



23 JUL, 2024

## Governor General gets insight into arts

Parra News, Parramatta

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Less than a month after being sworn in as the 28th Governor General of Australia, Sam Mostyn has visited Parramatta for a behind-the-scenes look at Arts and Cultural Exchange (ACE).

It's been a busy couple of weeks for the second female Governor General in Australian history, with Mostyn meeting people from all over the country as the new representative of Australia's Head of State.

At the top of her list of places to visit was ACE in Parramatta.

Sitting down with *Parra News*, Mostyn talked about why the cultural organisation is so important to Australia.

"The involvement of young people and creativity really defines western Sydney in so many respects," she said.

"I think that's what ACE is all about and why it's been one of the first places I've wanted to visit as Governor General, to come to the centre of this city and to see the best of creativity and what defines us as a country.

"There's such a huge focus on the story of the Dharug here, there's creativity, there's sport, there's educators, there's innovators, and it says to me that the population of today represented by western Sydney tells us where we're going – it tells us a story of a future that is diverse."

First established in 1984, ACE is a western Sydney community arts organisation working in the areas of cultural development, screen culture and digital technology.

Mostyn said she sees ACE as the heart of excellency and creativity in western Sydney.

"Creativity is at the core of ACE, I think it's one of the most important ways of sharing the story of contemporary, modern Australia that celebrates everything here from the west, so it's an exciting place to be at," she said.

Home to development spaces, music and recording studios, digital labs, training facilities and performance spaces, ACE is focused on providing creative empowerment to some of western Sydney's most underrepresented communities.

Having worked in western Sydney for almost 30 years, ACE Executive

Director Anne Loxley said it's "totally humbling" to see the work of talented western Sydney locals.

"I just feel genuinely intoxicated by the culture and artistic and creative context on which I work here and all of western Sydney. Parramatta is great, but all of western Sydney is great," she added.

Going forward, Loxley said she's hoping ACE will receive more funding to continue to champion people from diverse cultures, especially First Nations people.

"There's so much talent, there's so much skillset in First Nations communities, these people need to be running their own programs, so I would really like to see that," she said.

"We have a very simple vision, and that is that the mainstream is flooded with the creative expression of all people experiencing marginalisation.

"First Nations in the spotlight, people from diverse communities in the spotlight, people from western Sydney in the spotlight – they're much more interesting than what's in the spotlight a lot of the time."

To find out more about the work ACE does visit [www.aceinc.org.au](http://www.aceinc.org.au).



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**Governor General Sam Mostyn with the ACE team during her latest visit.**  
Photo: Katy Cao.