number of festivals (3) also indicated that the process of allocating the tasks to certain community organisations is somewhat strategic, as they seek an alignment between what is required and the normal activities performed by the groups/ individuals.

> "The scouts manage the campground, that's kind of what they do, throughout the year, they're into camping and that kind of stuff, so there is an alignment in the relationship". (Participant 3 2013, pers. comm., 19 April)

> "There's a group of ladies who are in their 70s and 80s and that's what they do. They will bake their 4 sponge cakes, or they will do their 6 batches of scones. You won't see them all weekend, but you know that they've come in and left their scones and gone again". (Caroline Blyton 2013, pers. comm., 19 July)

5.2.2.2. Community Consultations

Consultations with members of local communities were found to be part of the festivals' engagement efforts, in the form of community meetings. These meetings were found to be both of formal as well as informal nature and involved a diverse range of stakeholders e.g. residents, community groups, local councils, indigenous groups, and on occasions festival detractors.

A small number of festivals (3) seek community feedback and input through formal meetings often held annually in Council venues and facilitated by local authority officers. In one instance, the festival organisation opens the door of its annual general meeting to the public, in order to give members of the community and groups, the

opportunity to participate and provide feedback. Council-facilitated meetings are particularly important when dealing with festival detractors as they offer a platform to voice concerns and complaints as well as to discuss possible solutions, as noted by one respondent:

> "It is difficult, because these people often remain anonymous, we can't really talk to them directly and that what we're hoping at this community meeting – these people will come along and we can actually talk to them and find out what their problem is, and hopefully resolve it". (Stuart Leslie 2013, pers. comm., 27 March)

While in the cases illustrated above formal community meetings take place regularly to deal with negative feedback as well as report on festival outcomes, one of the events interviewed was found to call community meetings on an ad hoc basis, i.e. when serious issues arise. In other cases, the particular ethnic composition of the community might require a more informal approach. One of the festivals, for example, maintains regular contacts with the Aboriginal elders, their Land Councils and their musicians in order to seek opportunities to engage the residents of the settlement in festival activities. Similarly, another event was found to be connected with Aboriginal groups to ensure that Indigenous aspects are profiled and honoured during the event.

> "We're on local indigenous land so we're working with the land owners to make sure we're respecting and in some sense, profiling the indigenous connection of the land we're on for the festival". (Una McAlinden 2013, pers. comm., 12 March)

Undoubtedly, regular community meetings are important to address issues that arise during festivals delivery. However, community consultations play a significant role in the scoping phase of new festivals. Two of the festivals interviewed proved to be proactive by seeking community approval for their events before planning them, as indicated by the following quote:

> "We started the festival working with community so before we even took the festival to Portarlington we met with all the main community groups in the town and I spoke at their meetings and told them what the festival was all about and I basically asked them if this is something that they wanted in Portarlington and tried to get them on board before we even went there. So I think this was a really good way to do it. So then from then on, we

> really had the support of the people in the town". (Una McAlinden 2013, pers. comm., 12 March)

Another event also reported that community consultations were carried out following significant changes in the festival management structure:

> "One of the things that I did (…) is I went and met with absolutely every community group, government department, the whole lot, just sort of got their take on it and then tried to, you know, try to come up with a plan that sort of works, works all those people in so that no one, no ones sort of out of that loop". (Participant 6 2013, pers. comm., 15 October)

These findings confirm Jarvis, Berkeley and Broughton's (2012) view that consultations are a crucial process to build consensus as they provide a platform for the community to raise issues and give feedback. This process, they argue, is vital to build trust between the organisation and its community.

Festival office open-door policy

Three of the festivals interviewed were found to provide an ongoing connection with local residents and representatives of community groups by encouraging them to stop by the event's office to contribute new ideas or to provide feedback. In this way, it was argued, stronger community relationships were able to be built. This view is supported by Derrett (2008), who observed in the context of Casino's Beef Week, that an 'open office' policy greatly encourages community interaction, input and feedback.

5.2.2.3. Strategic Partnerships

The development of festival partnerships represents the efforts of folk festival organisers to foster relationships that could support the long-term growth of the event. The Australian folk festivals interviewed engaged a range of public bodies and other organisations in partnerships of different natures. Local councils are often primary partners as festivals are able to generate economic benefits and positive social and environmental outcomes for the area as well as to promote the locality on a regional, national or sometimes international level. They support folk festivals mainly through financial or in-kind sponsorships, as indicated by Participant 3 (2013, pers. comm., 19 April):

> "Our other principal sponsor is the local Council, that can see the benefits of the activities that the festival generates, not only on that weekend, but

> also in terms of marketing, that marketing is about $100,000 put there that has the word 'Queenscliff' on it. So they see a lot of value in the marketing activity that we do".

In-kind sponsorships include access to public spaces that can be used as camping grounds for patrons and the provision of services such as waste management.

Similarly, tourism bodies were found to support folk festivals and their engagement efforts as they recognise the events' potential in promoting the area as a tourism destination and to increase the influx of visitors, especially in regional localities.

> "Probably our principal sponsor is Tourism Victoria and they support us in marketing, in a cooperative marketing agreement, in the aim of trying increase and drive tourism to regional spots in Victoria, regional events – which we're one, we're identified as a major regional event in Victoria. And it's basically trying to drive traffic from Melbourne and from interstate to regional spots such as Queenscliff". (Participant 3 2013, pers. comm., 19 April)

Tourism associations were found to provide festival organisers (6) with sponsorship and marketing support for a range of activities:

- to promote the festival program
- to provide information about:
  - general accessibility
  - possible traffic disruptions
  - accommodation availability
- to sell festival tickets.

The support provided to festival organisations by government and tourism bodies is widely acknowledged within the literature about event tourism (Getz 2005, Allen et al 2011). In particular, as Getz points out (2005, p.14), these agencies can leverage events as 'image makers' and 'place marketing' tools in order to encourage a positive perception of the locality as a potential travel destination.

Similarly, the majority of festivals interviewed highlighted that traders associations and local businesses also acknowledge the positive economic benefits that the event produces. However, only a number of events have developed a partnership with these bodies.

> "You know, most small towns like ours have a business advance committee, or whatever they call them… progress association or something like that and if they can see that the festival will bring a bit of business and more people to the town, more recognition, an appreciation of the district, that is a prime thing in getting them involved *(sic)*". (Graeme Fryer 2013, pers. comm., 8 May)

Four folk festival organisations interviewed were found to have established linkages with their host communities by undertaking a membership to specific community associations, e.g. local business and traders associations, a facility management organisation for community venues, and a body representing the interests of the area's community groups.

Folk festivals can also seek association and partnership with special interest groups, such as performance or artist organisations/ collectives or charities. For instance, the National Folk Festival established a partnership with a community arts organisation, Music For Everyone (MFE)[8], in order to host a series of masterclasses that would form part of the festival program. In another instance, the Illawarra Folk Festival engaged the Heart Foundation to implement a no-smoking policy across the festival site and to promote the festival as a smoke-free event. A further example is represented by the partnership between the Corinbank Festival and three local environmental organisations[9], which were engaged to host sustainability workshops as part of the event's program.

Furthermore, three festivals were found to establish partnerships with other events of similar or different nature. These linkages were seen by organisers as opportunities to engage with the community as well as to maintain the awareness of the festival. Furthermore, these partnerships were found to lead, in some cases, to sharing ideas and resources amongst events, as explained overleaf.

> "I had a couple of discussions with Kangaroo Valley Folk Festival over the marketing area, because I'm the marketing manager for the festival; and we shared ideas about how to market the festival and we've also had

[8] Music For Everyone (MFE) is a Canberra-based community music organisation dedicated to inspire and encourage people of all ages and backgrounds to participate in music tuition, workshops and performances.
[9] The Canberra Environment Centre, The Australian National University Environment Collective and SEE-Change

> discussions with them about a new festival that is going to happen in Kiama so that we work together and we don't compete with dates. But we also share physical resources like cash registers, electronic resources, tents, etc. and we're also talking with Cobargo Folk Festival for sharing their tent between Kangaroo Valley Festival and ourselves". (Peter O'Neill 2013, pers. comm., 22 April)

The benefits of collaboration with other events are acknowledged by Getz et al (2007, p.116), who suggest that this type of collaboration can serve a variety of purposes, including securing artists, information sharing and general promotion.

5.2.3. Transformational Engagement

Community engagement of a transformational nature was found in a limited range of practices endeavouring to encourage:

- Joint management of projects; and
- Community leadership in decision-making processes.

In this type of engagement communication is a balanced exchange between organisation and community and is an authentic dialogue, a collaborative process that ultimately results in shared values and trust (Roulier, 2000).

The key practice identified as transformational in nature is inclusivity in the festival management structure and its characteristics are illustrated in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3. Transformational Engagement

TRANSFORMATIONAL ENGAGEMENT	**Inclusive management structures** ▪ Members of community/ community groups included on festival committees and in the event management team ▪ Community control of festival components through taking responsibility for the management or provision of program inputs

5.2.3.1. Inclusive Management Structures

Community inclusion in festival committees and management

Six of the folk festivals interviewed were found to connect to their local communities by including residents and/ or community groups representatives in the events' management committee. However, in most instances the inclusion of community within

the festival management is facilitated by a community ethic deeply grounded in volunteerism, especially in regional settings (Burr, cited in Harris 2005, p. 289, Molloy 2002).

The Port Fairy Folk Festival, for example, indicated that the managing body of the event is a community-based incorporated committee composed of a group of 12 Port Fairy residents, who operate the festival to bring benefits to the wider Port Fairy community.

> "Right from the very beginning there was community involvement doing things to make it work and that's the sort of an ethic of the community around here – they get involved in events (…) We're a community-based incorporation committee so all the profits from the festival that occur are held in trust and returned to the community through grants and other forms of investment". (John Young 2013, pers. comm., 4 January)

A similar management structure is outlined in regards to the Queenscliff Music Festival:

> "I report to a volunteer board of management who are all local, and then my two staff members are basically local people. And then the majority of the organising committee who are volunteer-based (…) are basically involved with the festival from day one, which is 1997. And then the majority of the core group are either local or moved down here or have strong connections with Queenscliff, or strong history with Queenscliff". (Participant 3 2013, pers. comm., 19 April)

In another instance, the presence, in the management committee, of community members who are all also involved in different groups facilitate communications with, and engagement of those groups, as noted in the quote below:

> "Our main core of people in the committee are all involved or volunteer in something else in the community as well (…) So automatically the folk festival is connected to other organisations in the community (…) It's not a separate thing that I've gone out and said 'right now I have to make connections into the community'. I've already got connections in the community, by having the people on the committee who are the people who do things in the community". (Pam Lyons 2013, pers. comm., 19 February)

In one case, the approach towards inclusion of community members within the event's management structure was found to be aimed at empowering people from the community to build their capacity and take on managerial roles within the

festival. This finding corroborates Molloy's (2002) study, which acknowledges that community support can take a variety of forms, including involvement in the organisational structure.

Community control of festival components

In five cases, the festival organisation was found to delegate control of festival components to the community. Through this practice, community groups were encouraged to take responsibility for the management or provision of program and/ or logistic inputs.

In one instance, the festival organisers approached the local secondary school in order to find support with accommodation for some of the festival performers. The request was welcomed as the school took full responsibility of coordinating accommodation not only for the members of the band, but for their parents as well. In another case, a summer school is organised and run by the residents of the area in conjunction with the festival. It is part of the festival program and features a number of workshops in a variety of musical styles. The school's workshops are often taught by local musicians and are aimed at encouraging local people to increase their musical skills and practice in a communal environment. At another festival, community groups were found to be encouraged to take responsibility for, and manage festival venues by performing a range of tasks, e.g. stage management, access control, and ticketing.

Another example of community control of departments of the event is the instrument lock-up, as noted by two interviewees. In both cases, this activity is operated by a service group, e.g. Lion's Club, whose members coordinate a security area where all the festival performers' instruments are stored. From this area, instruments are then delivered to the various venues and then collected and brought back after the performances.

> "One of the big jobs that the Lions club does is the instrument lock up, which is a secure place where the performers can deposit their instruments. And the Lions club takes the instruments of the performers around the various venues and collects them and brings them back into security after their performance. They put in about 600 hours over the weekend to do that job so this gives you an idea of the work they involved themselves in". (John Young 2013, pers. comm., 4 January)

At the Illawarra Folk Festival, a Summer School is organised and run by the residents of the area in conjunction with the festival. It is part of the festival program and features a number of workshops in a variety of musical styles. The School's workshops are often taught by local musicians and are aimed at encouraging local people to increase their musical skills and practice in a communal environment. The Summer School represents therefore an activity run by the community for the community.

Maintaining personal relationships between the festival coordinator and community groups was identified by 4 events as central to establish trusting relationships that ultimately lead to community control of areas of the festival.

> "Firstly I go around and speak to people. We manage to speak to some other organisations within the community and they're quite happy to take on specific tasks and take areas of responsibility". (Participant 5 2013, pers. comm., 30 April)

5.3. Community Stakeholders

A diverse range of stakeholders was found to be involved in the community engagement practices of the folk festivals interviewed. Their relationships with the festival organisations are outlined in the following sections. As suggested by Getz et al (2007), festival stakeholders often assume multiple roles at once and their relationships with the festival organisation are consequently dynamic. Moreover, overlaps often exist between the community stakeholder groups, as highlighted by a number of festival organisers:

> "There seems to be certain groups in Portarlington that will attract members of all different groups, say a community association will attract the fire brigades and the football club and the gaol guards". (Una McAlinden 2013, pers. comm., 12 March)

> "A high number of those volunteers volunteer for not just one organisation or event, but for many". (Participant 3 2013, pers. comm., 19 April)

> "Like a lot of volunteers, those who put their hand up to do one thing often put their hand up to do something else". (John Rollo Kiek 2013, pers. comm., 7 May)

As illustrated by Figure 5.1, the community stakeholders identified in this study include government organisations (e.g. local councils, government agencies, and emergency service providers), educational institutions (e.g. primary and secondary schools, pre-

schools, training centres), private sector firms (e.g. suppliers, local retailers), charities/ not-for-profit organisations (e.g. arts organisations, community service groups, religious associations, sports clubs, etc.) and broad residents groups.

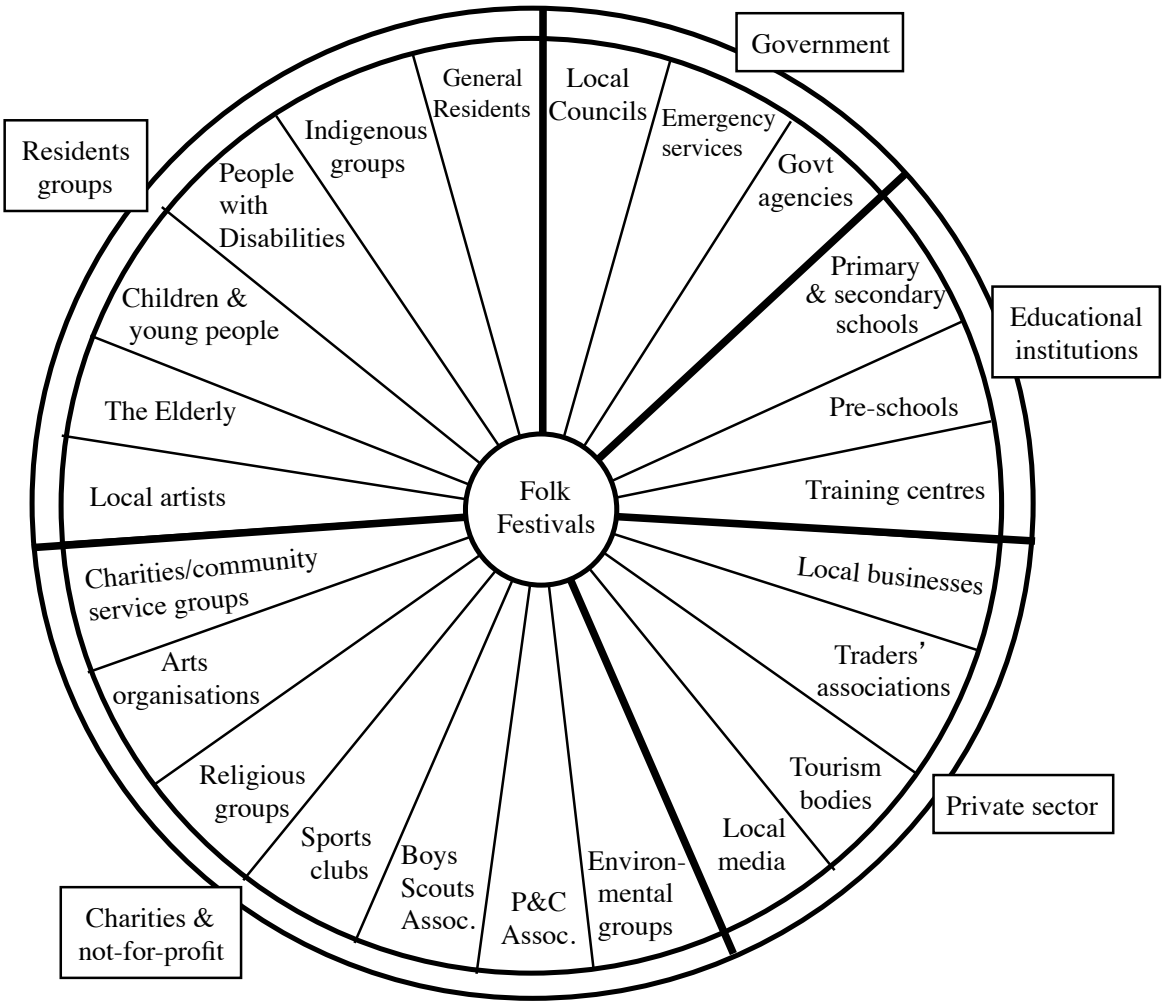

Figure 5.1: Community stakeholders

5.3.1. Government

5.3.1.1. Local Councils

Local Councils have been identified as community stakeholders by Jefferey (2009) and Lasker and Weiss (2003). Their relationship with festival organisations is multifaceted as they perform different roles and provide different levels of support. First, local government authorities manage a broad range of public spaces, such as streets, town parks, public buildings, sport complexes and in some cases showgrounds, which are used as festival venues or camping grounds.

> "They [the local Shire] do allow us to close one of the streets which has become one of the… sort of the centre of the festival in terms of where our market stalls are, where our food court is, where our buskers are, etc etc". (John Rollo Kiek 2013, pers. comm., 7 May)

> "The Council gave us the use of one of the parks as a festival camping ground". (Participant 5 2013, pers. comm., 30 April)

Secondly, local Councils act as regulators by setting the requirements organisers need to comply with when organising their events. These requirements include OH&S, insurance and risk assessments. For some of the smallest folk festivals interviewed these requisites have brought a significant change in their approach to community engagement and, in general, to the whole management of their event, which had to be "formalised" and become "more administratively intensive" (Caroline Blyton 2013, pers. comm., 19 July).

Thirdly, local authorities often have to manage residents' complaints and concerns about specific aspects of the festival or negative outcomes, such as noise and traffic congestion. In order to assist the resolution of any issues involving community and festival organisation, local authorities are called upon to monitor the festival activities during the event or to facilitate community meetings, where feedback about the event is gathered and discussed.

> "Every year, no matter how hard we try, council gets some complaints from the same people. It's difficult for us because they don't complain to us, they just complain to council. So we don't know for sure who these people are or even exactly what their complaints are. But last year we had a council employee who was there those nights to see, you know, for himself what the noise was like". (Stuart Leslie 2013, pers. comm., 27 March)

Finally, local councils were found to provide resources such as grants, sponsorship or in-kind support, as they increasingly acknowledge the positive economic outcomes that the event generates for the area. This was effectively noted by one interviewee, who commented:

> "Our other principal sponsor is the local Council, that can see the benefits of the activities that the festival generates, not only on that weekend, but also in terms of marketing, that marketing is about $100,000 put there that

has the word 'Queenscliff' on it. So they see a lot of value in the marketing activity that we do". (Michael Carrucan 2013, pers. comm., 19 April)

5.3.1.2. Emergency Service Providers

Emergency service providers are often engaged with to guarantee the safety of festival operations. Emergency services include the police, the fire and rescue service, the emergency medical service and a range of other minor providers, e.g. coastguards and lifesavers. A small number of festivals (2) pointed out that police were engaged during the festival on an *ad hoc* basis to provide support in dealing with critical situations, such as fights or episodes involving highly intoxicated individuals. Only one respondent indicated that the organisation engages the police in a 'harm minimisation' program in order to tackle issues arising from the excessive consumption of alcohol during the festival. This program is collaborative in nature and has delivered considerable improvements during the three years it has been implemented, as noted below:

> "In the pub they've had a lot of dramas with, you know, young people drinking and just lack of engagement there so we do go through a pretty big process like I'll sit there with the police and we'll come up with ideas and over the last three years we've gone from it being quite a problem to there not being a problem at all". (Participant 6 2013, pers. comm., 15 October)

Two festival organisations were found to engage fire fighters and rescue services in order to ensure their event sites is safe from bushfires and other natural calamities, e.g. landslides and floods. A small number of other festival organisations (10%) sought to involve local medical services such as registered nurses and the community emergency medical services (CERT) to provide first aid. The advantages of engaging local medical staff have been highlighted in the following quote:

> "I'm talking to the local CERT, which is a community emergency response team, so it's the first people to come before the ambulance. It's a community ambulance. What it is, if you've got a country town that is too far, it takes a while for an ambulance to get to the town, groups of volunteers who got training in first aid at emergency response, you call 000 and the CERT is notified at the same time of the ambulance, but the CERT gets there faster because they live here. They can also provide first

> aid. So I'm talking to them to provide first aid". (Pam Lyons 2013, pers. comm., 19 February)

Other minor community emergency services, such as local coastguards, are also engaged in the folk festival, although their involvement is not related to providing rescue services. In fact, they volunteer as a community group during the event, providing assistance with a range of activities such as traffic control or managing the patrons' access to the site:

> "The local coastguards – there's a volunteer-based coastguard here – they actually volunteer for the festival, they actually man all our gates, all the traffic control to the festival". (Participant 3 2013, pers. comm., 19 April)

5.3.1.3. Government Agencies (Information Centres)

Folk festivals organisers were found to direct engagement efforts towards to two kinds of government agencies: public information centres and social welfare groups. Tourist information centres, as identified by two respondents, are operated by local councils and provide financial or in-kind sponsorship, or assistance with the event's operations (e.g. festival box office). A number of other festivals confirmed their partnership with tourism bodies, however these were found to be populated by local businesses and therefore grouped under the next section, dedicated to the private sector.

One festival organisation was found to involve social welfare groups, e.g. youth support networks, and local health organisations as part of the event's 'harm minimisation' program:

> "They have a tent there which is just a chill out space basically where any kids outside the area who are in trouble can just go and have a chat and talk and it's just another… it's another referral system without sort of having the police involve straight up where they can be looked after". (Participant 6 2013, pers. comm., 15 October)

This finding is consistent with Jefferey's (2009) segmentation of community stakeholders, as he includes both welfare organisations and health services amongst other examples of community stakeholders.

5.3.2. Educational Institutions

In their appreciation of community from a stakeholder perspective, a number of authors have acknowledged educational institutions as an important stakeholder group (Frisby

& Getz 1989, Lasker & Weiss 2003, Jefferey 2009). A number of these institutions were found to be targeted by folk festivals' engagement efforts. These included:

- local primary and secondary schools;
- local pre-schools; and
- training centres.

Festival organisations were found to involve local primary and secondary schools in the conduct of workshops and festival activities targeted to their students. As noted previously, these workshops are facilitated by musicians and performers who are part of the festival program and are aimed at building up skills, as illustrated by the quote below:

> "We run some workshops in the schools too from time to time, some of the performers… We ask the performers whether they will conduct workshops, like we had a string orchestra come down from Picton this year and they ran a 3-hour workshop in the high school and 3 kids from the primary school, and I think 4 kids from the high school who are learning the violin participated in this workshop". (John Rollo Kiek 2013, pers. comm., 7 May)

Other activities organized in collaboration with the schools in order to engage their students include arts projects, bush dances and the placement of specific concert programs on their premises.

> "We've done lots of murals with lots of the primary school kids, we've had bush dances and quite often we put concerts on in the schools… in the local schools". (Participant 1 2013, pers. comm., 4 October)

A small number of festival organisations (3) indicated that primary, secondary and pre-schools are encouraged to participate in the event management by coordinating festival markets. This invitation to actively participate is welcomed by the institutions as an opportunity to fundraise as well as being often rewarded with a donation towards school trips, activities and equipment in general.

> "There are festival markets that run in conjunction with the festival. And one of the local pre schools is managing those and, again, they use that – the money they raise from working at market stalls as a fundraiser for their organisation". (Participant 5 2013, pers. comm., 30 April)

> "We have schools where we pay some of the schools... we make a donation to one of the schools and they then run children's activities because that money then goes directly back to the school but they then also use that as an opportunity to raise money in other areas". (Chris Smith 2013, pers. comm., 10 September)

In one instance, training centres were engaged in order to provide their students opportunities to gain practical experience in the events sector, as explained by Una McAlinden (2013, pers. comm., 12 March).

> "We also work with training centres. I'm an events teacher myself so I've worked with groups of events students and built a two-year program where those students are managing the running of the event; so they're managing areas of the site, they're managing areas of the staging. That's a program where we had first year students working with second years and now I've got graduates working with me – so it's actually a three–year program that we've been working with events students to try build their skills and give them the confidence to work in the events industry".

5.3.3. Private Sector Firms & Associations

5.3.3.1. Local Businesses and Traders Associations

As discussed previously, folk festivals' engagement of local businesses is transactional in nature. Thus the events' engagement efforts towards local traders in the area include the use of local suppliers to source a range of equipment (e.g. stationery, poster printing, PA systems and music gear), the use of their venues (e.g. pubs, cafes and restaurants), and sponsorship programs. In fact, as Getz et al (2007) confirm, festival organisations often target their sponsorship programs to local suppliers, who provide their services for a mix of discounted (or free of charge) and full rates.

As noted above, two of the festival organisations interviewed have a strategic partnership with the local businesses through membership to the local traders' associations. In this way, the business associations can leverage the event to further promote their own activities and the area. This is also the case with individual businesses, which can use the event to attract more customers and raise awareness of their services.

> "Our biggest local business here is the ferry, which goes across to Sorrento – and they're one of our principal partners and supporters (…)

> It's basically a joint partnership where we market the festival in terms of trying to drive traffic across the ferry and also awareness of the ferry throughout the year". (Participant 3 2013, pers. comm., 19 April)

However, folk festivals that take place in rural and remote areas, are more constrained as regards the development of such relationships, as they offer fewer opportunities to purchase products and services. Temporary increases in population associated with these events still generate benefits from visitor expenditure.

> "The thing is the local businesses already currently benefit quite strongly from our event. The next closest major town is Mandurah and if we can buy whatever we need to buy in Pinjarra well then we do… plus all of our patrons do as well. They buy their groceries on the way in, and petrol and that sort of thing. So there's the community benefiting". (Participant 2 2013, pers. comm., 11 June)

5.3.3.2. Tourism Bodies

Engagement of a number of private tourism bodies was also found to be relevant for some of the folk festivals interviewed. Private tourism bodies are populated by local businesses and often are members of local business associations. Their purpose is to increase tourism visitation to the locality by leveraging the festivals taking place in the area. The major input these bodies provide is events promotion through their channels, as highlighted by three festival organisers. In particular, in one of these cases, the event organisation works in partnership with the tourism bodies in order to create a joint, broader marketing campaign for the area that aims at attracting tourists not only when the event takes place, but also during the quieter months of the year.

> "I work with local tourism bodies to try to get them involved in the festival and come up with campaigns, sort of thing "if you like it in winter come back in autumn" or "…come back in summer". We try and work with all…with the region to promote it as sort of tourist attraction really, and promote that whole of the Bellarine peninsula". (Una McAlinden 2013, pers. comm., 12 March)

In another instance, the folk festival organisers attend the tourism association's meetings in order to identify expectations in relation to the event.

> "We work with the Kangaroo Valley tourism association, go along to their meetings and we try to work with them to see what their members want from the festival". (Stuart Leslie 2013, pers. comm., 27 March)

5.3.3.3. Local Media

Forty five per cent of the festivals interviewed were found to engage with a range of local media in order to reach their communities. On one hand, local media can play an important role in the promotion of, and distribution of information associated with the festival; on the other hand, folk festivals provide local newspapers, magazines and radios with material for their editorials. The types of media employed were mainly the printed media and local radios. The printed media, i.e. local newspapers, were found to be used by 4 festival organisations seeking to distribute information to the wider public/ community or to call for volunteers, while the local radio is rather employed to promote artists associated with the event. The importance of establishing strong linkages with the media has been acknowledged by the literature (Getz et al 2007). In particular, Robertson & Rogers (2009) suggest that local and national media have a role in influencing community's perceptions of socio-cultural impacts, particularly in rural locations.

5.3.4. Charities and Not-for-profit Organisations

5.3.4.1. Community Service Organisations and Charities

A range of community service groups was found to be involved in folk festivals. The nature of this involvement is varied, as noted previously, and falls under the transitional type of engagement. The service clubs, charities and community associations that were found to be actively involved in folk festivals are listed below.

- Lions' Club;
- Rotary Club;
- Probus Club;
- Men's Shed;
- Hearts Foundation;
- Drug and Alcohol Taskforce;
- Parents & Citizens Associations;
- Boys Scouts Associations; and
- Environmental and Land Care groups.

These clubs derive a financial benefit by selling food, beverage and, on occasions, craft products.

5.3.4.2. Arts & Performance Groups

Because of their creative nature, folk festivals often include artistic elements as part of their programs. The sampled folk festivals were therefore found to engage arts and theatre performance groups as well as music organisations that promote music learning. In three instances, visual artists are usually engaged to work with members of the community or festival patrons to create celebratory and decorative elements to be exposed during the event. Similarly, two festival organisations employed local artists to facilitate the construction and decoration of floats to be displayed during the festival parade or opening ceremony.

In line with folk festivals' ethos of promoting folk music and musical education, local musicians and local music organisations were found to be employed by four folk festival organisations to facilitate workshops and masterclasses, that formed part of the event program. Additionally, the engagement of a music organisation is employed in one instance to assist the festival team with insurance and compliance issues, as well as to provide sound equipment and stage management. Similarly, another festival is associated with the local Arts Council in order to have discounts on the public liability insurance. The folk festivals interviewed were found to rarely engage local drama groups and theatre organisations. Only in one case the festival organisers highlighted that they were able to offer the local theatre company space within the festival program to perform their show.

5.3.4.3. Religious Groups

Folk festivals' stakeholders were found to include, in the majority of cases, religious groups. The Anglican, Catholic and Baptist churches were all found to grant access and use of their churches and halls for festival activities. Financial benefits are the main outcomes for religious groups stemming from their involvement. In fact, festival organisations grant them donations for the use of their spaces as festival venues or for their volunteer work in specific areas of the festival.

5.3.4.4. Sports Organisations

Local sports clubs were found to be actively involved in half of the folk festivals interviewed, mainly in a volunteer capacity. The football, netball, tennis, cricket and

sailing clubs appear to be the most common sports organisations engaged by folk festival organisers and the range of activities they were found to be involved in was:

- Running of stalls;
- Help in the festival kitchen by cooking meals for performers or the festival patrons;
- Management of the service of alcohol; and
- Management site entry and exit gates.

Sports clubs were also found to allow festival organisers to use their grounds as offices or their venues and facilities to host performances.

5.3.5. Residents Groups

Although the festival engages with the range of community groups and bodies described above, it is important to remember that groups and organisations are composed of residents of the communities where festivals take place. Two folk festival organisations interviewed were found to engage residents/ individuals not associated with particular community groups, but willing to volunteer, as illustrated by the following quotes:

> "There's some people in the community who aren't part of those groups so they'll just come along and help because they want to. So you sort of get people driven to help for the sake of getting profit back to their group, or you get people who come along and help just because they want to, and just for… I guess the traditional factor of the festival that we're celebrating 40 years in January and it's just what people do: 'Every January I go and help at the folk festival". (Caroline Blyton 2013, pers. comm., 19 July)

> "We involve individuals as well because there's a… sort of a program of people being able to volunteer time to work at the festival, and in return they get a free ticket. That's sort of how we offer a bit of benefit to individuals". (Participant 5 2013, pers. comm., 30 April)

Additionally, as noted in the previous section, folk festivals' engagement efforts extend to a range of groups within the residents of their communities. These groups include:

- indigenous people, engaged through encouraging their direct participation in the event program and through consultations of an informal nature;
- people with disabilities, engaged through the facilitation of access to, and specific services at the festival site;

- children and young people, whose involvement is primarily associated with specifically targeted programs, or dedicated venues; and
- the elderly, involved through the use of activities such as poetry readings and some music genres (jazz).

By involving these subgroups, folk festival organisations acknowledge Australian society's diversity and multiculturalism and seek to provide inclusive, accessible events. Additionally, folk festival organisers were found to leverage the presence of a number of artists and musicians in the areas where they take place in order to enhance their connections with the community.

> "Kangaroo Valley is quite a small town, but there are a couple of very well known folk singers who live in Kangaroo valley and also there's a local Ukulele group and a local choir". (Stuart Leslie 2013, pers. comm., 27 March)

> "The Cobargo Folk Festival started… is put on by folk club which is the Yuin Folk Club. This was founded about nearly 20 years ago in a village where there were quite a lot of musicians". (Graeme Fryer 2013, pers. comm., 8 May)

Notably, those festivals associated with a folk club, such as Cobargo and Illawarra Folk Fest, were found to draw upon the club's activities to extend their reach within the community.

5.4. Drivers for Community Engagement

The community engagement efforts of the festivals interviewed were found to be driven by four factors: operational requirements; localisation of economic benefits; the particular philosophy/ethos of the festival itself; and, to some extent, the need for an audience. While not necessary purposeful outcomes, most events also acknowledged that their existence had an effect on the sense of connectedness and pride local people felt in relation with their locality. These additional outcomes align with the findings of a number of studies that identify a greater sense of community pride (Wood 2006), of community (Reid 2006) and of community wellbeing more generally (Small 2007) as results of community involvement in events.

5.4.1. Operational and program requirements

Festival managers were found to seek support from their local communities, acting to supply services / products / sponsorship and in most cases, volunteer labour. A small number of events explicitly recognised that actions taken to build positive relations with their communities served to further facilitate their access to resources upon which they were dependent, most particularly venues, grants, transportation and in some cases, sponsorship. Additionally, 35% of the organisations interviewed identified volunteer labour and the provision of financial support as critical for the economic sustainability of their events. Indicative of this finding are the quotes below:

> "It couldn't operate without that engagement, in terms of it couldn't operate without its volunteers program. We have 550 volunteers so if that volunteer base wasn't there, you'd have to translate that straight across to paid labour, you know, the festival just wouldn't be economical or run. It just couldn't run". (Participant 3 2013, pers. comm., 19 April)

> "Well the ticket sales by themselves wouldn't cover the cost of the festival, so we depend on getting the community involvement in order for the festival to happen. If it wasn't for the sponsorship and the support of the volunteers we wouldn't be able to afford to do it". (Participant 5 2013, pers. comm., 30 April)

This finding is consistent with Getz et al' s (2007) acknowledgement that festival organisations are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of effective stakeholder management in order to ensure adequate resource procurement and funding. Molloy (2002) agrees, recognising that in regional contexts festivals operate on a very low budget and would not be financially feasible if there was no community support. The dependency of some folk festival on community resources and volunteer labour is effectively summarised by one interviewee, who asserted:

> "There wouldn't be any festival if it weren't for the community support". (Participant 4 2013, pers. comm., 16 May)

One respondent, reflecting on the need for community engagement from a financial perspective, noted that recently public funding is no longer available for festival organisations so managers need to "be quite inventive or pull the festival in to be able to create those revenue streams". (Participant 6 2013, pers. comm., 15 October).

5.4.2. Localising economic benefits

The literature focused on the economic impacts of events suggests that the streams of revenue associated with positive economic outcomes produced by events in hosting communities can be identified in:

- the increased commercial activity associated with event tourism from outside the region;
- the generation of community support in the form of grants and sponsorship towards community development projects; and
- the additional expenditure incurred by event organisers and sponsors associated with staging the event (Dwyer et al 2000, Molloy 2002).

Most festivals interviewed acknowledged their economic value to their community, as the streams of revenue mentioned above indeed proved to generate economic benefits within their local communities. As one participant notes, the event is the major fundraiser for the whole community:

> "It's become the major fundraiser for the whole community (…) Because a lot of the people coming to town are from out of town. It's outside money that's coming in; it's not just the local money recirculated". (Chris Smith 2013, pers. comm., 10 September)

A number of interviewees confirmed this view, acknowledging that their community engagement efforts are purposefully directed at providing an opportunity to community groups and associations to raise funds.

> "This is the only injection of funds we get into our community for community projects (…) The common goal is to… well let's try and make lots of money to fix the tennis court or to give to the school for their kitchen garden or you know, fix the roof on the church, or to paint the hall or whatever". (Caroline Blyton 2013, pers. comm., 19 July)

In relation to the extent of the economic outcomes associated with the event, one interviewee highlighted that it is not only the particular groups engaged with by the festival organisation to benefit economically, but the community at large. He noted that:

> "Local producers and performers so that… the local newsagents, the stationary people, the press… all these people, even the butchers, and bakers and candlestick makers… everyone benefits economically from it". (Graeme Fryer 2013, pers. comm., 8 May)

These actions were also seen as building a greater sense of ownership and loyalty within their respective communities towards their festivals, as recognised by most festival organisers. This views are effectively summarised by Amanda Jackes (2012, pers. comm., 28 November) when explaining the rationale for the use of the Woodford Folk Festival's community engagement initiatives.

> "When we make a connection with something within our community we get a sense of ownership and loyalty towards it, we want to look after it and talk about it to our friends and engage with it in the future and that's what all of these projects are about". (Amanda Jackes 2012, pers. comm., 28 November)

Such bonds in turn, as some festivals noted, served to create a welcoming climate, which enhanced the visitor experience:

> "I think the more we can get the community involved in the event, the better the hospitality is over the weekend and the hospitality as in general hospitality, so the shops are ready for it, everyone's excited, everybody is welcoming". (Una McAlinden 2013, pers. comm., 12 March)

5.4.3. Participation as Foundation of Folk Philosophy

The underlying folk philosophy associated with the ideals of participation, promotion of musical education and skill development was also identified as driving community engagement efforts. One respondent summarised this perspective as follows:

> "Our basic philosophy of the folk club – because the festival is put on by the Illawarra Folk Club – is about engagement and participation (…) We're always encouraging the community become involved in performing at the festival, as well as helping to organise it. So it's sort of in our DNA if you like it". (Peter O'Neill 2013, pers. comm., 22 April)

This view was confirmed by a small number of other festival organisations (3). It was also added that engagement of the local community is at the heart of the events' *raison d'etre* and strategic vision, to the extent that one respondent stated: "the festival exists for the community… it doesn't exist for us… for the committee… we organise it for the town" (John Rollo Kiek 2013, pers. comm., 7 May).

Cultural enhancement was also highlighted by 3 interviewees as a driver for community engagement, as noted overleaf.

> "I suppose it's more a cultural enrichment side of it. There's a whole lot of musical activities and folk culture that they weren't exposed to before and they now have access to and they appreciate, they appreciate all of the hard work that the volunteers put in to make the festival run and so they keep coming back and becoming more engaged in helping to run it". (Peter O'Neill 2013, pers. comm., 22 April)

One interesting aspect of this was the perspective put forward by some interviewees that their events provided a context in which 'real relationships' and meaningful personal interactions could take place. Such opportunities they saw as increasingly rare in a world where so much interaction takes place within the realm of cyber space.

> "There are philosophical reasons which we believe that in this computerised age and what not that we should get back to local community involvement and feeling in the simple and basic things in life… and music is one of them, and performance has always been a tradition in country towns (…) And in the pretty strange world where everything's computerised and synthetic and consumerist, it's a welcome change". (Graeme Fryer 2013, pers. comm., 8 May)

5.4.4. The Need for an Audience

Surprisingly, only a small number of festivals (3) acknowledged being dependent, at least to some extent, upon the local community for patronage. One of these festival organisers, for example, noted that:

> "We've only got I think 800 people who live locally so we need those people to pay the entrance fees". (Graeme Fryer 2013, pers. comm., 8 May)

While not specifically mentioned during the interview, at least one other festival was found to heavily rely on the local community for attendance. In this case, in fact, a substantial quantity of tickets sold (around 41%) was purchased by local residents (National Folk Festival Ltd. 2012). Another interviewee pointed out that the size of the community does not allow for people to both patronise the event as well as be a volunteer (Participant 6 2013, pers. comm., 15 October). However, the festival organisation was found to direct engagement efforts at enhancing patronage through a program that encourages local residents to host friends from out of town for the festival weekend.

5.5. Facilitating and Inhibiting Factors

5.5.1. Facilitating Factors

The factors serving to facilitate festivals' engagement efforts were found to be associated with particular characteristics of the community, with the festival organisation's long-term/ strategic vision on engagement and its management approach. An additional element found to assist engagement was also identified in the thematic aspects of the event or of some of its components.

Table 5.4. Factors Impacting Folk Festival Community Engagement Strategies

FACILITATING FACTORS	• **Community characteristics** ▪ Openness to volunteerism ▪ Community spirit linked to a desire to enhance the cultural life of the location • **Management of festival organisation** ▪ Transparency of aims and operational practices ▪ Management's approach and personal connections/linkages within the community • **Festival vision on engagement** ▪ Long-term/ strategic vision on engagement ▪ Regular communication, and periodic activities, directed at maintaining a community presence for the event outside of the period in which it is conducted • **Thematic aspects of the event**

Table 5.4. Factors Impacting Folk Festival Community Engagement Strategies

INHIBITING FACTORS	• **Community characteristics** ▪ Prevailing perspectives within sections of a community that folk festivals are 'fringe' activities run by 'outsiders' ▪ Ageing and declining populations, particularly in the regional context • **Management of festival organisation** ▪ Difficulties in attracting volunteers into senior positions requiring significant time commitments ▪ Some festival managers/organising committees are 'time poor' leading to a prioritising of event operational and delivery tasks over matters such as community engagement • **Lack of cooperation of local businesses** ▪ Opposition by some local businesses due to the perceived competitive threat posed by the event to the sale of their products/services

5.5.1.1. Community Characteristics

Openness to volunteerism

Communities fostering a volunteer culture were found to respond positively to festival organisations' endeavours towards community engagement. Some of the festival organisers interviewed (5) confirmed to be able to access a vast pool of volunteers and engage with various community organisations because they operate within areas where there is a strong volunteering culture. In these areas, residents take part in their town's activities and volunteer for one of more associations and clubs. This particular characteristic of some festivals' host communities is illustrated in the quotes below:

> "Maldon is filled with people who do things for the community so they are doing it because they do things for the community, rather than having fun. It's something within themselves, within the people in Maldon who do the voluntary work". (Pam Lyons 2013, pers. comm., 19 February)

> "We're lucky as I said several times that the local community is eagerly community-conscious and want to be involved in things. They're very interactive and support for the festival and the organisation". (John Young 2013, pers. comm., 4 January)

Indicative of this approach to volunteerism is also the amount of associations, groups and clubs available within host communities. A small number of festival organisers noted that the number of community groups that can be called upon during a festival can impact community engagement efforts, as the more associations and groups there are that are available on the ground, the more opportunities there are to draw upon.

These findings are consistent with Mattessich et al (2001), who acknowledged a favourable social climate and a history of collaboration in the community are environmental factors that can positively influence engagement efforts. According to their perspective, the presence of a strong volunteering culture within a community facilitates trust in the engagement process and an understanding of mutual expectations.

Community spirit linked to a desire to enhance the cultural life of the location

Some of the festivals interviewed noted that the community is driven to participate in, and engage with their events because of a desire to enhance the cultural life of the location. This appears to be the case for smaller communities, where cultural activities are limited and the folk festival represents the one of very few opportunities for the

whole community to get together. One interviewee, reflecting on the different level of engagement he noted in small towns in comparison with bigger centres, observed:

> "People recognise in the smaller towns that if we are going to always have facilities for ourselves and our children we have to engage, we have to get involved, whereas in the bigger towns you tend to have a smaller nucleus of workers that do a little bit more hidden from the broader community and you don't get the level of community engagement that you do in the smaller towns". (John Young 2013, pers. comm., 4 January)

However, two folk festivals taking place in the city of Canberra also identified this community spirit as a characteristic of their host community. The ACT community, in fact, is seen as an active supporter of the city's cultural life as they engage with a broad range of cultural institutions, groups and associations as well as contributing to community programs and projects. In this community-minded environment, the two festivals serve to providing further opportunities to enhance the city's cultural life. Indicative of this is Sebastian Flynn's (2012, pers. comm., 19 December) comment:

> "I think Canberra has actually a very active cultural community, people involved in community cultural practices in an artistic sense. [The festival] is really offering them an opportunity to further develop *(sic)* their cultural activities".

5.5.1.2. Management of Festival Organisation

Transparency of aims and operational practices

A management team committed to transparency and genuine engagement were identified by two folk festival organisations as factors supporting engagement efforts. In this respect, they noted that clarity of aims and openness about operational processes enabled the community to develop trust in the engagement process, and ultimately were critical in developing long-term relationships with their respective communities. This perspective is articulated effectively in the comment below:

> "I think the good thing about our festival is that we come in and there's no hidden agenda, everybody knows what we are doing, everybody knows what we want, everybody knows what the end goal is and it's quite transparent (…) I think people know that we are genuine about the reasons we're doing it, you know, it's very transparent and genuine and I think that makes a difference". (Una McAlinden 2013, pers. comm., 12 March)

Transparency about finances was also seen as facilitating the development of trust and crucial in the relationship with the community, as explained by one interviewee:

> "Open and honest about finances is really critical as well. So you have to have a treasurer who is capable of producing an accurate and transparent financial report at the end of the event (…) So you've got to have those public, transparent financial records so that no one thinks that anything's being hidden". (Caroline Blyton 2013, pers. comm., 19 July)

In a small number of instances, this transparency is achieved by the publication of the event's financial statements in the publicly available annual reports, as well as on the event's website (e.g. National Folk Festival 2012).

Management's personal connections/ linkages within the community

In a number of instances, festival managers' personal connections within the area were identified as critical in establishing long lasting relationships with the community. Four interviewees observed that community members appreciate personal interaction, and are more inclined to engage when they feel the relationship with the festival organisation is authentic and personal.

> "You have to know everyone and get involved that way in the aspect of being sociable. And people appreciate it if you know who they are and their names and everything". (Participant 4 2013, pers. comm., 16 May)

This finding is congruent with Getz et al's (2007) acknowledgement that personal networking and the engagement of stakeholders through informal relationships serve an important function in the stakeholder management process. Mattessich et al (2001) also appreciate informal personal connections as able to produce a more informed and cohesive collaboration. Bowen et al (2010) agree, noting that trust developed through personal relationships is indicative of the most proactive engagement strategies (i.e. transformational engagement).

Additionally, some interviewees pointed out that the personality of the festival director/ manager or coordinator is also an important factor when seeking engagement with the community. A number of studies within the collaboration literature support this finding. For example, Lasker et al (2001) observe that leaders need to be able to understand and appreciate their collaborators' and partners' perspectives and should be comfortable sharing ideas, resources and power. Similarly, Mattessich et al (2001) appreciate

leaders' interpersonal skills and fairness in their approach as a success factor for collaboration. Interviewees noted that traits like being sociable, open and approachable appear to be key in establishing personal connections and linkages with local residents. Indicative of this is the comment below:

> "As long as you've got that good coordinator who can… who is approachable and nice, hasn't put anyone offside in the previous years then you'll get the people coming (…) It really does need someone to do that and whose approachable by everyone aged 5 to 95. So there's a big span of generations that you've got to be able to engage with to get everyone's support". (Caroline Blyton 2013, pers. comm., 19 July)

Another festival organiser reflected on the importance of managers' interpersonal skills by comparing the current leadership with past management experiences.

> "My predecessor – I have been the Director over the last 7 years – my predecessor, who was a great festival manager, but upset the community. He was quite aggressive in the sense that he got frustrated by them getting in the way and not getting involved in the organisation. I'm a very different sort of person, I'm quiet all the time, I don't lose my temper at all and gradually we put that together again". (John Uren 2013, pers. comm., 30 May)

The comment above implies that poor interpersonal skills can undermine strong organisational skills, as the leader loses the community's respect.

5.5.1.3. Strategic Vision on Engagement

Long-term/ strategic approach to engagement

Long-term commitment to engagement goals was found to facilitate the establishment and development of relationships with the local community. Some organisations indicated that they operate in areas where the host community might have preconceived ideas about folk festival and perceive them as 'fringe' events. Although these perceptions act as a limitation to organisations' attempts to reach out to their communities, the engagement process can be effective and rewarding if the organisation allows time for the relationship to develop. The time consuming nature of community engagement has been acknowledged by a number of authors, including Bladel (2004), Mattesich et al (2004), Dredge and Whitford (2011) and Frisby and Getz (1989). It was also highlighted during the interviews, as the following quote illustrates:

> "Now the local community has lived next to the festival for 18 years and the festival lived next to it for 18 years, so it is different now than what is was 18 years ago. So there's definitely different factors. There's debunking the myth about what a folk festival is to a local conservative community. That just takes a period of time (…) So I think you have to give things time". (Amanda Jackes 2012, pers. comm., 28 November)

Community engagement, as conceived by this interviewee, is necessarily associated with a long-term vision for the development of the event itself, as well as with its legacy. Additionally, another interviewee pointed out that time is needed to create what Lasker and Weiss (2003) call 'synergy', as explained in the quote below:

> "I think when you go into a community engagement activity you have an idea in your mind of what the result of that might be but you've always got to be really open minded and allow enough time for the communities' ideas to take over so things might end up in a completely different space from where you thought that they might go, but that might be a thousand times more awesome. There's a big time requirement… if you're going to do it properly". (Amy Moon 2013, pers. comm., 29 August)

Festival organisations can also be affected by the relationships other stakeholders have with each other and by dynamics associated with the community (Getz et al 2007). Within a strategic approach to engagement, knowledge of the community and the understanding of its internal dynamics were identified by some festival organisations as a critical factor. In fact, awareness of community dynamics was found to assist in directing engagement efforts towards more effective practices. This local knowledge was acquired by festival organisers through attendance at formal meetings, but also in more organic ways, such as informal conversations with community members and groups. One interviewee commented on this aspect from an operational point of view stating:

> "So yeah it's important to have that local knowledge so that you know, you know who works full time and still volunteers the whole weekend. Or who might be a stay at home mum who mightn't mind going and doing a shop leading up to it – doing a grocery shop leading up to it. Yeah, it's all those little things. And also knowing who not to put on shifts together because you don't want to put two people on in the bar who don't get a long". (Caroline Blyton 2013, pers. comm., 19 July)

The festival organisers who highlighted the importance of local knowledge also emphasised the need to remain objective and avoid any alignment with the interests of particular groups, as explained below:

> "We won't jeopardise all the good work that we've done over the last 10 years by aligning ourselves to one or the other. We need to stay true to what our goals are. I think the community know that if we started to align ourselves we would lose…it'd be awful". (Una McAlinden 2013, pers. comm., 12 March)

Another festival manager identified awareness of other folk festivals' approaches seeking to involve their communities as a facilitating factor. Knowledge of different practices employed by other organisations can in fact re-direct engagement efforts by providing input for different activities.

A number of festival organisations also engaged their host community during the scoping phase of their events in order to assess how the event would be received. Community views were sought through formal and informal consultations and led to a strong community support base for the festival's first edition. This approach was found to align with a strategic, long-term vision on engagement, as it guaranteed the sustainability of the event in the following years / editions, as explained below:

> "We started the festival working with community so before we even took the festival to Portarlington we met with all the main community groups in the town and I spoke at their meetings and told them what the festival was all about and I basically asked them if this is something that they wanted in Portarlington and tried to get them on board before we even went there. So I think this was a really good way to do it. So then from then on, we really had the support of the people in the town". (Una McAlinden 2013, pers. comm., 12 March)

A strategic approach also allows festival organisations to take advantage of unforeseen circumstances to engage their communities. In fact, on two occasions, natural disasters (e.g. floods and bushfires) provided *ad hoc* opportunities to engage with the whole community gathered to address the emergency shortly before the festival time.

> "I was, you know, coordinating rosters for the fire catering, and at the same time had my folk festival one there and was saying 'oh while you're

there, pop your name down on this'. So it actually, the fire… as terrible as it was, it actually provided a real hub for the community to come together and, yes it was in a disaster, but it actually brought everyone together before the folk festival which doesn't usually happen". (Caroline Blyton 2013, pers. comm., 19 July)

Regular communication, and periodic activities, directed at maintaining a community presence for the event outside of the period in which it is conducted

Open and frequent communication between organisation and community is identified by Mattessich et al (2001) as a success factor for collaborations. Communication was also identified as a recurrent theme through the interviews. When asked to suggest a recommendation to other festival organisers for a better and more effective engagement of their community, one respondent answered: "The best way to get to people and the best way to involve organisations is to go and speak to them directly (…) Be prepared to talk to people" (Participant 5 2013, pers. comm., 30 April). This view was reinforced by other respondents, as suggested below and in the supporting quotes provided in Appendix B:

> "I think communicating – two ways communication probably is the thing that worked for us when we first went to Portarlington and even now, working, you know, really having open conversations with groups and how we can work together on what we can do, listening to each other". (Una McAlinden 2013, pers. comm., 12 March)

Respondents also emphasised that communications with their local communities need to be maintained all year round, not only in the period of time leading to the event delivery, in order to keep the collaboration alive and maintain awareness of the event. Most festival organisations were also found to organise periodic activities with the same purpose of engaging the community outside of the period in which the event is conducted. These activities include:

- the organisation of community markets involving local producers, artists and musicians;
- the provision of entertainment through bush dances, house concerts, sessions and concerts open to the public;
- the arrangement of opportunities for the community to take care of, and rehabilitate the land where the festival takes place; and

- as noted elsewhere, a variety of workshops during the year aimed at producing works to be exposed or performed at the festival.

Notably, those festivals associated with a folk club were found to draw upon the club's activities to extend their reach within the community, as one interviewee observes:

> "A lot of people have come through various community groups who have helped out, like the Rotary and Lions etc. and they've now joined the folk club and are picking up musical instruments to play and becoming sort of active members and participating in concerts and dances, etc.". (Peter O'Neill 2013, pers. comm., 22 April)

5.5.1.4. Thematic Aspects of the Event

Themes associated with the celebration of aspects related to the history of the local community were also found to assist engagement efforts. The commitment of folk festival organisers to portray, through the festival program, aspects of the local community, e.g. its characteristics, history and geographical location, was seen by a couple of organisers as enhancing participation. This finding is consistent with Frisby and Getz (1989), who suggested that the festival theme should capitalise on the socio-cultural history of the host community to enhance marketing efforts. Specific thematic aspects of the event-allow the development of strong linkages with the community members, who may feel represented by, and celebrated through the event.

> "Our main reason why we have got the Man from Snowy River Festival is because Jack Riley, who is believed to be the man in the poem is buried in Corryong so his gravestone is in Corryong. So basically that's another sort of thing… factor that we have the festival here is to celebrate who they believe is the man in the poem… of the famous poem. So that's another probably big factor in the community getting involved in it". (Participant 4 2013, pers. comm., 16 May)

5.5.2. Inhibiting Factors

5.5.2.1. Community Characteristics

Prevailing perspectives within sections of a community that folk festivals are 'fringe' activities

In some instances, local communities were found to perceive folk festivals according to old stereotypes that depict these type of events as unconventional, highly politicised and 'fringe' activities attracting people characterised as 'hippies'. In particular, this

perception was found to be common within conservative communities, where the folk stereotype was identified by festival organisers as a significant hindrance to the organisation's efforts to reach out to their population. One interviewee effectively summarised the challenge associated with these perspectives stating:

> "We have to (…) break down the stereotypes of folk music as a bunch of 80s hippies singing kumbaya around the fire". (Peter O'Neill 2013, pers. comm., 22 April)

Another interviewee noted that certainly folk festivals attract types of people associated with the hippie subculture, however these events do target a broader audience through a very inclusive programming. This has been recognised as a common trend within the folk movement, as Smith & Brett (1998) agree that nowadays folk festivals are very inclusive events that feature a variety of music genres and activities to appeal to a wider public.

> "Certain people have a very narrow view of what folk music entails (…) Once people are exposed to folk music, they really enjoy it and want to become involved in it, but there is just that initial period of reluctance because they have that stereotype view of what folk music is involved in". (Peter O'Neill 2013, pers. comm., 22 April)

Additionally, it was observed, these perspectives can be deconstructed by effective community engagement practices, as noted elsewhere. For example, in the past the Woodford Folk Festival was identified as an event associated with hippies (Lewis & Dowsey-Magog 1993) and 'folkniks' (Gillespie, cited in Lewis & Dowsey-Magog 1993, p.5). Nowadays, this stereotype has been 'debunked' as the festival organisation has been working for 18 years towards the inclusion of the broader community.

Ageing and declining populations, particularly in the regional context

A small number of festival organisers identified the ageing of their host communities as a hindrance to engagement. Declining populations, especially in regional areas, create challenges for festival organisations by limiting the size of the pool of volunteers available to actively participate and by impacting upon the event's attendance. When volunteers from older generations start withdrawing their contribution to the event, the recruitment of volunteers needs to be directed towards younger generations. However, 3 respondents pointed out that considerable efforts need to be employed to engage with

them, as they are already engaged in sports and other activities. Evidence of this perspective can be found in the comment below:

> "You'd think the only ones to have spare time are the older people, but some of our volunteers are getting on a bit and we're going to have to work pretty seriously to bring in younger people to assist or replace them in time". (John Young 2013, pers. comm., 4 January)

When volunteers from older generations start withdrawing their contribution to the event, the recruitment of volunteers needs to be directed towards younger generations. However, two respondents pointed out considerable efforts need to be employed to engage with them.

> "A lot of the younger people I suppose don't have time to volunteer or engage… like a lot of country towns… the youngsters are engaged in sport and of course sport doesn't just stop for the weekend of the festival, so the footy, the netball etc etc all happens. So we don't get a lot of volunteers from the teenage group to assist with the festival". (John Rollo Kiek 2013, pers. comm., 7 May)

> "Engaging elderly is the least of our worries. It's the younger ones whom we've been trying to get over the line, because, you know, young people have this preconceived idea that Celtic was all old men with beards and kilts. So we really work hard to change that image". (Una McAlinden 2013, pers. comm., 12 March)

Difficulties in attracting volunteers into senior positions requiring significant time commitments

Issues associated with the recruitment of senior volunteers were identified as another limitation to festivals' community engagement efforts. As mentioned by a number of respondents, tasks performed by senior volunteers require serious commitment in terms of time, not only during the delivery of the event, but also throughout the year. In some instances, community members were found to be time-poor, and reluctant to engage with the event over a long period of time, as indicated in the quote below:

> "Probably the only thing that really limits people is time. So a lot of people obviously they've got full time jobs and everything and it's a volunteer job that we find it hard to get people in for meetings". (Participant 4 2013, pers. comm., 16 May)

In other instances, community members were found to withdraw from senior volunteer positions as a result of being involved in many different groups and activities outside the event. To explain this situation, one interviewee commented:

> "There are a number of people that are on the committee who wanted to have a rest. Mostly… not necessarily because they're getting too old, but because they're doing too many things around the community (…) They are engaged in a lot of other things around the town. So there's that limitation in terms of how much you can ask people to do when they're engaged in quite a few volunteer activities in the Lions Club, the Rotary Club, or whatever around the place". (John Rollo Kiek 2013, pers. comm., 7 May)

5.5.2.2. Festival Management Priorities

In general, the lack of resources such as the availability of senior volunteers and time was found to limit the capacity of festival organisations to dedicate adequate attention to the engagement of their local communities. In particular, time constraints were found to affect some festival managers and organising committees, leading to a prioritising of event operational and delivery tasks over matters such as community engagement. One interviewee commented on the challenges associated with limited resources noting:

> "A lot of the senior volunteers are actually involved in managing the site because it's an old site with run down structures and facilities so we spend a lot of time that we could spend in community engagement just physically making the site work for the folk festival". (Peter O'Neill 2013, pers. comm., 22 April)

While adequacy of resources such as time, funding and staff is recognised as a critical success factor for collaborations (Mattessich et al 2001, Lasker et al 2001, Cavaje 2005), community engagement has in fact been identified as a time-consuming exercise (New South Wales Office on Social Policy 1994, Bladel 2004). In the context of events, Dredge and Whitford (2011) acknowledged that festival organisations operate under tight timeframes, and as a result, they often have to deal with operational matters rather than focusing on creating a collaborative space to enhance their interactions with the community.

5.5.2.3. Lack of Cooperation of Local Businesses

While a number of festival organisations interviewed were able to establish successful relationships with local businesses, a few (5) encountered difficulties in their dealings with them. In a number of cases, lack of cooperation of local businesses is associated with the limited accommodation and trade opportunities available in small tourist regional centres. In fact, as the festival weekend is their peak time, local traders often do not have the capacity or resources to contribute to the event. This was explained by one interviewee as follows:

> "I think one inhibiting factor, particularly with the local businesses, *(sic)* they're so busy running their own business so whether they want to engage with an external event. Or, if they have a bad summer or a long winter, they're struggling to survive running their own business and engaging and supporting the festival becomes somewhat difficult". (Participant 3 2013, pers. comm., 19 April)

Additionally, in one case, local businesses' unwillingness to support the event was found to be connected to the employment of external suppliers during the festival delivery. One festival manager in fact pointed out that external traders are perceived by local business as competitors threatening and limiting the economic benefits deriving from the event.

> "A couple of the other businesses have said in the past 'why do you have an ice cream man in your food court? I sell ice creams in my shop'… you know, or 'how come you've got coffee vendors, a couple of coffee vendors in your food court? We sell coffee here'". (John Rollo Kiek 2013, pers. comm., 7 May)

In this case, the festival organisation confirmed that external traders were contracted, amongst other reasons, to reduce the impact of a significant increase of visitors on local businesses. However, as the event was deemed responsible for providing business opportunities to potential competitors, local businesses withdrew support to the event and declined further invitations to participate.

5.6. Summary

This chapter sought to provide input into the main research aim posed in this study: *Identify the spectrum of approaches and practices used by the organisers of folk*

festivals to engage with their local communities with a view to building relationships leading to both event longevity and positive community outcomes.

Specifically, discussion in this chapter has established that a diverse range of transactional, transitional and transformational mechanisms are employed by folk festivals to engage with their host communities. Engagement practices of a transactional nature were found to enhance event accessibility, build community capacity and deliver localised economic benefits. Transitional practices included sourcing community inputs, building strategic partnerships and engaging in dialogue around matters associated with the event. Transformational engagement practices were identified in community groups being directly involved in the festival management team and/or having responsibility for the provision of some program elements.

In determining the range of stakeholders with which folk festivals engage, five major groupings were identified. These included government organisations (e.g. local councils, government agencies, and emergency service providers), private sector firms (e.g. suppliers, local retailers), charities/ not-for-profit organisations (e.g. arts organisations, community service groups, religious associations, sports clubs, etc.) and residents. It was also found that the engagement process benefited from: the presence of a volunteering culture within the community; transparency in the management approach and informal relationships with members of the community; long-term/ strategic vision on engagement; and thematic aspects associated with the event and its community.

While these factors were found to facilitate the events' engagement efforts, other factors were found to act as constrains. These were: prevailing perspectives within the community that folk festivals are 'fringe' events; ageing populations and difficulties in attracting volunteers into senior positions requiring significant time commitments; lack of cooperation of local businesses; and festival organisations' lack of adequate resources, e.g. time, funding and staff to employ in the engagement process.

Chapter 6: Discussion

6.1. Introduction

The intent of this study is to identify the spectrum of practices used by the organisers of Australian folk festivals in order to engage with their local communities so as to build relationships leading to both event longevity and positive community outcomes. In particular, it addressed the research question through four key objectives:

1. to identify, classify and describe the nature of community engagement practices currently in use by folk festival organisations;
2. to determine the range of stakeholders that folk festival organisations engage with through the practices identified in objective 1;
3. to determine the outcomes sought through the practices identified in objective 1; and
4. to identify those factors that serve to facilitate or inhibit the community engagement efforts of folk festival organisers.

This chapter begins by summarising the findings presented in Chapter 5 in relation to the research objectives and discussing their implications. The chapter also revisits the conceptual framework proposed in Chapter 3 in the light of these findings. It then concludes by outlining future research opportunities that arise from this study.

6.2. Community Engagement Strategies

The study identified a range of community engagement practices employed by folk festival organisations seeking to build relationships with their host communities. In terms of diversity, the bulk of these practices, as evidenced in Table 1, were found to be of a transactional nature. This would seem to suggest that there is an acceptance by these types of events of the value of 'giving back' to their respective host communities. This is presently achieved through a diverse range of mechanisms serving to enhance event accessibility, build community capacity, foster community development and deliver localised economic benefits through local procurement.

A number of transitional practices were also in evidence, as festival organisations were found to be proactive in involving their local communities in collaborative ways, through sourcing and encouraging community inputs; engaging in consultation activities; and build strategic partnerships with government, business, charities, and other groups. In particular, the encouragement of community inputs was in evidence across all events interviewed, suggesting that folk festivals organisers are aware of the

benefits, in terms of the long-term sustainability of their events, of moving away from transactional approaches towards practices that sit further down the engagement continuum.

A limited number of mechanisms associated with transformational engagement were identified, with community groups directly involved in the festival management team and/or responsible for the provision of some program elements. Through these means the community in effect takes on a form of joint ownership of the event, which may in turn lead to a stronger sense of connectedness with the festival. This type of engagement was found to be reliant on personal relationships developed over time by festival managers with individual members of the community.

While transformational practices sit at the higher end of the engagement spectrum representing the more sophisticated type of community engagement, the value of transactional and transitional approaches should not be underestimated, as different levels of engagement are appropriate in different circumstances. Additionally, the findings of this study demonstrated that folk festivals are unique in their community engagement efforts, with different types of engagement often used simultaneously.

Although Bowen et al' s (2010) classification provided a useful scheme to understand the nature of the practices identified, the process of community engagement in the context of Australian folk festivals, especially in regional settings, was found to be a complex one. For example, folk festivals present a range of different organisational structures, which causes difficulties in the placement of some strategies within the three categories. Some folk festivals, in fact, were originated by the community's desire to enliven the cultural life of their area, and community members were involved in the festival from the very beginning. This resulted in the event being considered an integral part of community life, while in other cases, festival organisations were introduced to the community as separate entities, and have to employ more explicit and formalised strategies to build relationships with their local communities.

Adding to the complexity of the engagement process, the extent to which these practices are used strategically was also difficult to identify, as community engagement is seldom formalised in the context of folk festivals. However, the study found that community engagement is often the events' very *raison d'être*, resulting in engagement practices being developed organically, rather than following predetermined plans. Notably, the practices identified were also found to be evolutionary in nature. Most of the folk

festivals interviewed have operated for more than 10 years and during their history, community engagement efforts have changed depending on a number of factors, including external circumstances (e.g. availability of public funding and community readiness) and internal aspects (e.g. management approach of festival director). There was also evidence that festivals' long history allowed event organisations to acquire a series of 'lessons learnt' and to adapt their engagement practices accordingly. In the light of these complexities, it must be acknowledged that Bowen et al' s (2010) classification scheme does not reflect the richness of the community engagement process within the context of folk festivals in Australia. However, as noted before, it succeeded at providing an understanding of the continuum of engagement and the practices associated with it.

6.3. Community Stakeholders

The study found that there was a diverse range of stakeholders involved in the community engagement practices of folk festivals. Community stakeholders were found to include government (e.g. local councils, government agencies, and emergency service providers), educational institutions (e.g. primary and secondary schools, pre-schools, training centres), private sector firms (e.g. suppliers, local retailers), charities and a range of other not-for-profit organisations (e.g. sporting organisations, arts and performance groups, community service groups), and residents groups (e.g. indigenous groups, people with disabilities, children and young people, the elderly, local artists and general residents). Also, a broad range of folk festivals' engagement practices were found to engage groups of individual citizens not affiliated with any community associations or particular resident groups.

It was noted that in a number of festivals overlaps between stakeholder groups were in evidence, with individuals being involved in several groups, especially in those areas where a strong volunteering culture was present. While creating difficulties in the compartmentalisation of individual stakeholder groups, this finding suggests that some Australian communities demonstrate a community ethos linked to the desire to enhance community life, whose extent is recognisable in the readiness to respond to festivals' engagement efforts.

This study sought to bring a more "granular understanding" (Dunham et al 2006, p.36) of the many community stakeholders Australian folk festivals seek to engage with. The

variety of groups identified reflects the diversity of Australian society, with communities being composed of informal groups of individuals sharing the same characteristics (e.g. age, ethnicity, physical and psychological abilities, etc.) as well as by more formal/ official associations and groupings (e.g. government departments, businesses, not-for-profit organisations, etc.). This suggests that a broad range of community stakeholders can be identified by folk festival organisers when seeking to engage with their communities. Additionally, each folk festival was found to be unique in terms of its stakeholder profile, with a different combination of formal and informal groups involved at each event. In their stakeholder engagement efforts, festival organisers will therefore have to deal with different challenges for each group, and their communication strategies need tailoring according to the groups targeted.

Finally, while acknowledging the uniqueness of each folk festival's stakeholder profile, a common feature identified is the dynamic nature of stakeholder relationships with the festival organisation. Confirming Getz et al' s (2007) view on festival stakeholders, the community stakeholder groupings identified in this study were found to play multiple roles, sometimes simultaneously, acting to provide festival supplies, facilitate festival activities, sponsor the event, regulate compliance issues, and providing patronage/ audience. For example, local government groups were found to act as regulators, but also as sponsors and partners and local businesses were found not only to provide supplies, but also sponsorship and venues for festival activities.

6.4. Drivers for Community Engagement

Folk festivals were found, to varying degrees, to be driven by four major factors in their efforts to engage with their respective communities: operational and program requirements; the need for an audience; localizing economic benefits; and the particular philosophy/ethos of the individual festival itself. The first two of these factors are key in the short-term survival of most events. In fact, festivals were found to be largely dependent on the input provided by local communities, especially in terms of the provision of supplies and volunteer labour. This implies that festival organisations need to become skilful in identifying, and effectively managing relationships with those stakeholders that can provide, or facilitate access to specific support and resources.

Even if not explicitly articulated by most event organisers, festivals were also found to be dependent on their local communities, at least to some extent, for patronage. This is

demonstrated by a range of engagement practices of transactional nature aimed at enhancing festival access and making the event appealing to different resident groups. The third factor driving engagement efforts, the localisation of economic benefits, concerns longer-term sustainability considerations associated with the building of community goodwill and an associated positive climate that facilitates access to community resources. These factors seem to suggest that the conduct of community engagement practices is driven mainly by self-interest, as the benefits generated through these approaches ultimately affect the events' success and its ability to operate.

However, the fourth factor, which was found to be linked to the altruistic concerns of the folk movement itself, suggests that this particular type of event is also concerned with generating a legacy of a more culturally engaged, culturally literate and connected community. This in turn, as a number of writers have noted, can lead to a greater sense of community pride (Wood 2006), of community (Reid 2006) and of community wellbeing more generally (Small 2007), while also growing the stock of social capital (Moscardo 2007).

6.5. Facilitating and Inhibiting Factors

The study acknowledged the potential for the efficacy of folk festival community engagement practices to be impacted to varying degrees, either positively or negatively, by factors external or internal to the individual event. This indeed proved to be the case with the characteristics of the host community itself being key in this regard, along with matters linked to festival management and its strategic vision. In fact, the presence of a volunteering culture, together with a history of engagement within the community was found to provide a favourable environment for engagement. In comparison, obstacles to community engagement can be found in conservative contexts where stereotypes associated with folk festivals are in evidence. This suggests that the engagement process may be easier in certain communities than in others.

Within the festival organisation, matters linked to festival management approach and strategic vision were found to assist in building trust and long term relationships. In particular, there was evidence of festival organisations' awareness of the beneficial impacts of effective networking, as personal connections and effective and regular communications were regarded as significant elements in securing community support. Also, certain characteristics of the festival director's personality were evidenced as

playing an important role, with traits such as open, sociable, patient and approachable being valued. The vision on engagement displayed by some festival organisations was found to include strategic considerations and long-term timeframes. This approach suggests that these events have a level of sophistication in terms of the engagement process, that can allow them to build trust and 'grow together' with the community, as in the case of the Woodford Folk Festival and that would assist other festival organisations in their engagement efforts.

A serious hindrance to community engagement was found in certain organisations' lack of resources, in terms of time, funding and staff leading to prioritising tasks of operational nature over matters such as community engagement. This suggests that where poor results derived from engagement efforts, festival organisations may need to commit more resources to, as well as be more strategic in, engaging their communities if they are to achieve positive outcomes.

6.6. Conceptual Framework Revised

The conceptual framework used to guide this study sought to describe the community engagement process within Australian folk festivals, by identifying its key elements and outlining the relationships between them (Chapter 3, Figure 3.2). It was based upon a limited understanding of the research question that emerged from the review of the literature concerning stakeholder theory and community engagement. The framework has guided the development of the study and was successful in providing an understanding of the elements involved in the engagement process, which are integrated here in the light of the enquiry's findings (Figure 6.1).

A number of considerations need to be made in relation to the revised framework. The framework depicted in Figure 3.2 and 6.1, envisages that community stakeholders engaged with by festival organisers can be grouped in five main groupings: government, educational institutions, private sector, charities and not-for-profit organisations, and residents groups. The diagram represents these groups as separate entities, not related to each other. While this representation is useful to visualise the stakeholder groups involved, it is limited in terms of reflecting the complexity of the relationships between categories, especially where individuals are involved in more than one group.

The framework that emerged from the review of the literature concerning stakeholder theory and community engagement envisaged the different types of community engagement practices as clearly recognisable individual categories forming the continuum. This present study suggests that the community engagement continuum in the context of Australian folk festivals, especially in regional settings, presents several complexities, as noted in the previous sections. In order to represent this finding, the three types of engagement are depicted with no separation lines, or arrows symbolising the increasing levels of involvement. While acknowledging that practices of a transformational nature lead to higher levels of engagement, this choice was also driven by the intention to reflect the equal value of all practices when used in different contexts and for different purposes.

Additionally, although the representation of the framework in Fig. 6.1 is valuable from a conceptual point of view, there are certain limitations in seeking to simplify the engagement process in diagrammatic form. The identification of community stakeholders, for example, is sometimes driven by folk festival needs (e.g. operational requirements and facilitation of program activities) to identify who in the community can be approached. In other instances, however, the knowledge of what community groups are available to folk festivals to engage with can serve to stir their engagement practices towards certain outcomes such as the localisation of economic benefits.

Also, facilitating and inhibiting factors can be seen in relation to other elements of the framework and used strategically to drive the engagement process. For example, while certain community characteristics can impact on the success of the engagement practices, they should also be included in the process of community stakeholders' identification and analysis. Another example is the thematic aspects of the event, with celebratory aspects related to the history and culture of the local community being seen as facilitating the engagement process as well as driving it.

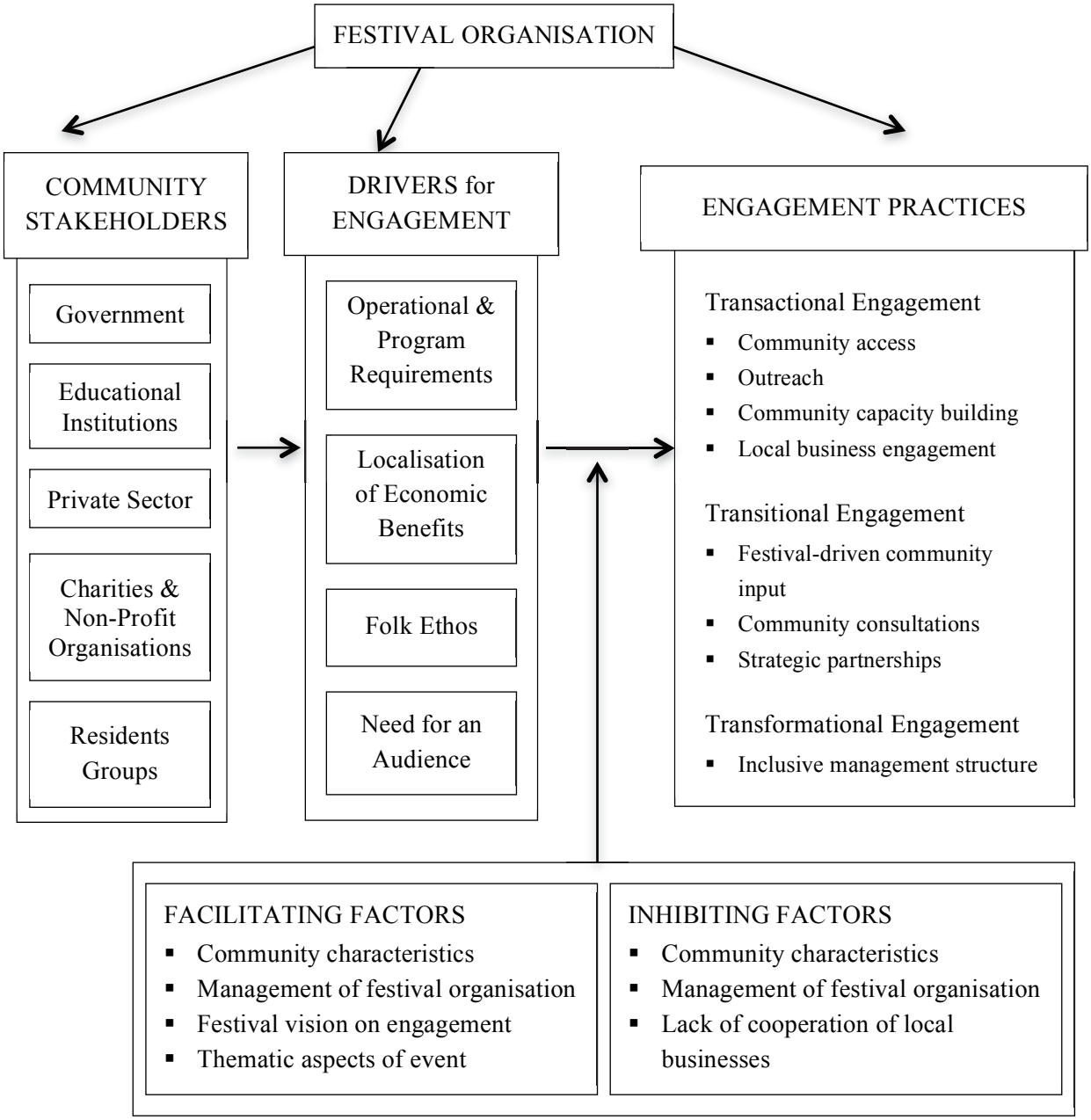

Figure 6.1. Revised conceptual framework

6.7. Contribution to Knowledge and Future Research

As noted in Chapter 1, this study contributed to the broad under-researched area of socio-cultural and community impacts. In specific terms, it sought to develop insights into this area by providing event organisers, both in the folk festival area and in the broader public events field, with a deeper appreciation of the range of potential practices available to them in the area of community engagement, along with those factors that might impact such efforts. This appreciation, in turn, should assist organisations to

articulate their community engagement efforts and make an argument of their practices when seeking government support through public grants. Additionally, this appreciation should also serve to 'sharpen' the strategic focus of such events in the community engagement area.

The present investigation was limited in its scope to folk festivals only. However, it was possible to note similarities between certain aspects of folk festivals and features of other types of community events. In particular, the list of community stakeholder groups highlighted in this study in relation to folk festivals is equivalent to that of most community festivals, as well as of larger types of public events. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that the findings of this study can be applicable to other event settings and that the conceptual framework devised may result useful in analysing the engagement efforts of other types of event organisations.

Ergo, the opportunity exists to explore the insights emerging from this study in other public event settings. This study also provides the ground to further explore and gain a closer understanding of the factors contributing in a positive way to successful engagement. Future research may focus on the extent these factors are leveraged to foster engagement, or, conversely, on ways devised by event organisers to reduce the impact of inhibiting factors. Additionally, no effort was made in this enquiry to explore stakeholder perspectives on the effectiveness of the various approaches to community engagement identified here, along with their desired outcomes. A study that sought to undertake this task would likely result in a more holistic understanding of community engagement in such settings.

6.8.Summary

The present study sought to provide meaningful insights into a little explored area, that of community engagement in the context of public events. Specifically, it set out to:

Identify the spectrum of approaches and practices used by the organisers of folk festivals to engage with their local communities with a view to building relationships leading to both event longevity and positive community outcomes.

In order to engage with this research aim, four subsidiary research objectives were established to guide the enquiry. These objectives sought to identify the spectrum of practices Australian folk festival organisers employ to engage with their local community along with those factors that can impact their efficacy, and the outcomes

that are sought through them; it has also sought to determine the stakeholders with whom folk festivals managers connect as they seek to employ these strategies and; determine the range of community stakeholders they engage with through these practices.

The study highlighted the diversity of community engagement practices that are currently in evidence. These practices were grouped into three main headings that sought to represent the engagement continuum: transactional, transitional and transformational. The study has shown that folk festival organisations seek to engage with their communities mainly through a transactional approach, suggesting that these types of events acknowledge the importance of 'giving back' to their respective host communities. This is presently being achieved through mechanisms such enhancing event accessibility, building community capacity and delivering localised economic benefits.

A number of transitional practices were also in evidence. There is awareness of the long-term benefits arising from involving their local communities in more collaborative ways. In fact, festival organisations were found to collaborate with their local communities in order to: source inputs; engage in dialogue around matters linked to the event; manage event related issues (e.g. crowd/traffic management); and build strategic partnerships with government, business, charities, and other groups. Some transformational practices were also in evidence, with community groups being directly involved in the festival management committee and/or having control of festival components through taking responsibility for the management or provision of program elements.

The study has shown that a diverse range of stakeholders are involved in the community practices of folk festivals. Stakeholders were found to include government groups (e.g. local councils, government agencies, and emergency service providers), educational institutions (e.g. primary and secondary schools, pre-schools, training centres), private sector firms (e.g. local retailers), charities and not-for profit organisations (e.g. community service groups, arts and performance organisations, environmental groups, etc.), and a range of informal resident groups (e.g. people with disabilities, indigenous groups, the elderly, etc.). Additionally, four major factors were found to drive folk festivals' efforts to engage with their respective communities: operational and program requirements, the need for an audience, localising economic benefits; and the particular

philosophy/ethos associated with the folk ideals of participation. The engagement process was found to be impacted to varying degrees, either positively or negatively, by factors external or internal to the individual event. These factors were: certain characteristics of the host community; matters linked to festival management; the organisation's strategic vision; and the level of local business cooperation.

In conclusion, the study determined that the process of community engagement in the context of Australian folk festivals, especially in regional settings, is a complex one, and one that public events should approach with considered and strategic intent. It also concluded that a greater understanding of this process delivers positive outcomes associated with the longevity and sustainability of the event.

Appendix A: Community Engagement Continuum

Community Engagement Continuum
TRANSACTIONAL ENGAGEMENT
Facilitation of community access ▪ Development and implementation of access plans for patrons with physical and hearing disabilities. ▪ Programming targeted at particular groups (children, elderly, young people) ▪ Provision of free/discounted tickets
Outreach ▪ Wide distribution of event information & general publicity ▪ Use of social media to obtain community input/perspectives as regards festival content, and to seek feedback as regards any matters of concern linked to event conduct ▪ Organisation of, and participation in other events throughout the year to maintain awareness of the festival
Community capacity building & development ▪ Provision of training ▪ Conduct of community arts projects/workshops leading to the creation of works for display or to performances within the festival ▪ Donations/ sponsorships/grants to community groups for specific projects/training initiatives ▪ Provision of opportunities for local organisations/charities to fundraise ▪ Relationship building between residents and artists/performers through the medium of community billet programs
Local business engagement ▪ Buy-local policy ▪ Encouragement of attendees through marketing communication efforts to stay and eat at local establishments ▪ Local sponsorships

Community Engagement Continuum

TRANSITIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Festival-driven community input

- Priority given to sourcing of local labour/businesses to: build/install elements of the festival site (e.g. stages, marquees, etc); operate food and craft stalls; undertake cleaning and waste management tasks; and provide crowd management services.

Community consultations and facilitation of interaction

- Formal or informal meetings involving selected stakeholders e.g. residents, community groups, local councils, indigenous groups, and on occasions festival detractors
- Open-door policy for festival office in order to enhance access to, and encourage interaction with festival staff and management

Strategic partnerships

- Formation of partnerships linked to the long term development of the event, with:
  - Local Councils
  - Tourism associations
  - Traders associations & local businesses (e.g. via sponsorship agreements)
  - Special interest groups (e.g. performance groups, charities)
  - Other festivals in nearby areas

TRANSFORMATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Inclusive management structure

- Members of community/ community groups included on festival committees and in the event management team
- Community control of festival components through taking responsibility for the management or provision of program inputs

Appendix B: Supporting quotes

Transactional Engagement – Supporting quotes

Section 5.2.1.1 - Facilitation of community access

- Targeted programming
  - "We have a separate marquee on the oval itself where there's a lot of activities like performances, face painting and thinks like Punch and Judy and clowns… magic shows, things for… they can get on stage and do something themselves like… and craft activities and all sorts of entertainment for the children. Just to give them some exposure to the music but also to make it fun… put the idea in their head that it's fun to be there and its fun to be involved in". (Peter Thornton 2013, pers. comm., 8 August)
  - "…The teenagers through to about 25… and we have a separate marquee for that age group so… it's not excluded from the rest of the festival but it's just to give them their own space and degree of autonomy about what happens in there and so we've given them a venue with a decent space and a decent marquee and a decent PA system and lighting and all of that… but dedicated towards young performers". (Peter Thornton 2013, pers. comm., 8 August)
  - "There's a group called The Crossing down here which is a camp that looks after youths that are in trouble (…). Kids learn to perform and then we provide a tent, a venue at the festival where these kids can put there skills in event management. And we involved them in the main festival and the best of them perform in the main stage as a feature, and encourage them". (Graeme Fryer 2013, pers. comm., 8 May)
  - "For young people we have a dedicated venue called The Majestic, which is programmed by young people and it's like a circus big top that really provides them with a dedicated program for use of young people". (Sebastian Flynn 2012, pers. comm., 19 December)
  - "We also bring Indigenous people from around Australia and they perform outside of the festival up in the Wallaga Lake Aboriginal settlement. We involve Indigenous people and some of our resident Indigenous people in the performances and we have our Welcome to Country, and Aboriginal culture is very strong". (Graeme Fryer 2013, pers. comm., 8 May)

Transactional Engagement – Supporting quotes

Section 5.2.1.2 - Outreach

- Wide distribution of event information & general publicity
  - "Oh, we might do the radio station. I think the local radio station… if you're a community group, you know free event type thing… I think they plug us on the radio a bit leading up to it too". (Caroline Blyton 2013, pers. comm., 19 July)
  - "We employ the local newspaper, we employ the local radio". (Participant 5 2013, pers. comm., 30 April)
  - "We have ads on radio and things like that". (Stuart Leslie 2013, pers. comm., 27 March)
  - "We report on what's happening in the local paper or on the radio in terms of who we're getting for the festival next year, whether we've made a profit or loss (…) We do advertise in that to do (sic) all those sorts of things I was just talking about… advertise for billets and sponsors and volunteers etc etc. So we use…utilise that, plus the local radio station.". (John Rollo Kiek 2013, pers. comm., 7 May)
- Use of social media
  - "Most of the people who come to the folk festival are now in there 50s and 60s. We realised that we had to start recruiting a heap of young people because otherwise we were simply going to run out of patrons, because they were all going to get elderly and not be able to come. So that's where I suppose, me being in my 30s – much more aware of the power of the social media side of things. So we had a presence of Facebook for the last festival, just as an event… and that went really well. That was sort of a bit of a tester… you know how many people are on Facebook. And so after the festival in January, I've now created a page on Facebook and it's been really exciting to see that all those retirees are all on Facebook, which was really surprising. So I've been able to connect with people who've got photos from the festivals in the 80's and yeah… so that's sort of linking in a younger generation on Facebook with the older generation on Facebook. That's been really valuable". (Caroline Blyton 2013, pers. comm., 19 July)
- Organisation of, and participation in other events throughout the year
  - "We also have a number of what we call festival fringe events across the year, and they're at local level across the Illawarra, which includes Kiama, Shoalhaven and Wollongong Council areas and they're designed to promote the festival but also engage people in local performances and musical activities". (Peter O'Neill 2013, pers. comm., 22 April)
  - "We keep consciousness of the festival going throughout the year by having monthly markets. So we actually run the markets on the second Saturday of every month. With that we engage with the local people a lot and we always have live music at the markets and it gives the local people a chance to sell their produce". (Stuart Leslie 2013, pers. comm., 27 March)
  - "We have…the other major event is a mid-year kind of event, during the middle of winter, it is just a kind of, you know, a concert in the middle of winter that we use to kind of raise awareness of the festival". (Participant 3 2013, pers. comm., 19 April)

Transactional Engagement – Supporting quotes

Section 5.2.1.2 - Outreach

- "[We] assist other organisations and keep our profile up, for example at the end of August there's a big ski race here. One of the international loppet races happens up at Falls Creek and we quite often get involved with that by utilising some of our volunteers to staff their shop, for example. Or this year we're going to run a barbecue on their presentation night and so on… and we'll get some kudos from that". (John Rollo Kiek 2013, pers. comm., 7 May)
- "The Willunga Almond Blossom Festival is an event that's held every year at the end of July that is a fundraiser for the community and the recreation park facility itself. So we have a stall there for the weekend. They have two days of activities at the Willunga recreation park, and they have lots of stalls and rides and a parade and other activities. And so through the festival puts a promotional stall there both the Saturday and the Sunday and we hand out flyers and talk to people and it's a good opportunity for us to put the idea in peoples heads – oh the festivals, the Fleurieu Festivals coming up later in the year… what's happening… so we can talk to them. We also are able to talk to some of the stallholders and see if they're interested in putting a stall in our festival". (Peter Thornton 2013, pers. comm., 8 August)

Transactional Engagement – Supporting quotes

Section 5.2.1.3 - Community capacity building & development

- Provision of training
  - "The [festival] site is treated as a construction site so it's closed to everybody other than the workers who are fully inducted and under work site OH&S and have an identity card". (John Young 2013, pers. comm., 4 January)
  - "Those people have the training to support other events in the region so we're basically supporting other events by giving, putting the money towards their fees – or paying their fees to do that course". (Una McAlinden 2013, pers. comm., 12 March)
  - "We do also try and engage them on a… particularly young people… on a production level (…). We've got professional crews in every aspect of it and part of their contract is that we get them to, you know, run particularly some young local crews so they've got to have a bit of… when they're tendering for the process or when we're assessing who to use… we sort of include that educational side of it in what they need to do". (Participant 6 2013, pers. comm., 15 October)
- Community arts projects/workshops, informal skill sharing and performance opportunities
  - "Because the whole thing about participation in a folk festival, we encourage everyone to join in activities irrespective of their skill level through sessions, poetry recitals, busking spots, and blackboard concerts where everyone can play". (Peter O'Neill 2013, pers. comm., 22 April)

Transactional Engagement – Supporting quotes

Section 5.2.1.3 - Community capacity building & development

- "This year for example we will have a community arts project where we will be working with young children and a professional puppet company to build 6m high puppets that have come from the imaginings on 4 -5 years olds. This will involve a number of workshops over 3 - 4 months and culminate in a parade in the local community and then again at the opening ceremony of the festival. This will be ongoing for the next three years". (Amanda Jackes 2012, pers. comm., 28 November)
- "We also work with a local organisation called Lead, L.E.A.D., and they are an adult disability services group so we… we've done quite a few different bits and pieces with them. In the lead up to the festival they helped us run a series of arts and crafternoons. We had a bunch of, kind of, art products that we wanted to make to decorate the site and we had a bunch of their clients come along (…) to make a whole bunch of artworks, I guess, out of recycled materials". (Amy Moon 2013, pers. comm., 29 August)
- "We've engaged a visual artist to work with underprivileged… possibly people with disabilities to the artists themselves [sic] will design and create icon (…) so he'll be designing it and then it'll be something that can be assembled. The people that he'll be working with will be painting and decorating, painting the icon and helping to put it together". (Peter Thornton 2013, pers. comm., 8 August)
- "There's a street parade competition for the best floats so a lot of those sort of groups get involved and do up like a truck and everything like that. Like the Corryong College and everything gets involved (…)a lot of the community gets involved and that… not just kids. Like there was a men's shed group and the Fergusson tractor group, they get involved. So it's not really particularly to one age group (Participant 4 2013, pers. comm., 16 May)
- "We get a décor team to come down and work with the school kids to actually help them build stuff". (Participant 6 2013, pers. comm., 15 October)
- "Last year we had a grant for a project that we called 'We are' and we engaged all the local primary schools, the local community, local artists yeah… and we did a project that consisted of five songs, five sculptures and the topics, you know, were very pertinent to the plateau like the land, water, agriculture". (Participant 1 2013, pers. comm., 4 October)

- Relationship building between residents and artists/performers through the medium of community billet programs
  - "There is not enough accommodation in town to house all of the performers, if we had to pay for accommodation, because it's all booked up by people wanting to come to the festival. So the only way we can accommodate performers is if we billet them with the community". (Pam Lyons 2013, pers. comm., 19 February)
  - "I've had people volunteering this year for instance that if the accommodation in town fills up, they're happy to billet people". (Participant 5 2013, pers. comm., 30 April).
  - "Every year we find more people offering to do that, to do the billeting. Because you know, they get to meet some performers and they get free tickets so that works well for people. And it works well for the performers too – they really enjoy". (Stuart Leslie 2013, pers. comm., 27 March)

Transactional Engagement – Supporting quotes

Section 5.2.1.4 - Local business engagement

- Buy Local Policy
  - "Our beer is supplied by a local brewery"; "We also run our own kitchen and that's all done with locally sourced food. All the meat that we cook is locally produced". (Amy Moon 2013, pers. comm., 29 August)
  - "Wherever possible we use the resources of local people, local businesses". (Peter Thornton 2013, pers. comm., 8 August)
- Encouragement of attendees to stay and eat at local establishments and use of local venues
  - "We have a poetry contest in one of the cafes in town. Last year we had a concert at one of the other cafes in the afternoon. So we are gradually increasing that. We have had outdoor concerts in the middle of town outside one of the cafes". (Stuart Leslie 2013, pers. comm., 27 March)
  - "On the weekend of the festival we usually have activities down in the town so the bulk of the festival is at the show ground but we do put performers down in quite a few of the little cafes and eateries down in Dorrigo". (Participant 1 2013, pers. comm., 4 October)
- Local Sponsorships
  - "We contact a whole lot of local businesses (…) – the local supermarket, the local community bank, the Bendigo bank… all the local businesses around, from the butchers to hardware shops – to engage them in a sponsorship program, and they get some recompense from us for that in terms of a free ticket and invitation to special events etc". (John Rollo Kiek 2013, pers. comm., 7 May)
  - "The same accommodation officer contacts all the local B&B places, motels, caravan parks, holiday homes and so on to ask for their support and they engage with the festival by providing usually one or two rooms or places free for our performers… and then for some of the other performers we get a discounted rates at some of their other places". (John Rollo Kiek 2013, pers. comm., 7 May)
  - "The traders for example sponsor our event directly". (Peter Thornton 2013, pers. comm., 8 August)
  - "We have local sponsorship. So we have a gold mine in town and they sponsor a generator for us to run the main site. One of the local shops selling clothes sponsors the t-shirts". (Pam Lyons 2013, pers. comm., 19 February)
  - "Primarily the businesses that have been able to offer us venues or facilities… but also some others who are prepared to donate money to support the festival". (Participant 5 2013, pers. comm., 30 April)

Transitional Engagement – Supporting quotes

Section 5.2.2.1 - Festival-driven community input

- Festival-driven community input
  - "We also use recognised community groups like the Bulli Rotary and Lions Club, the Bulli School P&C, and the Bulli Showground Society to organise events that are integral to the festival such as our stalls, parking, food, camping, etc.". (Peter O'Neill 2013, pers. comm., 22 April)
  - "We also contact the local service clubs; the Lions Club, the Rotary Club, Probus Club and so on, to seek their support in a variety of ways. Everything from providing volunteers, usually middle aged men to shift and move things and lend us equipment like tents and gazebos…things of that kind. So they come and do that". (John Rollo Kiek 2013, pers. comm., 7 May)
  - "The Fire Brigade mans the gate that's on the road to the main venue. We park – we use paddocks of one of the guys who's in the Men's Shed, we use that paddock for parking". (Pam Lyons 2013, pers. comm., 19 February)
  - "Some have stalls, like the school – they organise the Sunday market and they organise a dinner on the Saturday night where they actually earn money. Some of the others, like the Cricket Club, run a bar at one of the venues. The footy club lease out their ground and facilities and other people run different stalls on the Sunday". (Chris Smith 2013, pers. comm., 10 September)
  - "We have a team of 140 odd individuals – men who work for 2 weeks prior to the event erecting all the venues, fitting them out and getting them ready for operations for the festival weekend. Then of course they come back the following week to pull them down. So there's about 6,500 community hours going into that (…) One the weekend itself, we have about 400 volunteers working in crowd management in the venues, cleaning, ticketing, answering issues, servicing the performers". (John Young 2013, pers. comm., 4 January)
  - "They'll do all sorts of things, particularly on the day like as in, you know, getting… like we have the local fisherman's co-op and stuff; they bring down heaps of cray pots and decorations and old boats and bits and pieces that we can use to sort of set up and make the event, you know, bring the actual feel of Apollo Bay into the event". (Participant 6 2013, pers. comm., 15 October)

Transitional Engagement – Supporting quotes

Section 5.2.2.2 - Community consultations

- Community consultations
  - "We conduct meetings before the festival and after the festival, so it's a kind of open engagement. How we go about addressing some of the concerns (…) we program the festival accordingly so the impact is as little as possible. It's not like we've got heavy metal bleary on all weekend. We try to minimise our impact on the community over that weekend as much as we can. It's a major driving factor in a lot of aspects of the festival". (Participant 3 2013, pers. comm., 19 April)
  - "After 12 years a lot of the people who'd been helping to run the festival were getting tired, getting old… they wanted a bit more free time. Because, you know, looking after this takes a number of hours per week from the management committee people. (…) So there was a number of people who wanted to quit… so we thought uh oh... our future planning hadn't accounted for about half the committee wanting to leave. And so we held a town meeting in the middle of last year and about 50 people came along, and suddenly we got a new Secretary, we got a new Accommodation Officer, a new Publicity Officer, a new Food Court Coordinator…". (John Rollo Kiek 2013, pers. comm., 7 May)
  - "We have an annual general meeting which is coming up in August that everyone can get involved in". (Participant 4 2013, pers. comm., 16 May)
  - "When we originally established the festival 14 years ago we called some town meetings… there were about 6 people who initially got together and thought… well, what are we going to do to… what sort of festival would we like to have? (…) And eventually we determined we'd have a music festival which had a range of music and poets and dance so that it would bring things into town that wouldn't otherwise come here… and we then called some town meetings to see whether people would come. And we got 30 or 40 or 50 maybe people coming along to a couple of these meetings and we thought well, here we go… we can do it". (John Rollo Kiek 2013, pers. comm., 7 May)
  - "We do want to get the support of all the local community, so we have had a more planned approach to that and I've held meetings and discussions with the council and councillors and local businesses and tourist operators and artistic groups and there's a plan in place in a more systematic way to win support from the local community". (Peter O'Neill 2013, pers. comm., 22 April)
- Festival office open door policy
  - "Just about probably 10 minutes ago we had someone come in with a new idea for a just an attraction at the festival". (Stacey Carkeek 2013, pers. comm., 16 May)
  - "I've just got an email before while we were talking from one of the guys that's no longer on the committee but is seen something and has come back and said: what about this?". (Chris Smith 2013, pers. comm., 10 September)
  - "It's a very open organisation that is based in Queenscliff. We have an office here that is open every day during the week so it's not hard to engage and communicate with us". (Michael Carrucan, 2013, pers. comm., 19 April)

Transitional Engagement – Supporting quotes

Section 5.2.2.3 - Strategic partnerships

- Strategic partnerships
  - "I work with local traders, I work with local tourism bodies to try to get them involved in the festival and come up with campaigns, sort of thing "if you like it in winter come back in autumn" or "…come back in summer". We try and work with all…with the region to promote it as sort of tourist attraction really, and promote that whole of the Bellarine peninsula". (Una McAlinden 2013, pers. comm., 12 March)
  - "Some of our local businesses are partners, some of our other businesses are venues during the festivals, so we put on music in their venue, and that's a transition from a financial arrangement where they used to pay us to host festival acts over the weekend. Now it's not so much a financial transaction, we just put in entertainment over the weekend in their venues". (Participant 3 2013, pers. comm., 19 April)
  - "The management committee of the showground – they have their own committee and we've just got two people on that committee so those two people are locals and will help running the showground. So I think that's going to be a big help to us. (…) We often have difficulty with the Osborne Park Committee – the committee that runs the show ground (the showground is actually called Osborne) (…) We're hoping that now that we have two of our members have joined the committee, so we're hoping that by doing that, then they would come on side a bit better, and I think that'll work". (Stuart Leslie 2013, pers. comm., 27 March)
  - "Our initial approach was to go to some of their meetings and establish a rapport with the Willunga Recreation Parks Committee and consequently were able to communicate some of the other clubs an organisation through them (…) It creates an opportunity for us to go to their meetings… we'll meet with them… have special meetings with them... Or go to their regular meetings that they have and put something forward to them if we have something particular in mind that we want to discuss or they might have something that they want to discuss with us. Their committee is comprised of representatives from other organisations in Willunga like sporting groups and that type or organisation. So that makes it easier for us to communicate… firstly to know who we're talking to, who to communicate with… who's their representative and gives us an opportunity to communicate with them directly". (Peter Thornton 2013, pers. comm., 8 August)

Transformational Engagement – Supporting quotes

Section 5.2.3.1 - Inclusive management structures

- Community inclusion in festival committees and management
  - "Our main core of people in the committee are all involved or volunteer in something else in the community as well (…) So automatically the folk festival is connected to other organisations in the community (…) It's not a separate thing that I've gone out and said 'right now I have to make connections into the community'. I've already got connections in the community, by having the people on the committee who are the people who do things in the community". (Pam Lyons 2013, pers. comm., 19 February)
  - "Our festival is run by a board of management and anyone can be nominated to get onto that board and get involved in the festival". (Participant 4 2013, pers. comm., 16 May)
  - "Really, the whole of the festival is organised and run by the local community. Every member of the folk club is a volunteer and the folk club is a group that organises the festival; we don't have any paid staff, and it's actually the largest volunteer-run festival in NSW". (Peter O'Neill 2013, pers. comm., 22 April)
- Community control of festival components
  - "We work with a number of community groups to run departments of the festival. For example the Woodford Lions Group – they coordinate the instruments lock-up for all the artists at the festival". (Amanda Jackes 2012, pers. comm., 28 November)
  - "We had something like 270 performers this year… there were some very big groups… a big group from a girls secondary college down in Geelong, a modern sort of pop group playing Motown sort of music (…) So when I say there were 270 performers, a lot of them were in large groups. But that meant a big headache for our accommodation officers, but the local high school got involved. (…) There were about 30 of them really, plus the mums and dads, chaperones and so on. They ranged in age from about 12 to 19 or 18 or 19… something like that. And the local secondary college here actually took over the organisation of accommodation for the whole group and feeding them… so they stayed with parents and students… parents of students at the local secondary college. So that took a whole load off the mind of our accommodation officer I can tell you". (John Rollo Kiek 2013, pers. comm., 7 May)
  - "We have local people organising the festival summer school; there is about 60 workshops put on at cost and they're involved in playing musical instruments, singing, musical composition, dance, etc.". (Peter O'Neill 2013, pers. comm., 22 April)

Community Stakeholders – Supporting quotes

Section 5.3.1 - Government

- Local Councils
  - "We deal with the local swimming pool, which is part of the Alpine Shire's Sports Stadium here in Mt Beauty, because that's where we always have our office…". (John Rollo Kiek 2013, pers. comm., 7 May)
  - "The Bulli Showgrounds is only eight hectares and we have to deal with a number of different groups within that site that own various parts of it, as well as the council and the road and maritime services as the old RTA". (Peter O'Neill 2013, pers. comm., 22 April)
  - "A group of basically key members of the community got together to run a festival and they actually lost quite a bit of money the first year and then the Council underwrote the festival and then they started to run it on a more commercially viable and sustainable operations with underwritten Council support, which seems to have gone away". (Michael Carrucan 2013, pers. comm., 19 April)
  - "For instance, the city mayor of Geelong is a major event supporter of ours and part of their criteria would be that we have a positive effect on the environment". (Una McAlinden 2013, pers. comm., 12 March)
- Emergency Service Providers
  - "There'd been a fight on the Friday night and we let the same people in on the Sunday night and we shouldn't have. So yeah, the solution to that is… I don't know… we've just got to try again and be harsher on them. And we'll have the police fully on board at the next one, which will be better – better support from them. They'll come out and do patrols and everything". (Caroline Blyton 2013, pers. comm., 19 July)
  - "This year for instance we haven't had St Johns Ambulance for two years but we have a number of registered nurses and the registered nurses said well that's fine but we want a defibrillator – you know one of those heart thing - and I thought, there's got to be one in the village, it'd be in the fire station and the fire guy goes: 'Yep, there's one on the wall. Providing that only you and the top nurse use it, I'll give you the number to open the box', which he did. I mean that's a precious piece of gear". (John Uren 2013, pers. comm., 30 May)
  - The Fire Brigade puts up the main stage and fills the portable toilets with water – It's always good to do that. Who else can fill the portable toilets if not the people with the fire trucks??". (Pam Lyons 2013, pers. comm., 19 February)
- Government agencies
  - "We speak to the local tourist information office. They are run by the council so we have a pretty good working relationship with the council. They give us sort of preferential rates and a lot of in-kind support. The tourist office helps with promotion and providing information to people, and with accommodation information". (Participant 5 2013, pers. comm., 30 April)
  - "Probably our principal sponsor is Tourism Victoria and they support us in marketing, in a cooperative marketing agreement, in the aim of trying increase and drive tourism to regional spots in Victoria, regional events". (Participant 3 2013, pers. comm., 19 April)

Community Stakeholders – Supporting quotes

Section 5.3.1 - Government

- "The local information centre, which is operated by the Alpine Shire is… forms part of the festival as well in the sense that it's through that organisation and that particular place… it's a proper information centre like a lot of small towns have, where they actually sell tickets for us". (John Rollo Kiek 2013, pers. comm., 7 May)

Community Stakeholders – Supporting quotes

Section 5.3.3 – Educational Institutions

- Educational institutions
  - "We also contact the local schools… there's two primary schools in this area; Mt Beauty Primary School and Tawonga Primary School and there's a larger secondary college; Mt Beauty Secondary College, and we indicate to them what schools programs we are going to offer them because we do that each year on the Friday of the festival… and sometimes earlier than that depending on the nature of the performances or the people that we're getting here who would engage with school children… and so we run a schools program". (John Rollo Kiek 2013, pers. comm., 7 May)
  - "The high school itself, as a body, supports us in that we use some of their equipment. Sometimes we've hired a hall or we've always used chairs, we have quite often put workshops on in the high school so we have quite a good relationship with the high school". (Participant 1 2013, pers. comm., 4 October)
  - "The other pre school is providing space for specifically the children's festival. And, again, they will use money that they raise from that as a fundraising activity for their pre school". (Participant 5 2013, pers. comm., 30 April)
  - "A lot of the smaller groups, like the Primary School group, run stalls where they sell produce, either fresh produce or food stuff to the patrons of the festival event". (John Young 2013, pers. comm., 4 January)
  - "So some have stalls, like the school – they organise the Sunday market and they organise a dinner on the Saturday night where they actually earn money". (Chris Smith 2013, pers. comm., 10 September)

Community Stakeholders – Supporting quotes

Section 5.3.2 - Private sector firms and associations

- Local businesses and traders associations
  - "Most small towns like ours have a business advance committee, or whatever they call them… progress association or something like that and… if they can see that the festival will bring a bit of business and more people to the town; more recognition, an appreciation of the district, that is a prime thing in getting them involved". (Graeme Fryer 2013, pers. comm., 8 May)
  - "We've actually become a… joined a local businesses… traders association. Business and tourism association they call them now. WBTA: Willunga Business and Tourism Association. Basically it's… business people that operate in the town and promote Willunga as a tourism place". (Peter Thornton 2013, pers. comm., 8 August)
- Tourism bodies
  - "Each of the tourist outlets at Eden and Narooma and Bermagui and Cobargo, Batemans Bay… we have… publicity… they help us with publicity. We take posters and fliers to them". (Graeme Fryer 2013, pers. comm., 8 May)
  - "We involve at a regional level, the Wollongong tourism; we're closely involved with them to promote the festival". (Peter O'Neill 2013, pers. comm., 22 April)
- Local media
  - "We have articles in the local paper. There is a newspaper just for Kangaroo Valley, called the Kangaroo Valley Morning, so all the locals read that and they get it for free. So that's probably the easiest place to keep people informed". (Stuart Leslie 2013, pers. comm., 27 March)
  - "We have an agreement with the local ABC local radio station where they'll play, in the lead up to the festival, they'll play one of our bands either once a week for four weeks, or once every day in the week of the festival". (Amy Moon 2013, pers. comm., 29 August)

Community Stakeholders – Supporting quotes

Section 5.3.4 – Charities and Non-For-Profit organisations

- Religious groups
  - "During the festival itself we try to use as many venues within the town as we can. We use both of the churches, the Catholic church and the Anglican church for concerts and dances". (Stuart Leslie 2013, pers. comm., 27 March)
  - "The Catholic church and the Anglican church are providing us venues and… for concerts… and things like that". (Participant 5 2013, pers. comm., 30 April)
  - "We use the churches and the church halls and the Athenaeum Library Hall as venues and we give the community groups and the church a donation". (Pam Lyons 2013, pers. comm., 19 February)
  - "Then you've got sort of the churches… you know, I know that the Anglicans will always do Saturday morning in the kitchen (...) And the Catholics are a bit the same; they have their spot… I think they do… you know, they might do Saturday afternoon". (Caroline Blyton 2013, pers. comm., 19 July)
- Community service organisations and charities
  - "We also worked with the local branch of the Hearts Foundation to implement a smoke-free event across the whole festival". (Peter O'Neill 2013, pers. comm., 22 April)
  - "I've been working with the local Men's Shed. So they've been busy making a new stage for the last 3 or 4 months". (Participant 1 2013, pers. comm., 4 October)
  - "So I talked to the Men's Shed – I needed someone to drive the shuttle buses, so I talked to the Men's Shed and we gave them a donation for driving the shuttle buses". (Pam Lyons 2013, pers. comm., 19 February)
  - "We also contact the local service clubs; the Lions Club, the Rotary Club, Probus Club and so on, to seek their support in a variety of ways". (John Rollo Kiek 2013, pers. comm., 7 May)
- Arts and performance groups
  - "We have the Canberra Musicians Club who are a local body who support local musicians. They host their own events every Friday night in town, they provide insurance for musicians. Like they have a blanket insurance policy that covers musicians so they are heavily involved in a lot of what we do. They run some of the stages at the festival and we use their audio gear. They promote what we do, so they're very engaged in what we do". (Amy Moon 2013, pers. comm., 29 August)
  - "There's another artistic group in the town itself called Stars Southern Theatre and Arts and they have a venue in the town… not on the site where the festival is, but in the town and in the past we've had cooperations with them to put something sort of entertainment, or some sort of performance or workshop or dance or something like that on in their venue (…) Their brief is to promote performances in the town so the fact that we're… the festival is there and all these performances are there and able to offer them a performance to promote". (Peter Thornton 2013, pers. comm., 8 August)

Community Stakeholders – Supporting quotes

Section 5.3.4 – Charities and Non-For-Profit organisations

- "A lot of people have come through various community groups who have helped out, like the Rotary and Lions etc. and they've now joined the folk club and are picking up musical instruments to play and becoming sort of active members and participating in concerts and dances, etc.". (Peter O'Neill 2013, pers. comm., 22 April)
- "In that first year he [the festival promoter] kind of realised that he'd need to find an insurance body so he went to the local Arts Council of the Dorrigo… our local Arts Council and they were very supportive of him and so we still are very much involved with the Arts Council". (Participant 1 2013, pers. comm., 4 October)

- Sports organisations
  - "We're involved with…Football club, that the local football club we provide entertainment for them throughout the year – they just volunteer labour back to us". (Participant 3 2013, pers. comm., 19 April)
  - "There is a large marquee called the Sheeben Bar where everyone can go and buy a drink if they wish: that's run by the cricket club and the football club". (John Young 2013, pers. comm., 4 January)

Drivers for community engagement – Supporting quotes

Section 5.4.1 – Operational and program requirements

- "Of course the fundamental reason for the community engagement is to build the festival village, I'd call it, and run the festival without question". (John Young 2013, pers. comm., 4 January)
- "A lot of these smaller festivals particularly have to have community support or they wouldn't operate". (Peter Thornton 2013, pers. comm., 8 August)
- "The festival is held right in the middle of the town, in the showground so we really have to get on with the town and its people". (Stuart Leslie 2013, pers. comm., 27 March)
- "The outcome for the festival of that engagement is continued community support that allow us to operate in the first place, financial support from the principal partners, support from …supporting principals from the majority of businesses and people". (Participant 3 2013, pers. comm., 19 April)
- "If we had a hostile community you would feel it the minute you got in there and the festival probably wouldn't last in that town". (Una McAlinden 2013, pers. comm., 12 March)
- "Corinbank is what it is because of how we engage the Canberra community. Corinbank wouldn't be… it wouldn't be full stop without engaging the community". (Amy Moon 2013, pers. comm., 29 August)

Drivers for community engagement – Supporting quotes

Section 5.4.2 – Localising economic benefits

- "The reasons why we engage the community: to enliven the community, bring money into the town for the businesses and so on… because its the biggest thing that happens in Mt Beauty really, in terms of people coming in and staying for a while and spending quite a lot of money in the local businesses and accommodation houses and so on". (John Rollo Kiek 2013, pers. comm., 7 May)

Drivers for community engagement – Supporting quotes

Section 5.4.3 – Participation as foundation of the folk philosophy

- "The purpose of all this is that the folk tradition is something of great value to human beings and tends to be overlooked in this era where technology takes the upper hand. And it is really encouraging people that everybody has an individual style or talent that's very much unique to them". (Sebastian Flynn 2012, pers. comm., 19 December)
- "It's cornerstone of our charter and strategy, community engagement and like I said the festival itself is only run through the success of that engagement". (Michael Carrucan 2013, pers. comm., 19 April)
- "You got to engage a lot just from your heart. You can't overanalyse and overstrategise this. It is about engagement. You almost have to strip off the constrictions of our development as civilised beings and go back into how do we communicate with each other before we had all the numerous technologies that we have these days and the level of burocracy, the planning process and all that, how do we engage with each other there. And that's kind of what you got to get back to. Are people enjoying it? Is it making them feel happy? Does it give a community a sense of itself? Do individuals get to express themselves as individuals and as a collective? These are the things that you need to hit on". (Amanda Jackes 2012, pers. comm., 28 November)
- "The whole involvement philosophy of the club right from he start permeates our festival and all our activities (…) I think the main issue is the basic philosophy of folk music and the Illawarra Folk Club in that we value engaging people and getting people to participate and being involved in the various activities so that people become very enthusiastic and committed to the folk festival because they can see hundreds of other volunteers that are helping to make it a success, and they want to be involved in that sort of group". (Peter O'Neill 2013, pers. comm., 22 April)

Facilitating factors – Supporting quotes

Section 5.5.1.1 – Community characteristics

- Openness to volunteerism
  - "There's an extremely high percentage of volunteer population down here". (Participant 3 2013, pers. comm., 19 April)
  - "It's a great community-minded town". (Chris Smith 2013, pers. comm., 10 September)
- Community spirit linked to a desire to enhance the cultural life of the location
  - "There's a strong community of people here that are 4th-5th generations to the town. They're very proud of their town. They like to see anything that happens in the town being a success so they're enthusiastic to assist and make sure that what we try is going to work if we put everything into it (…) people recognise in the smaller towns that if we are going to always have facilities for ourselves and our children we have to engage, we have to get involved, whereas in the bigger towns you tend to have a smaller nucleus of workers that do a little bit more hidden from the broader community and you don't get the level of community engagement that you do in the smaller towns". (John Young 2013, pers. comm., 4 January)
  - "We're so fortunate in Canberra that there are so many people who are really community minded are really willing to get involved and contribute to things (…) There's definitely an underground… a strong undercurrent of community engagement throughout Canberra". (Amy Moon 2013, pers. comm., 29 August)

Facilitating factors – Supporting quotes

Section 5.5.1.2 – Management of Festival organisation

- Management's personal connections/ linkages within the community
  - "One of the things that does work is that person to person interaction with your key volunteers and then that filters down through the community (…) Yeah as long as you give them that little personal touch, they'll come year after year". (Caroline Blyton 2013, pers. comm., 19 July)
  - "I think it's really about liking people, showing people that you actually like them and appreciate what they're doing and you do respect, you do genuinely respect them and you genuinely like them. I think people can see that, when that's a real thing". (Una McAlinden 2013, pers. comm., 12 March)
  - "As long as you've got that good coordinator who can… who is approachable and nice, hasn't put anyone offside in the previous years then you'll get the people coming (…) It really does need someone to do that and whose approachable by everyone aged 5 to 95 (…) So there's a big span of generations that you've got to be able to engage with to get everyone's support". (Caroline Blyton 2013, pers. comm., 19 July)

Facilitating factors – Supporting quotes

Section 5.5.1.3 – Strategic vision on engagement

- Long-term/ strategic vision on engagement
  - "It was more difficult last year because they [the community] had never had a festival here before. But this year everybody is very excited about it as they had such a great time last year. A lot of people have actually volunteered to sponsor, for instance, this year, whereas I had to go around and talk to them fairly at length last year to try and explain to them what it was about. So it's always much easier once they understand what a festival is". (Participant 5 2013, pers. comm., 30 April)
  - "You don't need everyone's engagement, you just need to engage those people that are ready at the different time that they are ready". (Amanda Jackes 2012, pers. comm., 28 November)
  - "I think also what facilitates it is what goes on in the community for the other 360 days of the year (…) You know not to step on the toes of the people who have been doing it for years, and they have their little niche and, you know, this is what they do (…) So yeah it's important to have that local knowledge so that you know, you know who works full time and still volunteers the whole weekend. Or who might be a stay at home mum who mightn't mind going and doing a shop leading up to it – doing a grocery shop leading up to it. Yeah, it's all those little things. And also knowing who not to put on shifts together because you don't want to put two people on in the bar who don't get a long". (Caroline Blyton 2013, pers. comm., 19 July)
  - "I try and stay out of any personal stuff and I try and maintain complete objectivity. And that can be hard sometimes because people annoy me too". (Caroline Blyton 2013, pers. comm., 19 July)
  - "The other part is my son's a musician and I get to 20 festivals a year so I can look around and say: 'yeah, well that works'; I'll take that back and say: 'why don't why try this or try that or some other things' so we don't have a formal policy but if we see something that's good, that works, we're quite willing to adjust". (Chris Smith 2013, pers. comm., 10 September)
  - "The festival commenced here in 1977 under the auspices of the Geelong Music Festival, but in 1993 it was taken over by the current structure of the PFFF Committee Inc. and right from the very beginning there was community involvement doing things to make it work". (John Young 2013, pers. comm., 4 January)
  - "We started the festival working with community so before we even took the festival to Portarlington we met with all the main community groups in the town and I spoke at their meetings and told them what the festival was all about and I basically asked them if this is something that they wanted in Portarlington and tried to get them on board before we even went there". (Una McAlinden 2013, pers. comm., 12 March)
  - "The festival obviously is a not for profit organisation and it's basically got started by the community so was a community idea and volunteers and everything actually come up with the idea. So basically it's a community based project with over 400 volunteers that work on the festival". (Participant 4 2013, pers. comm., 16 May)

Facilitating factors – Supporting quotes

Section 5.5.1.3 – Strategic vision on engagement

- Regular communication, and periodic activities, directed at maintaining a community presence for the event outside of the period in which it is conducted
  - "It really is a lot of personal networking and really keeping those communication lines open". (Caroline Blyton 2013, pers. comm., 19 July)
  - "You go and drink with them, you know go and have a beer with them in the pub and you explain some of the difficulties you've got and you question them about the impact we have and whether or not we can alleviate it. But we 've always talked that through, I've never tried to put a questionnaire together or some sort of survey. It's just done on an informal basis". (John Uren 2013, pers. comm., 30 May)
  - "The lesson in there was you have to have the communication, it has to be clear communication and you have to touch base to them and you have to make sure the instructions are clear". (Una McAlinden 2013, pers. comm., 12 March)
  - I talk to people all year round for doing things (…) Little bits of different things are happening all through the year". (Pam Lyons 2013, pers. comm., 19 February)

Facilitating factors – Supporting quotes

Section 5.5.1.4 – Thematic aspects of the event

- "It's about bringing people together and celebrating the culture and the traditions, and bringing all these people into it so they can all share that same feeling". (Una McAlinden 2013, pers. comm., 12 March)
- "We seem to get quite a few people come from Wallaga Lake and Aboriginal settlements to see our programs, because we do favour their traditions". (Graeme Fryer 2013, pers. comm., 8 May)

Inhibiting factors – Supporting quotes

Section 5.5.2.1 – Community characteristics

- Prevailing perspectives within sections of a community that folk festivals are 'fringe' activities
  - "It's certain that we have this perception that folk festivals are full of hippies and so the wealthier people, maybe tend to look down a little bit on the folk festival". (Stuart Leslie 2013, pers. comm., 27 March)
  - "There is a perception that Corinbank is a 'hippie festival' which, in some respects, it certainly is but it's also got a lot more to offer everybody than what I think people recognise". (Amy Moon 2013, pers. comm., 29 August)
- Ageing and declining populations
  - "There are limitations in terms of the aging of our community (…) The age of the residents is one of the things though… I suppose. People who can't get out at night, who have limited mobility and so on… even though all our venues are within walking distance of most of the town I would say there's that limitation". (John Rollo Kiek 2013, pers. comm., 7 May)

Inhibiting factors – Supporting quotes

Section 5.5.2.2 – Management of festival organisation

- Difficulties in attracting volunteers into senior positions requiring significant time commitments
  - "We always have an ongoing problem with attracting a core of senior volunteers that are prepared to manage roles and being engaged throughout the year. And that's something we're constantly grappling with because if we had more senior volunteers and a bigger festival site, we could have more community involvement than we got now". (Peter O'Neill 2013, pers. comm., 22 April)
  - "I'm finding, I mean people are quite time-poor now and people are on different committees and do different things". (Caroline Blyton 2013, pers. comm., 19 July)
- Festival Management Priorities
  - "A lot of it has to do with our resources. Obviously being not for profit and majority of our staff being voluntary, it's just a matter of having time". (Fairbridge Folkworld 2013, pers. comm., 11 June)

Inhibiting factors – Supporting quotes

Section 5.5.2.3 – Lack of cooperation of local businesses

  - "We don't have much involvement with the local Bulli businesses – that's their peak time during the summer, because it's a touristy area there and they're heavily involved in just running their own businesses then or else they're on holiday, because that falls on the holiday time". (Peter O'Neill 2013, pers. comm., 22 April)

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