The Pack Living Labs Proposal

THE PACK AUSTRALIA - STREAMING WITH A SOCIAL CONSCIENCE

The Pack streaming service connects Australian musicians with local listeners. The Living Labs Project will fund software development and prototype testing in the Cities of Fremantle, Vincent and Subiaco, WA.

WHO ARE WE, AND WHAT DO WE WANT OF YOU?

The Pack Australia is currently seeking investment to develop a living lab project from various government and non-government funding bodies, and would like to request both your commitment to the project, and a letter of support, detailing the value in-kind FTE investment that the City might make to this project. We're happy to provide a model letter if required.

The Pack Australia seeks to address the financial and mental health impacts of globalised digital disruption on the independent music sector, by applying a new business model to music streaming.

This funding we are seeking will support the development and marketing of a novel streaming and sharing marketplace for unsigned music, that provides a supportive and sustainable scaffolding for artists before they enter the noisy, crowded global streaming space.

Our project will help unsigned artists reclaim the value of their content via direct 'creator-consumer' transactions whereby listeners, governments and businesses subscribe as owner-member patrons within a platform co-operative model, underpinned by blockchain technologies. It will hyper-localise and connect the streaming community, developing co-operative, trust-based local economies and focusing on the creator-consumer experience – not just on exploitative 'creator as commodity' transactions.

Driven by its commitment to sustainable and equitable creative and community economies, The Pack will redirect Australia's streaming dollar from multinational corporations to Australian musicians. The Pack's powerful, patron-funded co-operative combines community exposure with fair pay for Aussie artists, local arts economy activation and access to valuable, localised cultural data for governments at all levels.

OUR 'WHY'

By 2024, digital music spend is projected to reach $1.4 billion; however this investment in music streaming largely goes offshore. Australian musicians earn less than 0.005 cents from the average streamed track, and unsigned artists earn less than $8000pa from their music practice. This financial insecurity, coupled with the massive impacts of COVID-19 on the arts industry is having a severe impact on the mental health of our music community.

The Pack wants to change these statistics, generating sustainable economic benefits for musicians, creating employment and delivering co-benefits to the Australian business community and the music industry.

This project will enable thousands of Australian artists to stream their original music content within a novel creator-consumer transactional model, with 40% of co-op revenues going directly to artists. This financial security will support innovation, gigs and touring, resulting in local economic benefits to hospitality, retail and music venues.

THE TECHNICAL SOLUTION

This technical research project will test, validate and commercialise our localised, independent music streaming service. It will deploy a platform co-operative streaming model within a contained research environment (a living lab), analysing financial flows to demonstrate that music streaming, if designed around interdependency and co-benefits to all members, can provide the music industry with a viable and consistent income from creative labours, independent of the more vulnerable live music sector.

The Pack will partner with Ninja Software to prototype a geo-fenced music streaming service that dynamically responds to listener's playlist preferences, pairing them with local artists and to local businesses. The Pack will also collaborate with blockchain developer, Intrinsic Global, to implement an equitable and transparent blockchain based payment system that complements the member-owned co-operative business model.

HOW WILL IT WORK?

Living labs aim to involve stakeholders in interactive research activities with the objective of co-creating and prototyping concepts and testing them in the real-life environment of end-users (living labs).

We will install the streaming prototype in 30+ business premises in each local government, sharing the music content of 200+ Australian musicians with 200+ listeners. Businesses will receive curated playlists consisting entirely of Western Australian, independent music, which they will test in their premises over a period of 12 months, with evaluations at three-month intervals.

We will analyse the resulting data to assess the efficacy of the business model; co-design system improvements with system users; and, disseminate outcomes through academic and professional literature, training and development opportunities and stakeholder presentations.

METHODS

With our significant cohort of industry and research partners, we will will co-design a Community Based Social Marketing campaign through which to ascertain community behaviours and barriers to change, and to influence music consumption behaviours.

We hope to work with our local government partners to engage industry and community via Economic Development, Community Development and Arts / Culture channels.

Data collection methods will include:
1. Real-time data generated through platform analytics:
    a. Financial data.
    b. Exposure data.
    c. Location / spatial data
2. Surveys
    a. Current state survey of attitudes, health & wellbeing, income.
    b. Three-monthly surveys of participants' experiences.
3. Interviews, workshops & focus groups
    a. Qualitative / anecdotal data including health, wellbeing and financial.

OBJECTIVES / OUTCOMES

Our primary project outcome is to develop a real-world tested, financially and culturally impactful, localised music streaming service that will strengthen local music economies and mitigate the impacts of global digital disruption and economic shocks to the live music sector on the whole music industry.

The product of this will be a launch-ready, fully commercial, scalable streaming social enterprise (The Pack Australia).

Alongside this commercial goal there are seven key research outcomes that this project will focus on, namely:

1. To identify and model the social and economic impacts of a localised streaming platform cooperative (The Pack) on musicians, businesses and music consumers in Australia.
2. To model the impact of The Pack on the financial resilience of musicians, businesses and other key actors in Australian local music ecologies.
3. To model and track the health and wellbeing impacts on musicians, businesses and other key actors in Australian local music ecologies of improved financial potential and creative fulfillment.
4. To model the potential impacts on artist income of giving performers rights agencies (OneMusic et al) access to real-time data and accurate per play information and advocating for transparent and equitable (direct) royalties to musicians.
5. To test the cultural and economic impacts of localised music promotion and availability through businesses and venues at precinct / hyperlocal scale.
6. To identify key leverage points that can create the system change necessary to support a local streaming service taking a platform co-operative approach.
7. To identify any barriers to the successful implementation of this service, and ways to overcome them, in collaboration with project participants / system users.

CONTACTS AND MORE INFORMATION

The Pack has volumes of research, data and further information should you wish to read more before getting involved!

You can find our White Paper on our website, as well as more information about The Pack, and our business and membership model.

Or, if you'd like to chat to us in person, please contact Melanie Bainbridge, Co-Founder / Director and Chief Impact Officer on thepackoz@iinet.net.au or 0488 222 286.

Many thanks for your kind consideration.

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