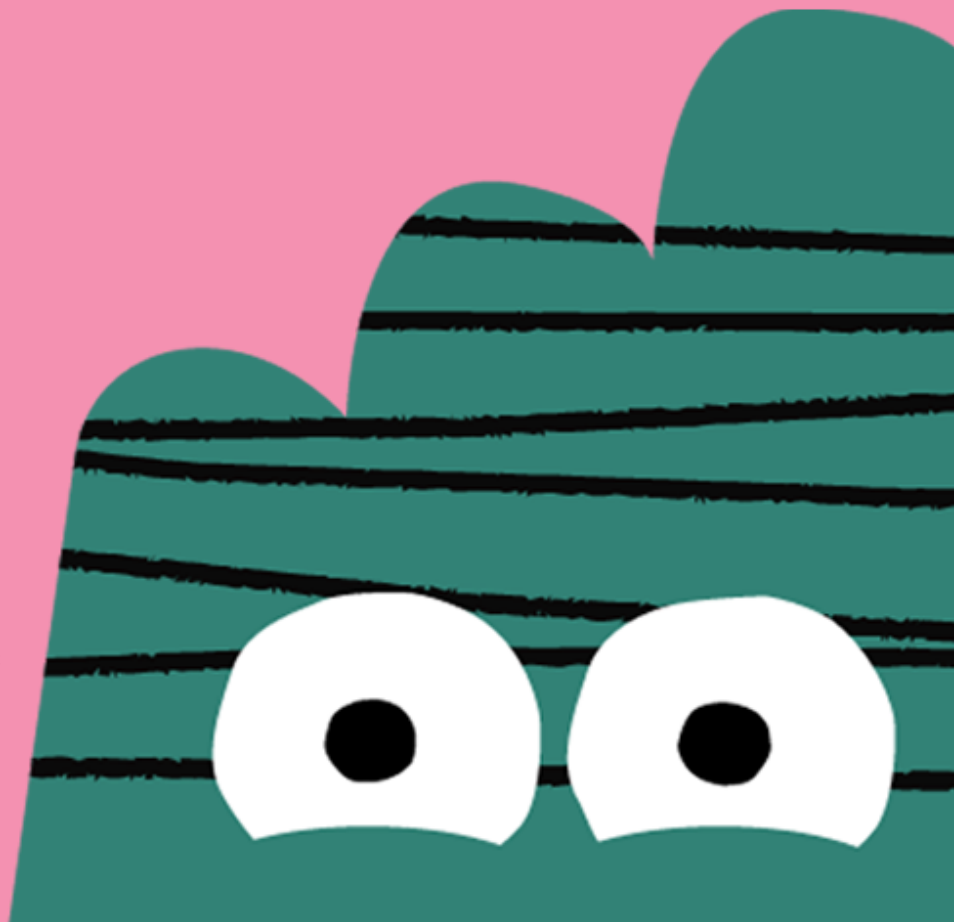


Outback Queensland Listening Tour Report

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Listening First: Building Partnerships Across Outback Queensland

In May, our Artistic Director Eva and Head of Production Laura embarked on a two-week listening tour across Outback Queensland, travelling through Roma, Mitchell, Charleville, Eulo, Cunnamulla, Tambo, Blackall, Barcaldine, Longreach and Winton.

As Monkey Baa prepares to bring *Where is the Green Sheep?* to these communities in 2027, we wanted to spend time on the ground understanding the unique character of each town and meeting the people who make these communities thrive.

Across more than 2,500 kilometres, we were welcomed into council chambers, schools, early learning centres, community halls, libraries, homes and local businesses.



Communities at the Heart of Our Journey

One of the most remarkable aspects of the tour was the generosity shown to us everywhere we travelled.

Our journey included meetings with:



Alison Shaw from the Western Touring Circuit, whose knowledge and commitment have been instrumental in planning our 2027 Outback tour.



Representatives from Roma Regional Council, educators from Mitchell State School and the team and the children from C&K Maranoa.



Local councillors, community members and organisers at the Charleville Show.





Leeanne from Wyandra, whose kindness epitomised outback hospitality. When a truck rollover closed the highway between Charleville and Cunnamulla, she flagged us down, guided us to an unsealed back road, and 50 kms later checked in to ensure we'd made it safely. We did.





Principal Michelle Beresford and the seven students of Eulo State School.



Principal Zac and the team at Blackall State School.



Matt Young, who welcomed us with a generous home-cooked meal in Blackall.





The passionate team behind the iconic Tambo Teddies, together with a memorable visit to the famous Tambo Chicken Races.





We were joined in Longreach by our Executive Director Kevin du Preez, and QPAC's Katrina Torenbeek to meet with the remarkable staff at Longreach School of Distance Education, and Outback Futures to explore future partnerships.





Of course, there was also a little side trip to the Qantas Museum.



Parent peers and Shire Council members in Winton.



Shared a night of opera under the star hosted by our friends at Opera Queensland.



Listening Creates Better Touring

The tour confirmed that successful regional touring begins long before the truck arrives. Being physically present in each town allowed us to understand local venues, infrastructure and logistics while building practical knowledge that simply cannot be gained from plans or photographs. For our Head of Production, visiting each venue provided valuable insight into technical requirements and touring considerations.

By understanding local priorities, school calendars, community events and the rhythms of each town, we can shape visits that genuinely complement community life.



Building Opportunities Beyond the Stage

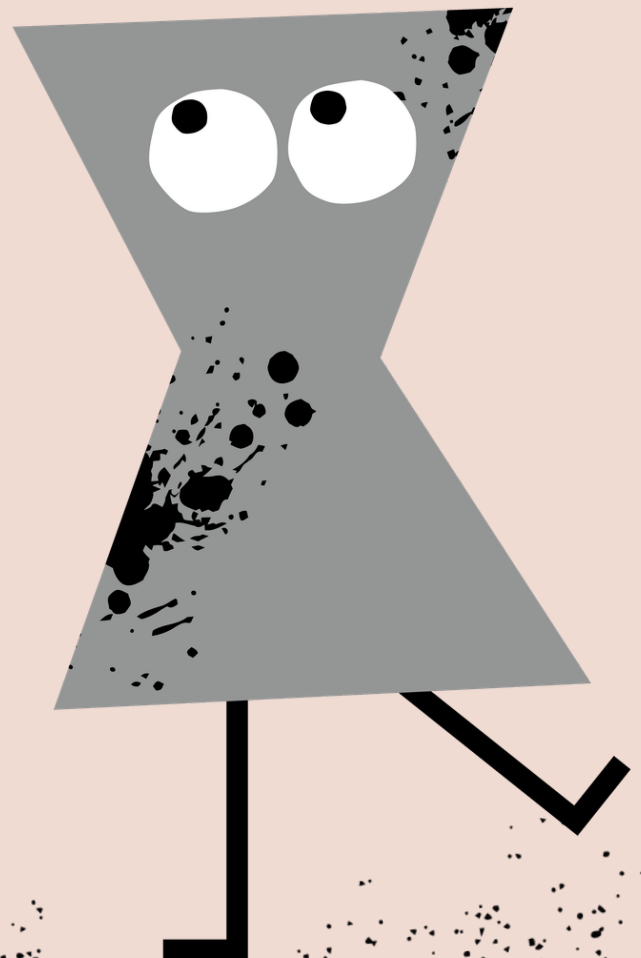
Communities spoke passionately about creating meaningful experiences for young people, and together we began identifying opportunities that extend our impact beyond a single day in the theatre.

Following discussions with Blackall State School, plans are now underway for senior students to undertake work experience with Monkey Baa when we visit in 2027, providing firsthand experience of professional theatre production.

An exciting new relationship was also established with the Longreach School of Distance Education, whose collaboration with Queensland Performing Arts Centre has opened possibilities for future partnerships supporting geographically isolated students through the arts.

Meeting the team at Outback Futures with their deep commitment to supporting the wellbeing of outback communities, and their belief in building strong, trusted relationships, reflects many of the values that underpin Monkey Baa's work, and we hope to partner with them throughout our 2027 tour.

These initiatives are already shaping the way we approach our 2027 tour, ensuring it creates meaningful opportunities that extend well beyond the performance itself.



Looking Ahead

Every community welcomed us with generosity, honesty and pride, leaving us with a richer understanding of the diverse places we will return to and strengthening the relationships that will help shape our 2027 tour.

We are deeply grateful to everyone who opened their schools, halls, offices and homes to us, sharing their stories, ideas and aspirations with such generosity. These conversations have already begun shaping the way we plan our return, ensuring that when Monkey Baa arrives in 2027, we arrive not as visitors, but as partners.

For Eva and Laura, this journey was far more than a planning visit. We leave with full hearts, inspired by the vastness of the landscape, the warmth of the communities we met, and the privilege of being invited into their lives. We return home changed by the experience and eagerly look forward to returning in 2027.



Thank You

A listening tour only works because people open their doors. Our deepest thanks to every council, school, kindy, library, hall and family who made time for us across western Queensland, and to the partners and supporters who made the whole journey possible.



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Monkey Baa respectfully acknowledges the custodians of this nation and honours their enduring cultural and spiritual connection to the lands, waters and seas. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, on whose lands we work, live and share stories.

02 8624 9341 | admin@monkeybaa.com.au | monkeybaa.com.au