

GEE LONG GALLERY
STRATEGIC PLAN

2020–2023

Endorsed by Geelong Gallery Board 21 September 2020

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1. OUR PURPOSE

Geelong Gallery's purpose is to provide an experience of art that will enrich people's lives.

PILLARS

Geelong Gallery's purpose is underpinned by four pillars:

1. Geelong Gallery will deliver artistic and cultural advancement for the community thus making Geelong a more liveable City;
2. Geelong Gallery will bring economic benefit to the region through tourism arising from its exhibitions and events;
3. Geelong Gallery will connect and empower people by promoting equity, diversity, inclusion, access and lifelong learning;
4. Geelong Gallery will expand its premises to provide greater access to its collections and exhibitions, in order to significantly enhance the delivery of its aims in the first, second and third pillars.

2. INTRODUCTION

This document summarises the strategic direction of Geelong Gallery for the period 2020–2023. This Plan is endorsed by the Geelong Gallery Board and supported by six key sub-committees of the Board focussed on the Governance and guidance of Gallery operations. The plan is implemented by Senior Management via detailed annual business plans. While many Gallery activities delivered are quantifiable, the primary outcomes of the Gallery's core business – across exhibitions, learning and public programs, and visitor experience – are qualitative: beyond conventional accounting and measurement, and reliant on peer, popular and critical response in the short and long term, and on the cumulative effects of learning, engagement and self-determination. Geelong Gallery's reputation is based on its position as a leading cultural institution in the city; the excellence of its collection; its capacity to deliver scholarly, wide-ranging exhibitions across media and disciplines; and its history as one of the oldest public art galleries in Australia.

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In this 2020–23 Strategic Plan, four pillars focus the Gallery's goals and strategies. These pillars—**Artistic and Cultural Advancement**, **Economic Benefit**, **Equity & Learning for Everyone**, and **Gallery Expansion**—effectively encapsulate all areas of Geelong Gallery's current core business operations and commitment to community engagement. These four strategic pillars are designed to continually strengthen and raise the profile of the Gallery; to broaden its reach; to deepen its influence; and to assert its relevance to local, state and national communities. These pillars also focus attention on the ongoing necessity to assuredly assert our capability to government and funding stakeholders so that they are convinced to support our capacity-building and expansion ambitions.

The four pillars of this plan are strengthened by a separate Pillar Support section. This outlines the Gallery's commitment to good governance; to resourcing; to its focus on the strategic and business planning required at operational and government levels towards a future expansion into the Town Hall; to its ambition to achieve greater financial independence; and its attention to risk management, particularly in light of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic and an operational imperative to remain agile and adaptable.

3. ORGANISATIONAL BACKGROUND & OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

3.1 History

Geelong Gallery was established in 1896 and is an incorporated association governed by a Board of Directors. The Gallery holds a magnificent collection of 19th, 20th and 21st century Australian and European painting, sculpture, printmaking, photography and decorative arts. The Gallery has important holdings of 18th and 19th century British, Irish and Welsh porcelain, and colonial Australian silver. The historical collection has been developed with a special focus on early images of the Geelong region, the exemplar of which is Eugene von Guérard's 1856 masterpiece *View of Geelong*. The Gallery's outstanding collection includes many works of national significance such as Frederick McCubbin's *A bush burial* (1890). Since 2016 the Gallery has been the custodian of the Colin Holden Print Collection on behalf of the Colin Holden Charitable Trust.

Prior to 1896, the Geelong Mechanics Institute, established in 1846 in Ryrie Street provided the Geelong community with program of exhibitions, lectures and concerts. In 1896 twelve prominent Geelong citizens and business leaders were invited to a meeting at City Hall by then Mayor Horace F Richardson to consider the establishment of a permanent art gallery in Geelong to address the growth and aspirations of the city. The group established the Geelong Art Gallery Association to campaign for a purpose-built public Gallery on land adjacent to architect Joseph Reed's partially completed town Hall.

Having occupied temporary premises in the Town Hall and later in Geelong's Free Library building in Moorabool Street (since demolished), the foundation stone for a new gallery was laid by William A Watt, Premier of Victoria, in February 1914. The Building with its entrance on Johnstone Park was opened to the public in 1915. Originally consisting of a single long room currently designated the GM Hitchcock Gallery, the building was successively enlarged, renovated and upgraded in a series of capital projects commencing in the 1930s, followed in 1971 (the current Sidney Myer Gallery), in 1995 (expansion of the basement level to incorporate the Decorative Arts Gallery and enlarge the collection storage, in addition

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to the construction of first floor administration offices), a Centenary of Federation grant in 2001 (reconfiguration of the entrance, foyer and main temporary exhibition spaces, and incorporating modest alterations to part of the adjacent Peace Memorial basement to include secure storage for works of art), and in 2015 the addition of a temporary exhibitions gallery as part of the redevelopment of the Geelong Library & Heritage Centre.

In 2017 the Gallery completed a redesign and refurbishment of its entrance foyer, reinstating a previously sealed entrance from the foyer into the McPhillimy Galleries. In 2019 and 2020 a major collection storage upgrade was completed.

In 2021 Geelong Gallery will celebrate its 125th anniversary.

3.2 Funding context

Geelong Gallery receives annual operational funding from the City of Greater Geelong which is allocated under the terms of a Triennial Funding Agreement. Additionally, the Gallery currently receives annual funding under the terms of a multi-year funding agreement with Creative Victoria through its Regional Partnerships Program. Gallery operations are further supported by commercial operations, philanthropic organisations, Geelong Gallery Foundation income, and a range of cash and in-kind sponsorship agreements.

In the context of the realisation of any form of expanded facilities, Geelong Gallery's greatest challenge is fiscal. The Gallery operates within tight restrictions imposed by its limited financial resources and the constraints of the local and wider economies. In 2020–23 the predictable and unpredictable impacts of the global COVID-19 pandemic on local, state and national economies will be wide-ranging and have the potential to adversely affect the Gallery's operational model and the scope of its funding sources. The Gallery's core business of exhibitions, learning and community engagement require the support of streamlined, strategically focussed commercial operations, and ambitious fundraising and development streams. These are crucial to supporting the Gallery's base activities and to providing the space and opportunity for major fundraising initiatives required to meet the ambitions of the Gallery's expansion.

The sourcing of funding streams to support ambitious exhibitions and the human resources required to deliver them will be fundamental to the Gallery meeting the goals of all four strategic pillars.

Pillar 1: Artistic & Cultural Advancement

Goal: To deliver artistic and cultural advancement for the community thus making Geelong a more liveable City

Scope: **Artistic & Cultural Advancement** covers the core operations of the Gallery, and its provision of wide public access to its exhibitions and learning programs, the collection and its promotion and interpretation. This pillar advocates the enriching of the scope and ambition of artistic programming, which will strengthen Geelong Gallery’s capacity to attract high-profile artists, collaborators and sponsors, and its position as a leader in not only the Geelong Cultural Precinct, but wider public gallery sector. The Gallery plays a leading role in the City of Greater Geelong’s vision of a ‘clever and creative city’ and in the designation as a UNESCO City of Design.

Geelong Gallery aims to continually increase public access to its nationally significant collection by continuing its long success of profiling Geelong-specific content in changing collection exhibitions; and strategically developing the collection through gifts and purchase. The outstanding priorities for future development are the securing of significant funding bases for annual major exhibitions; to ensure at least one annual ticketed admission high-profile exhibition to increase operational income; to increase the base of funding for acquisitions and conservation; and ensure the highest standards of curatorial practice and collection management. As priorities supporting artistic leadership and cultural advancement, these strategic actions ensure the growth in capacity and reputation of the Gallery, and contribute simultaneously to **Economic Benefit, Equity & Learning for Everyone**, and the ambitions of **Gallery Expansion**.

Pillar 1	Strategies	Desired Outcomes
Artistic & Cultural Advancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present a diverse program of exhibitions from internal and external sources to promote Geelong Gallery as a major cultural venue and destination. The program will range from ticketed major exhibitions; the Gallery’s long-established Prize exhibitions; exhibitions focused on the historical collection and its representation of Geelong; and contemporary projects that extend new ideas to our audiences, that inspire the creation of new works by contemporary artists or respond to the Gallery’s permanent collection. • Develop digital maturity to ensure on-line, remote access to and experience of exhibitions and collection content • Develop the Geelong collection through purchase and gift with works of exceptional quality and relevance to Acquisition Policy, and make works publicly accessible via exhibition and online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present a range of exhibitions per annum, including those drawn from the permanent collection, and including an average of one ticketed exhibition per annum • Exhibitions and extended collection content available in digital formats • Engage with and help lead the City of Greater Geelong’s commitments as a UNESCO City of Design. • Maintain annual visitation within the operating context of COVID-19 • Engage with a range of individual key artists per annum • Number and / or value of works acquired and increased number of works on display, and increased number of works with extended interpretation in galleries and on-line • Number of works evaluated and processed towards deaccession • Number and scope of cultural precinct and other government, corporate, philanthropic and educational organisational affiliations • Number of publications, externally published papers, and professional presentations

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate collection items for deaccession • Initiate a range of collaborative local and national affiliations that extend the reach of the visual arts into other sectors • Lead in scholarly research, curatorial practice, and knowledge sharing within and outside the sector 	
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Pillar 2: Economic Benefit

Goal: To bring economic benefit to the region through cultural tourism arising from the Gallery’s exhibitions and events

Scope: The Gallery’s contribution to **Economic Benefit** is reliant on its financial prosperity and operational sustainability, vulnerabilities are also influenced by the economy and visitor confidence due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. This pillar highlights the importance of the Gallery’s capacity to deliver ‘destination’ exhibitions and publicly accessible events that contribute to the local economy. The Gallery’s capacity to contribute to economic benefit will continue to be enhanced by its strategic alignment with local government and independent Geelong and region-focussed associations such as City of Greater Geelong, G21, the Committee for Geelong, the Geelong Authority, Tourism Greater Geelong & the Bellarine, and Regional Development Victoria among others.

The Gallery will maintain a communicative and consultative working relationship with local government, from which it derives core operational funding, and with the State government as a key regional partner. The Gallery’s core business programs and commercial operations will exemplify leadership and excellence over this Strategic Plan period, as well as responding to or contributing to priorities identified by the Board and government.

Pillar 2	Strategies	Desired Outcomes
Economic Benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and program destination events and experiences based on the high profile, artistic importance and relevance to Geelong of specific artists and presenters • Develop and implement productive, ongoing affiliations with key local, state and national tourism, marketing and promotional bodies to ensure wide reach of programs • Continually review and refresh commercial operations streams based on Gallery as destination experience: retail, venue hire, membership, public programs/events • Develop and maintain cultural precinct relationships and other tourism and visitor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and demonstrable acclaim of widely acknowledged artists and creative practitioners in program, including delivery of drawcard ticketed exhibitions • Number, scope and outcomes of working relationships • Refurbishment and upgrade of Back/Front of House and ongoing refinement of business models for improved commercial operations • Number and scope of collaborative programs and events and digital/remote access to programs where applicable • Market research and benchmarking to evaluate trends and practices • Imaginative responses to operating model to generate new income sources in a post-COVID landscape

	attractions to explore potential of inter-institutional programming and events	
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Pillar 3: Equity & Learning for Everyone

Goal: To connect and empower people by promoting equity, diversity, inclusion, access and lifelong learning.

Scope: The Gallery’s expanded commitment to Equity will embed in the Gallery’s governance and operations the principles of cultural safety that underpin the engagement of First Nations people, disabled people, culturally and linguistically diverse people and other marginalised peoples with our organisation. This will be supported by and will enhance the strong foundation Geelong Gallery has established in the Learning & Audience Engagement space.

Equity, learning and audience engagement strategies and programs are developed around the Gallery’s exhibitions and collection, and extend their reach to diverse and under-represented audiences including First Nations and CALD communities; outreach to socially and economically disadvantaged; disability sectors; local schools and regional centres. In the context of COVID-19 and recovery, the Gallery’s reach extends more broadly via online resources and the Gallery’s digital maturity and agility. Since 2019 Geelong Gallery has ensured a full-time resource to oversee the expansion, design, delivery and evaluation of our programs, including flagship programs produced through local collaborations with government and other external partners. The Gallery will share its expertise across the organisation in the use of new technologies to communicate with schools and other audiences, and in innovative technological, pedagogical and public engagement approaches (such as online and virtual programs, Youth Ambassador Program; and Art + memory, Art + Access programs), and ensure its educational programs align with contemporary curricula and local and state government frameworks.

Pillar 3	Strategies	Desired Outcomes
Equity & Learning for Everyone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand and implement principles of Cultural Safety, Accessible and Inclusive practice into all operations Actively consult, engage and design programming to reflect and serve people from under-represented cultures, communities, and sectors Create inclusive events, work practices and exhibition frameworks Deliver imaginative education and public engagement programs using the Gallery’s collection, exhibitions, and history as a fundamental learning resource 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledge and respect the histories, languages, values, rights and cultures of First Nations people, people with disability, people from underrepresented Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds Board endorsed Equity Action Plan Consult and work to include First Nations people, people with disability, and CALD people and other under-represented peoples in employment opportunities, volunteering, programs, exhibitions, acquisitions and marketing. Reflect diverse audiences in programming and ensure events are accessible to all including the removal of all barriers (physical and emotional) and provide a range of innovative, inclusive and diverse programs Maintain visitor numbers in annual Learn and Audience Engagement Programs respectively

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and promote learning experiences across generations and people inside and outside formal education systems, from infancy to senior years. • Provide connections across diverse communities to promote use of and public ownership of the Gallery • Explore and optimise opportunities for engagement with disability sectors, First Nations people (Wathaurong community) and CALD communities • Maximise outreach to, and develop targeted programs for socially and financially disadvantaged communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment of schools-based programs with curriculum, local and state government education department imperatives and funding opportunities. Design and delivery of cross-generational learning • Implementation of accessible online collection interpretations and exhibition content • Number and scope of community engagement programs • Demonstrated affiliations, consultation and outcomes • Range and scope of engagements
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Pillar 4: Gallery Expansion

Goal: to expand the Gallery’s premises to provide greater access to our collections and exhibitions, and to significantly enhance our business delivery against the four strategic pillars through newly purposed infrastructure that builds display and storage capacity, increases social engagement, and builds commercial operations capacity

Scope: The Gallery’s ambition to contribute more to Geelong’s ‘clever and creative’ economic and cultural renewal is restricted by a lack of adequate space, limiting display of, access to, and storage of the great riches of the collection owned by the people of Geelong. Expanded facilities will embed drawcard exhibitions and significant economic outcomes for the City as our core business, as well as providing greater opportunities for the display of the permanent collection and visitor engagement. The Gallery is ready to take a leadership role in the Revitalising Central Geelong Action Plan, and in the City of Geelong’s Arts and Cultural Masterplan, and Cultural Precinct Masterplan. The expansion of its premises would complement the recent developments and improvements in the arts precinct, including the Library and GAC. The Geelong Gallery Board and Management have a strong interest in expanding into part of the Town Hall building in a manner that honours the building’s past, provides for the continuation of Town Hall’s historical function as a social and ceremonial place, whilst realising its potential as a grand exhibition space and a leading 21st century cultural facility.

In 2019 the Gallery completed an ILM process as the first step towards a refreshed Business Case for redevelopment and expansion. In 2020 the City of Greater Geelong contributed funds towards the realisation of the Business Case.

Pillar support	Strategies	Desired Outcomes
Gallery Expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close engagement with CoGG Council and Executive, and new Arts & Culture Manager on determination of Civic Precinct timelines • Utilise 2019 ILM outcomes for Gallery-generated, updated draft Business Case for expanded Gallery including Conservation Management Plan outcomes; and review of spatial requirements • Implementation and continuation of communications and lobbying of strategy for all levels of government engagement, and ILM stakeholder participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular and routine planning and logistics discussions between CoGG and GG Board and Senior Management • Updated draft Business Case brief by June 2021 • Formulation of Fundraising Strategy and communications plan focused on redevelopment • Early engagement of philanthropy and fundraising resources • Build pathways for significant donations from corporate and individual donors • Build pathways for significant fiscal support from State and Federal Governments

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Precinct Masterplan engagement • First phase modelling of GG core business and commercial operations financial models • Design and Implementation of Fundraising strategy • Ongoing recruitment of Board Fundraising Committee • Human resourcing strategy for Gallery Expansion • Review and enhance fundraising initiatives with focus on expansion project • Identification of and engagement with potential corporate and individual donors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A building that enhances and complements the already improved arts precinct, and raises the reputation of the Gallery • 100%+ increase in display space and storage space • Communications strategy and campaigns • Employment of fundraising executive as per Fundraising Strategy recommendations • Full Capital funding for expansion • Ongoing funding to cover increased operating costs
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PILLAR SUPPORT

GOVERNANCE, RESOURCES & RISK MANAGEMENT

The Gallery’s future prosperity and expansion requires a strong focus on securing multiple levels of public and private support, and on optimising necessary core resources, as well as an adventurous exhibitions and acquisitions program curated and delivered with regard to robust risk management.

Five key organisational resource categories are: **Financial / Physical / Human / Information / Time**

A strategic approach is required to generate financial support for identified human resourcing, and program and capital works priorities. Geelong Gallery has benefited from some key philanthropic and private support for major exhibition and Prize programs, however transformative corporate and philanthropic financial support has and will be more challenging in a post COVID-19 environment. The Strategic Plan will draw upon the expertise and networks of members of the Gallery Board and sub-committees to assist the Director and development staff in reaching annual fundraising targets and developing and implementing fundraising campaigns. The ongoing work of the Geelong Gallery Foundation, Geelong Contemporary and recent initiatives like Geelong Conservation will assist funding bases.

PILLAR SUPPORT	Strategies	Desired Outcomes
<p>Governance, Resources & Risk Management</p>	<p>Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop annual fundraising campaigns • Diversify sources of income through commercial operations: retail, membership, ticketing, venue hire, donations and partnerships • Implement multi-year funding engagements with government, corporate, philanthropic and private bodies <p>Physical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbish collection management areas • Enhance Learning Pillar through a dedicated Learn Space • Ensure robust relationship with Council as building owner <p>Human</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review human resources (staff and volunteers) against functional and optimum business operational model • Build organisational capacity to demonstrate preparedness for proposed redevelopment • Recruitment and retention of appropriate levels of expertise and experience • Growth of young arts and museum sector professionals <p>Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine and clarify internal IT systems and corporate record keeping and maintenance • Refine channels of communication and reporting through clarified organisational structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing implementation of GG Bequests Program, in-house campaigns (eg. President’s Dinner), ongoing management of donors and annual capital-focused fundraising campaigns • Ongoing engagement with GG Foundation • Maintain membership numbers • Ongoing focus on retail outcomes and margins • Number of annual and multi-year new project-specific partners and sponsors achieved per annum • Retention and development of existing program partners and sponsors • Retention and development of local, State and Federal funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed upgrades of specific public and back-of-house spaces as endorsed by Building & Spaces Committee, Board and CoGG • Annual evaluation of staff accommodation and productivity • Ongoing inclusion of Board and Senior Management in government and stakeholder discussions around Gallery redevelopment • Ongoing implementation of Learn Space <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing review and consolidation of organisational structure aligned with the strategic plan with a focus on manageable staff levels in a post-COVID-19 operating environment • Implementation of ongoing Performance Planning & Review Process • Completion and dissemination of finalised and legally compliant suite of policies • 3,000-5000 hours per annum donated by Volunteers • Design and implementation of robust internship program aligned with tertiary partners • Ensure principles of equity, inclusion, diversity, and access are embedded in all recruitment processes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrable % reduction in redundant files • Demonstrable % increase in archived file and reduced common-drive pathways

<p>RISK MANAGEMENT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure participation of senior management on relevant civic and Geelong-focussed committees and fora • Ensure open and transparent communication exchange between management, committees and Board <p>Time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure exhibition, and audience & engagement programming is realistic in terms of scope, time and financial resources required for delivery • Ensure whole-of-organisation commitment to efficient time management • Ensure readiness of Gallery operations for proposed expansion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure strategic and operational risk registers are maintained and reviewed at least annually • Ensure staff communication associated with inherent operational risks • Ensure Government and Board stakeholder awareness of risk associated with facilities, exhibitions, Learn and Public Programming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing review and management of reporting lines according to organisational chart • Demonstrable level of participation through reported activities • Records of all committee and Board meetings • Implementation of a Digital Asset Management System (DAMS) (to streamline storage of and access to image libraries) • Enhancement of online collection access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board and committee review of annual programming • Degree of success recorded in annual Performance Planning & Review process • Demonstrable and reported senior management activity in relation to future redevelopment • Implementation of ambitious, high-profile programming to demonstrate readiness and necessity of future expansion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing review of master suite of policies and procedures • Annual review of Risk Management Policy and Risk Management Register • Staff reporting via internal routine meeting and OH&S Committee • Demonstrated interaction and communication with CoGG and relevant government, workplace and legal agencies through reporting
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