

Geelong Gallery Expansion Key facts

A 21st-century
regional gallery
for Geelong



Concept design
by John Wardle
Architects

In December 2021, Geelong Gallery completed a Business Case for expansion in conjunction with the City of Greater Geelong and Regional Development Victoria through the Enabling Tourism Fund.

The Business Case seeks investment in the range of \$110 million to \$120 million over five years from Federal, State and local governments along with philanthropic sources, to deliver priority infrastructure to revitalise and expand Geelong Gallery, and realise the organisation's significant role in the delivery and activation of the Geelong Cultural Precinct Masterplan. Geelong Gallery is seeking support now, so that a new model of a 21st century regional gallery can be built and opened by early 2027.

Key reasons for the Geelong Gallery expansion:

- The population of the Greater Geelong region is changing rapidly and Geelong Gallery is not keeping pace as a regional facility of state significance
- Infrastructure and other constraints are hindering Geelong Gallery from attracting and presenting more commercially viable exhibitions
- The Gallery's identity is evolving, but it lacks a leading architectural and physical presence within the Geelong cultural precinct.

Key facts

- On Tuesday 14 December, the City of Greater Geelong Council endorsed the expansion of the Gallery into the Conference Centre and endorsed the Gallery's shared use of what will be a redeveloped historic City Hall. Council's endorsement states that 'Council and the Gallery have a shared and forward-looking vision for the cultural, civic, social and ceremonial purpose of the historic fabric of Victoria's oldest working City Hall.'
- Geelong Gallery has built an enviable reputation through its popular and critically acclaimed historical and contemporary exhibitions. However, its business operations, community services and ambitions for the future are depressingly constrained within its current footprint. Geelong is Victoria's second largest and fastest growing city. A clever, creative and vibrant city with a diverse population, Geelong deserves cultural assets and infrastructure to match the changing needs of its people. At present, Geelong Gallery has the space to display less than 2% of its nationally important collection.
- Without the creation of additional exhibition and programming space (and improved back of house and collection storage), the Gallery will continue to be constrained by a serious shortage of space preventing its presentation of large-scale drawcard exhibitions; it will continue to have to compromise on its programming ambitions; and importantly, ongoing space limitations will place the collection at risk.

Benefits of expansion

A redeveloped and revitalised Geelong Gallery will deliver the following key benefits per annum by 2035:

- 350,000 visitors
- new contemporary gallery spaces to display the collection
- Creative Industry jobs for 25 full time equivalent staff and 1,200 direct and indirect construction phase jobs
- 20,000 education visitors and increased outreach to schools
- 300 community events and 60 outreach programs
- 2 artist in residence spaces

Over 30 years Geelong Gallery will contribute

- Net induced direct tourism spend of \$73.9M
- Amenity benefit of \$223M
- Education benefit of \$18.5M

Statements made by Geelong Gallery and the City of Greater Geelong

Geelong Gallery Director & CEO, Jason Smith states 'Artists and art are essential to any community and its culture. Great art galleries enrich our mind and spirit. They celebrate our creativity. They challenge us. They connect us. And great art galleries provide space for the critical thinking of current and future generations. Geelong is ready and, in need of, a great gallery.'

Geelong Gallery President, Gerard Mullaly said 'Geelong Gallery has undertaken significant work throughout the Business Case process in governance, project specification, development of a fundraising strategy and supporting processes, project timelines, and consultation with stakeholders. The Gallery has strong confidence in its case for change, and the preferred option that has been determined. The Gallery's redevelopment project is now ready for funding to proceed to detailed design, advanced planning for procurement, and construction.'

City of Greater Geelong Deputy Mayor, Trent Sullivan says 'The City of Greater Geelong Council supports Geelong Gallery's expansion. The proposed purpose-built facility meets the needs of our rapidly growing, progressive and culturally diverse community. It also aligns with the Council's 10-year Arts and Culture Strategy, which prioritises a vibrant cultural, learning and social space that connects to the unique heritage of our historic City Hall.'



Little Malop Street entrance facade

Concept render
designs by John
Wardle Architects

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Arrival Hall internal
(walking towards Johnstone Park from Little Malop Street)



Historic City Hall ceremonial and civic space