

**Ms. Eve Stafford OAM**  
Director, Savvy Arts

## **BIOGRAPHY**

Eve Stafford OAM has extensive experience in all aspects of community cultural development as well as policy, planning and advocacy. She has been appointed to panels at Arts Queensland, Australia Council, Playing Australia national touring - and many other arts, community and policy advisory panels at all levels. Awards include an Australia Council Fellowship re models of rural and remote service delivery, and an Order of Australia Medal (OAM) for her services to the community for regional arts and cultural development.

## **ABSTRACT**

### **A different view of mining communities and liveability**

In the past year, Savvy Arts has undertaken over 100 hours of grass-roots community consultation in regional towns and rural hamlets between Mackay and Longreach to underpin the development of informed Cultural Policies and Plans for the next few years. Taking an integrated approach, consultation also extended at macro level across government and business, education, media and tourism sectors.

Apart from obvious wealth generation, the effect of mining, both established and new, is having a palpable and permeating effect on community cohesion and liveability. To varying degrees, the balance between the four pillars of sustainability - social, environmental, economic and cultural - is out of kilter for many residents, FIFO workers, their partners and their families.

Mining companies have a range of engagement and support programs for communities in which they operate that vary widely in their ability and cost-effectiveness to make a real difference. Residents acting as volunteers largely hold these rural communities together as de facto infrastructure, but many opportunities are being missed that could offer real benefits in attracting and retaining residents, workers and their families. To provide innovative avenues for all to actively participate in a fuller civic and community life, fresh thinking and new collaborative partnerships built across non-traditional boundaries are needed to foster and guide more strategic programs of support. Working smarter within existing budgets to realise authentic community and cultural development stands to add vibrancy and reduce transience.

This presentation will both unpack the present scenario and offer some quite different but pragmatic avenues of exploration for future solutions.