

## MGA Strategic Plan 2018-2022

<b>PURPOSE</b> <i>5 years</i>	To champion Australian photography, and inspire audiences to embrace, explore and value photography		
<b>VISION</b> <i>5 years</i>	To be the Australian home of photography		
<b>Strategy Statement</b> <i>3-5 years</i>	<p>MGA is Australia's leading public art gallery devoted to the collection and exhibition of photography. We engage local, national and international audiences in arts and cultural experiences.</p> <p>In five years, we will double visitor numbers, engagement, sector relevance and influence.</p>		
<b>Fundamental goals</b> <i>3 years</i>	<b>1. Compelling, must see exhibitions that meaningfully contribute to arts scholarship and the advancement of photography</b>	<b>2. Nationally significant collection of Australian photographs</b>	<b>3. Culturally enriching experiences</b> that inspire audiences to embrace, explore and value photography
<b>Key initiatives</b> <i>2-3 years</i>	<p>1.1 Inspire audiences to explore photography with compelling, must see <b>exhibitions</b> that grow and enrich audiences</p> <p>1.2 Present a national and internationally significant <b>touring program</b>, developing global partnerships that champion and support Australian artists and arts workers</p> <p>1.3 Demonstrate <b>excellence and leadership</b> within the sector including profiling and championing photography, increasing collaborative projects, producing publications of significance and providing professional development opportunities</p>	<p>2.1 Build a <b>nationally significant collection of Australian photographs</b> that contextualises photography's place within the visual arts, and highlights seminal moments in the history of photography in Australia</p> <p>2.2 Leverage the collection to <b>profile and promote Australian photography and its artists</b></p> <p>2.3 Enhance <b>collection engagement</b> through increased education and public programs, travelling exhibitions, digital experiences and improved physical access and storage capacity</p>	<p>3.1 Deliver engaging, educational and thought provoking <b>programs</b></p> <p>3.2 Provide an exceptional <b>visitor experience</b> by activating the site with events and improving site visibility, accessibility, amenity and capacity</p> <p>3.3 Create a <b>virtual experience</b> built upon technological innovation to enhance engagement with our community and the collection</p> <p>3.4 <b>Identify audience</b> profiles and tailor programs to increase engagement</p>
<b>Fundamental goal</b> <i>3 years</i>	<b>4. Build our capacity to deliver our strategy by increasing revenue and developing and supporting our people</b>		
	<p>4.1 Develop and deliver a <b>Development, Philanthropy and Corporate Sponsorship</b> plan focused on establishing long term sustainable relationships which generates both operational income streams and builds the endowment for the future</p> <p>4.2 Develop and deliver a <b>Commercial Operations</b> plan to create profitable income streams and activities</p> <p>4.3 Establish <b>Professional Development</b> opportunities for MGA staff to build their capacity and skill set</p>		

## **Monash Gallery of Art: Strategic Plan 2018-2022**

MGA vision is to be the Australian home of photography, championing Australian photography, and inspiring audiences to embrace, explore and value photography.

As Australia's leading public art gallery devoted to the collection and exhibition of photography, we engage local, national and international audiences in arts and cultural experiences.

In five years, we will double visitor numbers, engagement, sector relevance and influence.

MGA will achieve this by focusing on four key initiatives:

- **Present compelling, must see exhibitions that meaningfully contribute to arts scholarship and the advancement of photography**
- **Build a nationally significant collection of Australian photographs**
- **Deliver culturally enriching experiences that inspire audiences to embrace, explore and value photography**
- **Build our capacity to deliver our strategy by increasing revenue and developing and supporting our people**

MGA's ability to deliver on the strategic plan hinges on building its capacity to increasing revenue and develop and supporting its people. This will be achieved by developing and delivering a Development, Philanthropy and Corporate Sponsorship plan that is focused on establishing long term sustainable relationships which generates both operational income streams and builds the endowment for the future; a Commercial Operations plan to create profitable income streams and activities; and initiating Professional Development opportunities for MGA staff to build their capacity and skill set as well as programs that support Australian artists and arts workers.

## **History**

### **Where We've Been: A Look at MGA's History to Present**

MGA had its genesis in the late 1970s with the creation of the Waverley City Gallery, an initiative of the former City of Waverley Council. The gallery was conceived as a place to display Australian and International art which made the initial focus very broad. Its collection comprised a small number of artworks including local and national paintings, photographs, prints and textiles. The collection was housed in a residential home in Mount Waverley before relocating in 1990 to the purpose-built Harry Seidler designed gallery on Jells Road, Wheelers Hill, where it still stands today. In 2001-02 the building underwent a redevelopment with the addition of a sympathetic extension by architects Cox Sanderson Ness to house new gallery spaces, café and the new Wheelers Hill Library.

In 1980 an acquisition committee was formed to assess the development of the Waverley City Gallery and its respective collection. Four years later the Gallery's first collection of photography was initiated. In the early 1990's it was decided that the collection was to solely focus on Australian photography. In doing so it became the only public collection dedicated to Australian photography at a time when few public institutions were focused on increasing their holdings, and well before most of its contemporaries recognised the importance of collecting and interpreting Australian photographs. MGA quickly came to hold one of the most important and nationally significant photography collections in Australia.

When the councils of the City of Oakleigh and the City of Waverley were amalgamated to form the City of Monash in 1994, the name changed to what it is today – Monash Gallery of Art or MGA. Since then, the collection has grown substantially to over more than 3,000 photographs. These works reflect the history and development of Australian photography from the mid-nineteenth century to today. The collection is diverse and includes many iconic images and work of nationally significant artists.

Locally, MGA and its collection hold a significant and unique value to the City of Monash and its residents. Items from the collection form the basis of many of the exhibitions staged across three gallery spaces. In addition, items from the collection are on display at many council buildings including the Harry Seidler designed Monash Civic Centre in Glen Waverley. MGA also promotes the collection by touring and lending works to other galleries around Australia, and it is envisaged that its collection, exhibition program and reach will extend internationally as well.

In 2005 the MGA Foundation was established to support MGA and its significant collection. At the time, Bill Bowness was Chair of the Board, and, under his leadership, the Board and the newly constituted Foundation recognised the importance of providing a platform for contemporary Australian photographers, which would simultaneously raise the profile of MGA and its unique commitment to photography. The following year the MGA Foundation launched the inaugural William and Winifred Bowness Photography Prize to promote excellence in photography across all photographic media and genres by both established and emerging artists with work produced within the last year. The Bowness Photography Prize has become an important survey of contemporary photographic practice and one of the most prestigious prizes in the country, providing Australian artists with the opportunity to exhibit at one of Australia's leading public galleries.

MGA is a local cultural icon with a national reach. MGA's annual exhibition program encompasses approximately five exhibitions across the three gallery spaces per annum. Exhibitions explore a diverse range of subject matter, often highlighting seminal moments in the history of photography in Australia and celebrating and promoting photography as well as supporting artists by profiling, exhibiting and acquiring their work. Its highly successful exhibition touring program takes MGA throughout Australia's eastern states and its suite of a vibrant and culturally enriching suite of education and public programs provides audiences with a deep engagement into photography.

More than 50,000 visitors attended MGA's exhibition and programs over the last year, and over 180,000 visitors engaged in onsite arts, cultural and literary activities including visiting the sculpture park. MGA also toured 3 exhibitions to 6 venues nationally, reaching more than 45,000 visitors.

MGA is located in the heart of the City of Monash which has an incredibly diverse community. Over the past 20 years, Monash has transitioned from a largely Australian-born community, to one of the most multicultural communities in Australia with true cultural diversity. 49% of Monash residents are born overseas and over 12% come from Chinese backgrounds, meaning Monash has one of largest Australian-Chinese populations in the state.

Monash is a vibrant city, a hub of activity and an economic centre with commercial, construction, manufacturing and educational sectors driving growth. It is a haven for leafy residential homes and has a steady growth in high density dwellings. Its highly educated, multicultural, engaged and affluent population is reflected in MGA's audiences. The strength of MGA's exhibition program lies in its ability to showcase exemplary photography and champion Australian photography and its artists.

Now in its 27th year, MGA has formed strong foundations and developed into a unique cultural institution. The challenge MGA faces is how to increase its profile, reach, reputation and resources so that it can speak to a broader audience and deliver on its ambitious vision for the future. The following frameworks put in place a structure with initiatives, goals and measures that support the delivery of the plan.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

MGA will develop integrated and holistic strategies and plans to create a framework for delivering on MGA’s ambitious vision for the future. At the heart of these is the exhibition program and the development, management and conservation of the collection. Surveys will be conducted to inform and shape these reflecting the best way to engage audiences. These include well-developed plans in the following areas:

- **Exhibition Program**
  - **Touring Program**
  - **Collection Development, Management and Conservation**
  - **Development, Philanthropy & Sponsorship**
  - **Virtual Experience – Digital Environment**
  - **Marketing & Communications**
  - **Audience Development and Tourism**
  - **Commercial Operations**
  - **Capital Works**
  - **Education and Public Programs**
  - **Professional development program**
- 
- **Exhibition Program**



MGA’s exhibition strategic framework will be reviewed and revised in line with the strategy, creating a compelling, must see exhibition program that meaningfully contributes to arts scholarship and the advancement of photography. Key to this will be creating a balanced program, targeting key audiences with exhibitions that appeal to a broad demographic as well as smaller niche exhibitions, with exhibitions planned 2 years in advance.

- **Touring Program**

Develop and grow MGA's touring program creating global Partnerships – bringing the best of the world to Australia and the best of Australia to the world, championing and supporting our artists, and providing Australian audiences, artists and arts professional with access to international contemporaries. This will dovetail with the professional development program as well as derive income to support MGA's exhibition program.

- **Collection development, management and conservation**

The Collection Policy will be reviewed, formalising and finalising the collection's purpose in line with the strategy. Acquisition and deaccession policies will be reviewed in line with the Collection Policy with a revised desiderata list established with a plan in place to deliver on these.

- **Development, Philanthropy & Sponsorship**

MGA's Development, Philanthropy and Sponsorship Strategy aims to increase its network of supporters and strengthen its relationships with them in order to grow and develop a stable long-term funding base with a target of raising an additional \$200k above current income levels. MGA's philanthropic, fundraising and sponsorship activities over the last 27 years has resulted in securing a small number of key supporters with ties to the community. MGA plans to leverage these relationships as a base upon which to grow a larger and more diverse network of supporters. This Strategy establishes a holistic, organisation wide plan to attract, cultivate and steward supporters based upon the relationship model which provides a structure to grow and maintain meaningful and enduring relationships with a network of supporters.

- **Digital Engagement**

MGA will devise an integrated digital engagement plan which utilises digital technologies to enhance engagement with audiences, creating increased access to the collection and awareness about MGA so as to grow audiences. Social media platforms, improved website functionality, utilising digital means to engage and expand our audiences will be key to the plan, integrating the digital experience with the onsite experience.

- **Marketing & Communications**

MGA's Marketing & Communications plan will be established to ensure consistency in branding and profile and incorporate website, social media, digital, editorial, PR and advertisements aimed at establishing relationships with our audiences and stakeholders, growing the depth and reach of our profile, promoting MGA and its activities, increasing audience engagement.

- **Audience Development and Tourism**

A plan setting out how to inspire local, national and international audiences will be developed, that is integrated with all other strategies and plans. This will include how to attract and retain new audiences and drive not just local but how to attract global audiences in order to be recognised as the Australian home of photography.

- **Commercial Operations**

A Commercial operations strategy and plan will be developed. The strategy will establish the purpose, identity, Unique Selling Proposition and brand identity to create a profitable and commercial viable event, venue hire and retail operations, focussed on more than doubling income levels over the next 3 years, achieving at least 50k profit above current levels.

- **Capital Works**

A program of capital works will be devised, including three key capital works programs. An annual programs of operational small capital works program will outline capex supporting MGA's operations, typically funded within MGA's annual small capital budget e.g. digital display, camera. Larger site specific or larger spend capital works projects will also be developed, which fall beyond annual small caps budget. This will require larger spends, and will typically be subject to annual capital works bids made to Council.

- **Education and Public Programs**

An annual calendar of Education and Public Programs will be formulated, creating a strong framework of engaging programs that respond, enhance and explore photography focussed around the exhibition and collection program. A brand identity will be developed to support the marketing, profile and reach of the Education and Public Programs, focussing on the unique experience audiences will have at the Australian home of photography. Developing an annual calendar of programs will allow for better marketing of the programs to audiences, driving up audiences. Key leadership attributes will be established, creating a unique selling proposition (e.g. disability access for the vision impaired), with an increased focus on inspiring audiences to engage with photography. Ensuring the exhibition program is devised 2 years out will allow for more time to develop programs that speak not just to the current exhibition, but that help advance MGA's ambitious vision for the future.

- **Professional development program**

Create a leadership position within the sector, by establishing a professional development program for MGA's staff as well as create meaningful opportunities for Australian artists and arts workers. This includes developing MGA's Volunteer program, providing Staff scholarships, mentorship program for students and work placements, internships, as well as develop an artist-in-residence program, commissioning an artist to produce a body of work while overseas, or curator in residence or curator exchange program (partner with sister org and swap curators).

## MEASURES

Measures	1. Compelling, must see exhibitions that meaningfully contribute to arts scholarship and the advancement of photography	2. Nationally significant collection of Australian photographs	3. Culturally enriching experiences that inspire audiences to engage with photography	4. Build our capacity to deliver our strategy by increasing revenue and developing and supporting our people
<b>1. Quantitative engagement</b>				
• Number of onsite visitors	x	x	x	
• % of onsite visitors from Monash, Victoria, interstate, internationally	x	x	x	
• Number of visitors to touring exhibitions	x	x	x	
• Number of Education programs	x		x	
• Number of Education attendees	x		x	
• Number accessing MGA online	x	x	x	
• Number of Public programs	x		x	
• Number of Public program attendees	x		x	
• Repeat visitation	x		x	
• No of behind the scenes tours	x	x	x	x
• Attendance at behind the scenes tours				
<b>2. Qualitative</b>			x	
<b>Feedback from visitors via a range of mechanisms (online, real time, range of stakeholders, immediate experiential)</b>	x	x	x	x
• Surveys measuring				
• Quality of the experience	x	x	x	x
• Impact of the experience	x	x	x	x
• Impact of Professional development opportunities				x
<b>3. Influence and relevance</b>				
• Number of positive commentary and reviews	x		x	
• Number of negative commentary and reviews	x		x	
• Number of loans	x	x		
• Number of touring exhibitions	x	x		
• Social media followers	x			
• No of works on loan to City of Monash		x	x	
• Number of catalogues sales	x		x	
• Requests for Staff to take part in industry specific events (eg. Award judge, guest speaker etc.)	x		x	
• Leadership positions held by staff	x		x	
• MGA facilitated industry specific leadership and professional development programs and initiatives	x		x	
• COM connections to govt and high level networks				x
<b>4. Financial</b>				
• \$ valuation collection		x		
• \$ donations	x	x	x	x
• Number of donations	x	x	x	x
• \$ donors increasing up a donor segment	x	x	x	x
• No of donors increasing up a donor segment	x	x	x	x
• \$ corporate cash	x	x	x	x
• \$ corporate in-kind	x	x	x	x
• \$ Grants	x	x	x	x
• \$ Retail income				x
• \$ Venue Hire income				x
• No of Venue Hires				x
• \$ Events and Public Program	x	x	x	x
• % variance to budget	x	x	x	x
• Capital Works Projects through investment \$	x	x	x	x