

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **Country Arts SA welcomes new Community Arts and Cultural Development Producer to Whyalla**

The New Year is off to a good start in Whyalla, with a new Community Arts and Cultural Development Producer starting in a six-month partnership position between Country Arts SA and Country Health SA Mental Health.

Alison Howard, who began last week, will be working closely with teams from both organisations to find ways of engaging consumers of mental health facilities in community arts projects.

*“There are challenging times ahead for Whyalla and the surrounding region as extensive job cuts and unemployment impact on its communities,”* said Ms Howard.

*“Given this climate, it is timely to be joining Country Arts SA in my role as Community Arts & Cultural Development Producer, working in partnership with Country Health SA to identify and develop arts initiatives for consumers within the mental health system, supporting those on a journey towards better health and wellbeing. When arts and health intersect, the possibilities are endless and that’s an exciting platform to start from and I look forward to exploring what’s possible in the months ahead.”*

Ms Howard has previously worked as the Artistic Director of Riverland Youth Theatre, Fringe Family Weekend Creative Producer, Education Manager for the State Theatre Company of SA and regularly works as a guest director at Adelaide College of the Arts. Country Arts SA CEO Steve Saffell says this background in community arts is vital for success in the role.

*“We are excited to welcome Alison Howard, who has a substantial background and skills in community arts to the Community Arts and Cultural Development Producer position in Whyalla,”* said Mr Saffell.

*“It’s a big role that many would be daunted by, but Ms Howard is taking it in her stride and we’re looking forward to working with her and with Country Health SA to develop programs that will benefit those who access mental health facilities.”*

The new role is a temporary one at this stage until 30, June 2016.

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