

A woman with long dark hair and a child with dark hair in a ponytail are looking at a large, colorful butterfly exhibit. The butterflies are displayed on a wall, with some in the foreground and others in the background. The woman is on the right, looking towards the left, and the child is on the left, looking towards the right. The background is a large wall covered in various species of butterflies, including monarchs and others with blue and white patterns.

Tasmanian Museum
and Art Gallery

Strategic Plan 2021-24

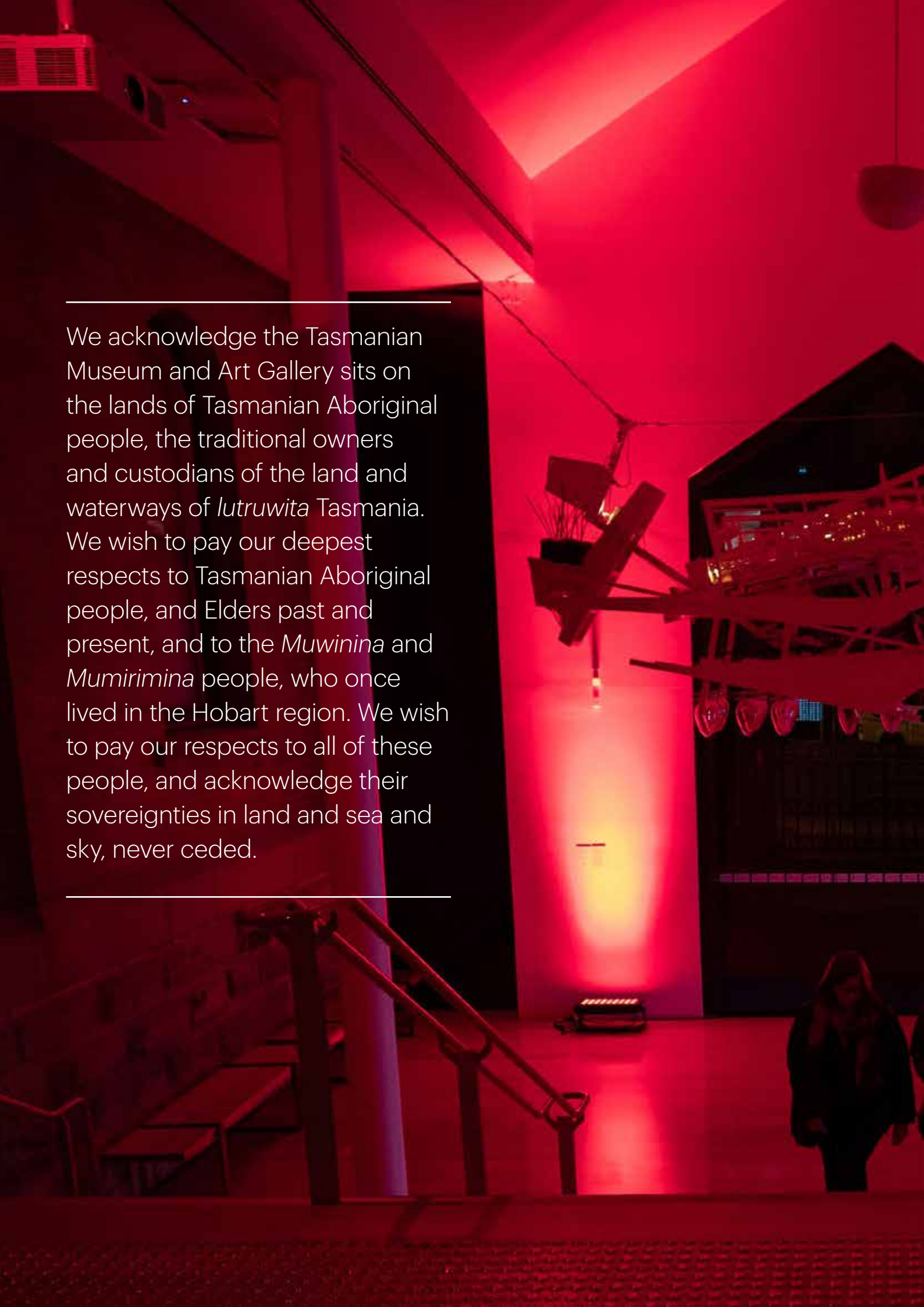
Extraordinary collections creating
extraordinary possibilities

www.tmag.tas.gov.au



TASMANIAN	
MUSEUM	&
ART	GALLERY

We acknowledge the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery sits on the lands of Tasmanian Aboriginal people, the traditional owners and custodians of the land and waterways of *Iutruwita* Tasmania. We wish to pay our deepest respects to Tasmanian Aboriginal people, and Elders past and present, and to the *Muwinina* and *Mumirimina* people, who once lived in the Hobart region. We wish to pay our respects to all of these people, and acknowledge their sovereignties in land and sea and sky, never ceded.



Contents

TMAG is	4
Intent and purpose	5
Four areas of focus	8
The next three years and beyond	10
Strategic Outcomes in detail	12
Outcome 1	13
Outcome 2	15
Outcome 3	17
Measuring our success	19
2016-21 Strategic Plan – what we have achieved	20
History	23

Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery

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Images by the Friends of TMAG, Alistair Bett, Stephenie Cahalan, Stu Gibson, Richard Jupe and Jessica King

Cover image: TMAG's new gallery for children aged 0-7 years, *mapiya lumi* | around here, delights both children and their carers.
Inner page image: TMAG Link Foyer red-lit during Dark Mofo, 2018

TMAG is

The Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG) was founded in the last decades before museums of arts and sciences began to part company. It is a rare survivor of that schism and has retained its original all-encompassing vision. Today, it has again become more relevant, important and vital.

It is a place for both scientific and creative research. A place where the sciences and humanities intersect to consider and confront the world's urgent challenges. These fields are symbiotic: the imagination of the arts gives us new pathways of understanding, whereas the creativity of scientists takes us down unexplored avenues.

TMAG is in a fortunate position, rare in Australia in its powerful combination of a gallery, herbarium and museum. It has the collections and expertise that can be marshalled to educate, propose ideas, stimulate thought and encourage imagination across the spectrum of human knowledge, past and present. Its perspective is uniquely Tasmanian, relevant to locals and visitors alike. TMAG strives to regularly reinvent itself to retain relevance, as all museums must do.

The COVID-19 crisis has provided a further catalyst. Working with the support of the Tasmanian Minister for the Arts through the *Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery Act 2017*, TMAG will play a critical role in Tasmania's Cultural and Creative Recovery Strategy to further a vibrant and resilient cultural sector.

This relevant, contemporary ethos, driven by strong ideas, will lead to even better exhibitions, research outcomes and public engagement. Dynamic reinvention provides stakeholders with compelling reasons for further investment in TMAG. Ideas also drive private benefaction.

Through this reinvention, the new TMAG will take the lead role in a campaign to make Tasmania a cultural centre at the edge of the world.

Julie Gough, 'Some Tasmanian Aboriginal children living with non-Aboriginal people before 1840' (2008)
On loan from the National Gallery of Australia for *Tense Past: Julie Gough* (2019).



Intent and purpose

INTENT

The Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery plays a leading role in positioning Tasmania as a globally significant cultural centre at the edge of the world.

PURPOSE

The Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery tells unique stories that exhilarate and stimulate, by connecting art, science, culture and our environment. We create opportunities that enable participation, reflection, learning and discussion.

The Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG) has been a statutory authority of the Tasmanian Government since 2017, drawing resources and staffing via the Department of State Growth. Corporate services are delivered through State Growth in accordance with a Service Level Agreement.

VALUES AND ATTRIBUTES:

At TMAG, we look outwards towards our visitors, community, and stakeholders – in all our activities.

We are **Bold, Caring, Independent,** and **Passionate,** as we aspire to awaken and enliven new experiences for all.

In addition, **Teamwork, Excellence, Integrity** and **Respect** are the Department of State Growth values that underpin all we do.

BOLD

We innovate and experiment with fresh ideas

- We push boundaries and take risks to try new things and accept some failure as part of growth
- We respond to and encourage new thinking and practice in the community
- We take responsibility for our actions even around difficult issues

CARING

We care for our people, visitors, and collections

- We are inclusive ensuring that all in our community have a voice, are heard, and can participate safely
- We take pride in our stewardship of the State Collection for future generations
- We recognise and celebrate our teams’ and partners’ achievements
- We strive to be collaborative with the community and our supporters as well as each other

INDEPENDENT

We champion critical thinking and the use of evidence-based knowledge

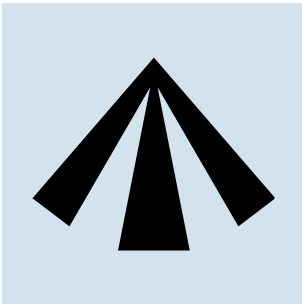
- We encourage people to express their opinions and are considered in our assessments
- We communicate and advise fearlessly based on the evidence from our research
- We apply clear governance and processes to guide our decision-making
- We can be relied upon to work productively on TMAG’s priorities with autonomy

PASSIONATE

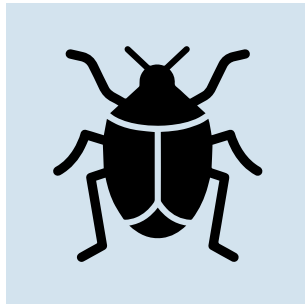
We advocate for Tasmania’s art, history, First Peoples and natural world, and its importance

- We are committed and energetic, challenging ourselves never to be complacent
- We act as ambassadors for TMAG at all times when sharing our work
- We are inspiring storytellers using our collection to engage people

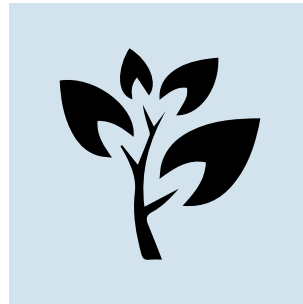
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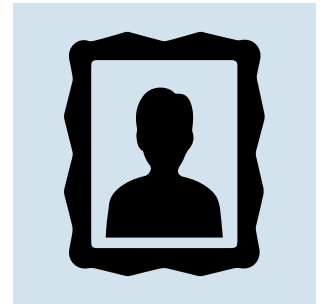
A museum of history



A museum of science



A herbarium



An art gallery



Custodian of Tasmania's State Collection



Around 70 staff and 100 passionate long-term volunteers



Supported by over 1 000 passionate Friends and Foundation members

TMAG manages six locations:



- 📍 Museum, Art Gallery and Administration at Davey Street
- 📍 Collections and Research facility in Rosny
- 📍 Tasmanian Herbarium, our botanical collections and research, on the University of Tasmania Sandy Bay Campus
- 📍 Markree House Museum and Garden in Battery Point
- 📍 Narryna Heritage Museum in Battery Point
- 📍 Moonah Collection and Conservation facility

TMAG collections further afield:

- 📍 The West Coast Heritage Centre, Zeehan
- 📍 The Australasian Golf Museum, Bothwell

Four areas of focus

TMAG's remarkable collections create extraordinary possibilities but, in order for us to thrive and be different, we must focus on a small number of key narratives across all areas of our work. These bring our intent and purpose to life for our community and supporters.

An island in a changing world

Islands are different. Surrounded by ocean they can follow their own pace and can sometimes be the first to innovate or the last to respond – protected by their watery buffer from the ever-changing world beyond. For Tasmania's inhabitants there is an intimate closeness to each other and the natural world, and a clear connection between the people and the environment – even if it is sometimes an uneasy relationship. Geographical isolation has led to the evolution of different plants and animals, survivors in a refuge from the mainland. It is this closeness that leads us to intersections between otherwise disparate circumstances and breeds innovation, with sometimes extraordinary outcomes where Tasmania punches above its weight. Our small scale makes development, adaptation and impact quickly visible, and sometimes hotly contested – but Tasmania has found itself at the forefront of addressing global challenges.

First Peoples of *Iutruwita* Tasmania

The unique culture of the First Peoples of *Iutruwita* Tasmania is a vital story that should be heard, but must be led by First Peoples. The continuing practices, reclaiming of traditional knowledge, fights for justice and conciliation, and contemporary relationship to Country are all key narratives that TMAG can facilitate in partnership with the Community. But first there is work for TMAG to do. The legacy of colonialism and the part that TMAG played needs to be addressed, and heritage such as petroglyphs repatriated. Reconnecting with Culture and Country, and using traditional knowledge and leadership could provide better outcomes for all. *Iutruwita*'s First Peoples have shaped and continue to shape culture on this island and what it means to be Tasmanian.



Migration, heritage and resilience

Tasmania has seen waves of occupation by migrating people which continue to cause profound changes in land use and the Tasmanian way of life. Arrivals from convicts and pastoralists through to post-war workers and recent migrants have reshaped the landscape for their purposes and moulded the strong sense of identity that sets this state apart. For many years the economic and social challenges faced by Tasmanians have built resilience and stoicism. This is reflected through our people, who work more than one job, leave the state for work and then return for family – or the famous one degree of separation. There has been a tendency towards simplicity and self-sufficiency. Poverty and isolation have allowed much of the heritage to remain visible in Tasmania, but also led to new thinking and ideas, ranging from wineries and wasabi to mountain biking and tulips. Beneath the face Tasmania presents to the world are the challenging stories only now being told, but which have been just as important in forging Tasmanian resilience.

Southern extremes and perspectives

Tasmania lies between mainland Australia and Antarctica, and beyond the South Cape lies only the Southern Ocean and Antarctica, with the streak of Macquarie Island somewhere in-between. On a typical map Tasmania is at the edge of the world, sometimes even beyond. We have a unique perspective on the globe from the end of some of the longest supply chains in the world, and as the gateway to Antarctica for explorers and scientists. This southern outlook from the margins (in other people's eyes) of civilisation means Tasmanians often see the world differently, and drives the need to create value from small-scale activity here. Whether it is permaculture design, ecotourism, opium poppies, artisan spirits, or designs made from the island's unique timbers, there is a need to build trade and other links with the mainland and beyond – the famous double hop. For artists this southern outlook provides inspiration, whereas for scientists the biota, geology, climate and wildness helps them discover how the world came to be as it is, and what the future holds. For the unique animals and plants of Tasmania this is the end of the line; there is no further south for them to go as climate and habitats change.

The next three years and beyond

TMAG has identified THREE STRATEGIC OUTCOMES for 2021-24, and beyond. The AREAS OF FOCUS will underpin all we do in order to play a leading role in positioning Tasmania as a globally significant centre of culture and knowledge at the edge of the world.

Our efforts will contribute to our INTENT, align with TMAG's PURPOSE, and support our organisational VALUES, while always meeting our obligations under the *Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery Act 2017*.



Outcome

1

Be accessible to the Tasmanian and global community.

We will provide a cultural hub so that our visitors can be inspired by Tasmania's unique journey, and local communities can know and use their wonderful resources on their own terms.

Outcome

2

Tell unique stories that exhilarate and stimulate through our strong collections.

Through knowledge generated and shared by our experts, visitors, and the community, TMAG will build and care for strong collections that represent our unique environment, culture and heritage; that tell Tasmania's stories; that grow to reflect our contemporary identity; and are brought to life in our historical precinct.

Outcome

3

Have engaged and involved communities by enabling participation, reflection, learning and discussion.

We will nurture communities of interest that help to choose and share the stories TMAG tells, and become their museum's strongest advocates.

Strategic outcomes in detail



Opening nights in the Central Gallery are an opportunity to welcome our community of supporters and stakeholders.

Outcome 1

Be accessible to the Tasmanian and global community

Welcome and connect our diverse visitors

- Always ensure everyone is personally welcomed to our physical locations – or increasingly can enjoy a positive online experience – depending on how they choose to access TMAG. The visitor experience should be diverse and offer evocative journeys physically and virtually, including encounters with staff and volunteers, and opportunities to take and share images and knowledge.
- Reinforce TMAG as a cultural and social hub through activities and engagement across all disciplines, and actively design multi- and inter-disciplinary programs including First Peoples' perspectives.
- Open TMAG at times to suit our visitors, such as during the summer tourist season, festivals and for late night events in a safe and appropriate manner.
- Make TMAG's experience more accessible to everyone, including those with disabilities and from non-English speaking backgrounds.
- Continually improve the TMAG experience by incorporating visitor feedback in our planning processes.

Inspire visitors by making TMAG a globally significant cultural centre

- Ensure TMAG's city site is central to the cultural precinct, a place of great significance and a visibly prominent Hobart attraction enabled by the Rosny Collections and Research Facility.
- Emphasise and care for TMAG's heritage buildings so they are acknowledged for their significance and recognised as part of the TMAG visitor experience.
- Transform our existing property portfolio to support our current, emerging and future exhibition, engagement, storage, research and financial needs.
- Develop information and resource facilities that include community access points and tools for enquiry to facilitate community research and foster collective ownership of the collection.

- Nurture our younger visitors in their exploration of the world, and foster the next generation of museum visitors, creating opportunities that enable participation, reflection, learning and discussion.
- Create a vibrant multi-year program of exhibitions, events and activities both physically and virtually, prioritised by our four areas of focus, and including significant participation in major festivals.
- Explore and realise opportunities for fee-paying activities to increase TMAG revenue and capacity to deliver high-quality experiences.
- Enhance the visitor experience by providing an outstanding food and beverage service, which provides a significant gathering place for locals.

Improve TMAG's digital services to grow engagement and make it easier for visitors everywhere to access museum content

- Overhaul our website, mobile-device interface and program collateral to better serve the needs of the audience, including expanding our reach and impact in alerting visitors to daily activities both physically and virtually through signage and social media.
- Provide a better user experience through new, enhanced online functionality, collection management system accessibility and the TMAG web platform to foster deeper appreciation of the collection both virtually and physically.
- Promote the highlights and scope of the collection online, including telling Tasmania's unique stories, and effectively utilise the power of the new, integrated content management system by increasing the number of collection items accessible.
- Create online enhancements such as dynamic exhibition content, participation programs, and opportunities to meet and interact with TMAG staff and specialists virtually.
- Build the reputation of the virtual tours program and deliver state-wide engagement for schools and communities.



Children captivated by the collection in *This Too Shall Pass*.

Outcome 2

Tell unique stories that exhilarate and stimulate through our strong collections

Build a State Collection that represents Tasmania's story which grows to reflect contemporary history, culture and research

- Continue to collect representative items of Tasmanian significance in indigenous cultures, natural sciences, art and history that strengthen the State Collection, with a particular reference to the four areas of focus.
- Ensure strong representation of Tasmanian First Peoples' cultural material, including a focus on the present, working in close partnership with communities across Tasmania, advised by the TMAG Aboriginal Advisory Council (TAAC).
- Ensure currency of collection policies and departmental strategies to undertake the focussed and strategic development of the State Collection in line with the four areas of focus.
- Consult widely and engage with the Tasmanian community to inform acquisition decisions and build strong collections.
- Grow the annual *Expedition of Discovery* into the major annual collecting initiative for our scientists and key partners, working to document new species and new knowledge in previously poorly studied areas of the state.

Care for the collection on behalf of current and future generations

- Continue to implement and activate the TMAG-wide collection management system to transform the recording, curating, auditing, accessing and care for Tasmania's collections.
- Complete the large scale digitisation of TMAG collection objects for publication online.
- Provide partners and the community with free and open access to our data.
- Develop a team of highly-skilled staff and volunteers to support digitisation by providing training in photogrammetry, collection care, and improving records.

Bring the collection to life through research

- Undertake high-quality research, with particular reference to the four areas of focus, and communicate it to a broad audience through professional journals, conference papers, online publications and public programs.
- Increase knowledge of the collection and its applications by nurturing collaboration and strong research partnerships with relevant stakeholders and organisations.
- Identify and showcase the research questions that TMAG plays a pivotal role in solving.
- Be recognised for taking a leading role in Tasmanian historical, scientific and art knowledge and advice.



Senior Curator of Cultural Heritage, Kirstie Ross and Public Program Officer, Richard Hale, learn from the students of St Joseph's Catholic School, Rosebery as part of the community consultation sessions sponsored by Hydro Tasmania and the Tasmanian Community Fund for West: *Out on the Edge* (2019).

Outcome 3

Have engaged and involved communities by enabling participation, reflection, learning and discussion

Build participation so the community is engaged and involved in choosing, creating and sharing the stories that TMAG tells, and how those stories are told

- Establish a digital Learning Lab to foster an involved community through the delivery of new blended learning tools and resources.
- Strengthen the relationship with TMAG Aboriginal Advisory Council and across Tasmanian Aboriginal communities through implementation of the Australian Museums and Galleries Association *First Peoples Roadmap*, and by taking a leadership role in building engagement within the state.
- Use advisory and reference panels to build and nurture connections with key audiences such as teachers and children, and new groups such as migrants to Tasmania.
- Be active in all parts of the state with community events, educational initiatives, collecting initiatives, and taking part in festivals, which build awareness of TMAG and the State Collection.

Grow a thriving and mutually-beneficial community of volunteers

- Create projects, including digital ones that are accessible virtually, to provide volunteering opportunities that act as a magnet to build participation and connection in the life of TMAG.
- Encourage those already active as our Friends and supporters to communicate and advocate to grow our volunteer projects.

Foster reflection, learning and discussion

- Encourage use of the TMAG website, social media channels and third party apps to share experiences, review TMAG and talk with us.
- Build awareness and an engaged community, including a global one, through regular updates and news, through creating unique content that can be shared online, and through social media channels.

Partners, funders and communities choose TMAG because it meets their needs

- Be welcoming, inclusive and meaningful for our partners and supporters to nurture long-term mutually beneficial relationships.
- Continue to partner with the galleries, libraries, archives and museums (GLAM) and the herbarium sectors to build access to our collections, information and knowledge.
- Help partners connect to our visitors at our sites, through our staff and programs, and through volunteer projects, to amplify their engagement and impact.
- Sustain a compelling program for life-long learning in partnership with Tasmania's leading educational, research and cultural organisations.



Conservation work using equipment purchased with the support of the Friends of TMAG on 'Theme and Variation', a painting by Australian artist Adrian Feint, bequested to TMAG by Ruth Komon (2005).



Measuring our success

Achievement of the three strategic outcomes will be underpinned by transformational use of resources to diversify the revenue base to become more self-reliant. The development of an entrepreneurial environment enables us to maximise self-earned, government, grant-based and private funding streams and increase support by building upon our mutually beneficial partnerships.

Each year the Strategic Plan is used as the basis for an annual business plan linked to budget and resources and including KPIs.

By tracking our performance, we will stay on target to deliver the impact of enriching, inspiring and educating local and global communities by connecting them with Tasmania's unique journey and place in the world.

Our tools include: refereed publications, engagement data, visitation statistics, project delivery, media, social media analytics, client surveys and written visitor feedback. TMAG will measure our impact as a tourist and online destination, collecting and research institution, community hub, focus for volunteering, an information source, charity and more.

Our progress is communicated with key stakeholders and via annual reports, partner and donor reports, media and social media.

2016-21 Strategic Plan – what we have achieved

We have created a welcoming physical and virtual destination

This has been achieved through our major exhibitions such as *Julie Gough: Tense Past; West: Out on the Edge; One Hell of an Inferno: The 1967 Tasmanian Bushfires; The Remarkable Tasmanian Devil; Tempest; kanalaritja: An Unbroken String; The National Picture; Thomas Bock and David Keeling: Stranger.*

Smaller high-calibre exhibitions have added immense value and interest including, *Discovering the Flora of Wind Song: Botanical Art and Science; Around the World in 80 Objects; Exquisite Habits: the Botanical Art of Stephanie Dean; Balnhdhurr – A lasting Impression; The Derwent; Inscription and Place; The Art of Science: Baudin's Voyagers 1800 – 1804; Patricia Giles: A World of My Own.*

We have launched *mapiya lumi* | around here, our major new space for children, and the beautiful gardens and tangible history of Narryna and Markree, are regularly open for the public to enjoy.

We have built strong collections that tell Tasmania's story

The annual *Expedition of Discovery* program to survey the animals and plants of poorly studied regions of Tasmania, and key acquisitions to develop and enhance the State Collection continue to ensure the protection of our cultural and natural heritage for generations to come.

The collections are accessed through the updated *Flora of Tasmania* online, the definitive account of the State's flora, for better informed natural resource management decisions and legislative compliance.

The Digital Cultural Experience (DCE) partnership has implemented new collections and digital asset management systems, we have prototyped an Augmented Reality App, and TMAG has provided successful digital programming through TMAG-from-Home online services.

Tasmanac is an almanac of Tasmania's past and present told through stories from its heritage register, archives, museums and history rooms, and a planned knowledge hub will enhance and build community engagement through facilities for conservation, digitisation and research.

We have fostered an involved community

TMAG has forged a new relationship with the Tasmanian Aboriginal people through the delivery of the Apology to Tasmanian Aboriginal People in February 2021 and commitments to a new, more respectful and collaborative future.

Lift Off! TMAG's Festival for Children and Young People is now a regular fixture in the Tasmanian festival calendar, and our Children's Reference Panel continues to play an important role in providing TMAG with valuable advice.

We have launched a multi-year project to collect and tell the stories of recent migrants to Tasmania.

Our partners and stakeholders have helped present locally and nationally important exhibitions such as *Hobart Current: Liberty; Extinction Studies; Beaker Street Science Photography Prize, The Change Room; Hobiennale 2019 and 2017; Making Marks: a celebration of Children's Art 2019; Dirty Paper; Antarctic Photography Exhibition 2016 and 2018; Make Your Mark: Home; Full Void and The Early Dutch Explorers.*

Our reputation as an outward facing organisation has been consolidated through partnerships including with the University of Tasmania, Dark Mofo, Detached Cultural Organisation, The Royal Society of Tasmania, the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Department of Education, Tourism Tasmania and the City of Hobart and other local governments.

We have transformed our use of resources

We have welcomed new governance arrangements including the *Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery Act 2017* and championed a masterplan for the City site, studying how best to deliver TMAG's functional requirements and enhance revenue-generating opportunities.

We have diversified revenue sources through a ticketed exhibition and improved sponsorship, grant and philanthropic efforts across all our exhibitions and public programs.

A major capital project has also enhanced the experience and sustainability of the historic building and garden at Narryna.



Lab work during the 2018 Expedition of Discovery, at Mussleroe Bay, supported by Woolnorth Wind Farms.

A photograph of a person with short grey hair, wearing a light-colored patterned shirt, sitting at a desk and looking through a microscope. The desk is cluttered with various items, including a purple pen, a white plate, and some papers. In the background, there are wooden shelves with various supplies and a pink ribbon hanging from the ceiling. The setting appears to be a laboratory or a museum's research area.

History

The Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG) precinct is one of Australia's most historically significant sites. The area has played an important role in Aboriginal life for tens of thousands of years and falls within the traditional lands of the *Muwinina* people. It was also the site chosen for the first permanent settlement by the British settlers in 1804.

TMAG has a collection that spans millions of years and represents knowledge and wisdom from tens of thousands of years of cultural practice. As an institution, TMAG is the second museum to be founded in Australia, and has its origins in the collections of Australia's oldest scientific society, the Royal Society of Tasmania, established in 1843. The first permanent home of the museum opened on the corner of Argyle and Macquarie streets in 1863, and the museum has gradually expanded from this corner to occupy the entire city block.

Included in the precinct is Tasmania's oldest surviving public building, the 1808-10 Commissariat Store; the Private Secretary's Cottage, built prior to 1815 and originally adjacent to old Government House; and Tasmania's first federal building, the 1902 Custom House.

At TMAG we care for the State Collection of Tasmania: around one million objects as diverse as fossils and fine art. The collection represents the essence of Tasmania's history, art and biodiversity. It has been inspiring a sense of awe and wonder in visitors for generations. It is a vital record of what it means to be Tasmanian, and a key reference to understand our place within the global community. Our collection is our main point of difference and is the basis for research and enquiry, public programs and exhibitions. Collections are used to assist and encourage people to ask questions, engage critically, and explore new ideas.

The State Collection belongs to the people of Tasmania. With our transition to a Statutory Authority in 2018 our next chapter has begun. With the reinforced support of the State Government our independent Board has the autonomy to make TMAG flourish within a community that will continue to enjoy attachment to, and investment in, their Tasmanian treasures.

