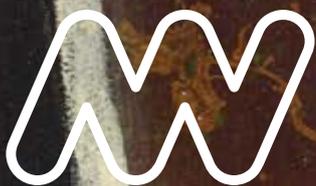


Strategic Plan

2017–2025



**MUSEUMS
VICTORIA**



Image — Robert Zugaro
Cover image — James Geer

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Acknowledgement

Museums Victoria would like to acknowledge Melbourne's Traditional Owners, the Wurundjeri and Boon wurrung of the Kulin Nation and pay our respects to their Elders, both past and present.

We also acknowledge the ongoing and significant partnership maintained between the Victorian Koorie community and Museums Victoria.

Together we share the stories of over 38 distinct language groups, celebrating the culture and history of Victoria's First Peoples.

Cover image acknowledgement

Artist: Craig Allan Charles
Yorta Yorta/Latje Latje/Mhutti Mhutti Peoples
A Pocket Full of Guardian Eagle, 2007
Acrylic, silver leaf, mixed medium on canvas 137 x 112cm
Museums Victoria. First Peoples Collection X 104886

Above image

Artists: Maree Clarke – Yorta Yorta/Mutti Mutti/ Boonwurrung/Wemba Wemba Peoples
Len Tregonning – Gunnai/Kurnai Peoples
Meeytmeet or Lean-now. Kangaroo tooth necklace, 2008
Kangaroo teeth, kangaroo sinew, kangaroo leather, emu oil, ochre, wattle gum. 35 x 35cm
Museums Victoria. First Peoples Collection X 104908

Message from the Chief Executive Officer

We live in an extraordinary world, in which new and wondrous discoveries about our universe, our planet and the communities we share can inspire new insights and understanding. At the same time, the pace of environmental, social and technological change occurring around us can feel daunting as we struggle to understand our place in an uncertain future.

As we face the opportunities, challenges and choices before us, Museums Victoria's role in sharing and exchanging knowledge, experiences and expertise has never been more critical. As one of the world's leading museum organisations, we are uniquely placed to help audiences make sense of this world and foster greater understanding of the deep connections we have to each other and to our environment.

Museums Victoria's Strategic Plan 2017–2025 has been crafted with extensive participation and input from across the organisation. It is an ambitious plan that charts new directions and captures our aspirations for our society and for our planet. The plan reflects the passion of our people, volunteers, and partners, and will help us realise our vision for *People enriched by wondrous discovery and trusted knowledge*, and *Society compelled to act for a thriving future*.

Our Strategic Plan is underpinned by three transformational themes that are our primary response to achieving our mission:

- Walking in partnership with our First Peoples, we will place the richness, wisdom and depth of their histories and living cultures at the core of Museums Victoria's experiences
- In making sense of the world around us, we will deliver foundation narratives that tell the stories of the Universe, Life and Humans — inspiring our audiences with wonder and passion for nature and science, and creating a deep sense of connection to our world and to each other
- We will create digital experiences that deliver Museums Victoria's stories, research, collections and content far beyond our walls to the world at large. As a leading centre for technological and scientific excellence, we will foster innovation and enterprise in Victoria.

The future we plan for is underpinned by financial growth, a strong brand and highly engaged people. Aligned with the Victorian Government's objectives, including the *Creative State* strategy, this Strategic Plan outlines our vision and charts our direction to 2025, providing the road map to delivering captivating physical and virtual spaces that enrich us and compel us to act for a thriving future.

I am extremely grateful to Museums Victoria's people, our volunteers and external colleagues and partners who contributed significantly to shaping our strategic path, and particularly acknowledge the more than 380 participants who attended our strategic planning workshop. I look forward to working together with you all in realising our inspiring Vision.



Lynley Marshall
Chief Executive Officer

Introduction

We are living in an era of innovation and invention, in which our ability to understand our connections to and influence on the world around us is increasingly important.

On an almost daily basis, new technologies are providing insights into previously unknown parts of our universe, our remarkable planet and the rich intricacies of human existence. These ever-expanding vistas of scientific knowledge stand alongside the deep truths about our world and environment passed on by the oldest living culture, Australia's First Peoples.

As the world becomes more connected, we are able to share and hear each other's stories with an immediacy that was unthinkable just half a century ago.

And yet it is also a world of unprecedented challenges. In addition to abundance and possibility there is growing inequality and conflict. Amidst change, our communities and the environment suffer. As a society we need to act.

For more than 160 years, the people of Victoria have turned to their State museum to connect the past and the present, and to imagine the future. As Australasia's largest museum organisation, we inspire audiences to engage in life's deep mysteries and big questions.

Our museums present unique and exceptional experiences for more than 2 million visitors who come from each year, who come from all over across Australia and around the world to be inspired and to learn about themselves and the universe we inhabit.

Our reach and impact across the State is unparalleled. We are a leading contributor to the Victorian education sector and are active in every Local Government Area through our outreach programs, touring exhibitions, field work and onsite education programs. Our major exhibitions and events are important drivers of tourism to Victoria, and we support a broad spectrum of local creative industries through our ongoing cycle of exhibition developments.

At Museums Victoria we are motivated by our changing world, and compelled to define a thriving future for ourselves and the world we share. This is an exciting time in our history and we are strongly placed to take advantage of the opportunities ahead of us. This Strategic Plan outlines our vision for the future and how we are going to achieve it.

Our strategic context

In a world of innovation and discovery, and in a period of change and instability, museums are a vital source of knowledge for individuals and communities to confidently face the future.

As trust in traditional sources of information continues to erode, museums offer opportunities for meaningful enquiry into topics that confront our society. Cultural, sociological and environmental change generates questions and uncertainty as we try to make sense of the world around us. Drawing on deep reserves of knowledge, insight and investigation, museums are uniquely able to create meaning and foster understanding. Through engagement and shared experiences, we can equip communities for a rapidly changing world by connecting them to essential narratives of our existence: the stories of Life, the Universe and Human experience.

Although we live in an age of continual technological discovery and innovation, the knowledge to create the future we hope for may not be new. The rich culture and wisdom of Australia's First Peoples, the world's oldest living culture, is recognised globally — yet injustice and disadvantage prevails. Placing First Peoples' knowledge, learning and voices at the heart of what we do will foster cultural understanding and social cohesion.

Museums Victoria's collection of more than 17 million items is also a unique and invaluable source of knowledge. Tracing our social, natural and cultural histories, the collection is a vital foundation for ongoing scientific and cultural exploration. Research is shared globally through partnerships with leading institutions and enabled by diligent collection management practices that set international benchmarks. As our collections continue to develop in an era of exponentially increasing content, a strategic focus is required to ensure we enhance areas of strength, increase regional relevance and anticipate the needs of future generations.

Creating and exchanging knowledge has also become central to the transformation of Victoria's economy. In this context the intellectual assets at the heart of Museums Victoria — our collections, research and expertise — embody extraordinary potential. There is a compelling opportunity for the Museum to explore new ways to engage with creative industries of all kinds, with the potential for increased contributions to the State economy through new products, innovation and design. Diversified revenue streams will strengthen Museums Victoria's financial sustainability at a time of increased austerity and growing pressures on government funding.

As the State grows, population expansion in Melbourne and our regional centres will parallel increased numbers of visitors to Victoria from interstate and overseas. As our potential audience diversifies and expands, so must our capacity for providing welcoming, captivating and unmissable experiences for visitors of all ages, abilities, cultures and socio-economic backgrounds.

We have a lot going for us at Museums Victoria, and we're well positioned to meet the challenges we face. Equally, we can pursue many opportunities to improve. Our people — staff and volunteers — are an incredible source of strength for the organisation. Collectively we possess expertise in every realm of museum business.

However, in a context of change, we must be open to new ways of doing things. An audience-centred approach to digital platforms will take the richness and breadth of Museums Victoria's knowledge and collections to global audiences. As we plan for our future, we will nurture and grow our digital expertise and reshape the ways in which Museums Victoria delivers content and experiences, physically and virtually.

Our vision is an enriched society, compelled to act for a thriving future. To achieve this, Museums Victoria will exemplify the engaged, informed and inspired community we envision.

STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

VISION

People enriched by wondrous discovery and trusted knowledge

Society compelled to act for a thriving future

MISSION

We create knowledge and experiences that help us make sense of the world

We exchange stories about culture, history and science and fearlessly discuss the big questions of life

We collect traces of time and place that allow us to connect the past, present and future

We make captivating physical and virtual spaces that open minds and hearts

VALUES

Strive – We are intrepid and enjoy a challenge

Embrace – We are a place where everybody belongs

Explore – We passionately search for bold new ideas and smarter ways of doing things

Respect – We walk in the shoes of those we meet

Illuminate – We ensure our knowledge, actions and decisions are visible, and welcome investigation

Sustain – We nourish and care for ourselves and the things we are responsible for

TRANSFORMATIONAL THEMES

1 Place First Peoples' living cultures, histories and knowledge at the core of Museums Victoria's practice

2 Develop a set of foundation narratives that tell the story of the Universe, Life and Humans

3 Develop an audience-centred Digital Life that delivers experiences beyond our walls

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1 Museums Victoria provides unmissable experiences for all audiences

2 Museums Victoria has the primary material collection that inspires and allows excellent enquiry into our region's big contemporary and historical questions

3 Museums Victoria engages with, welcomes and celebrates all communities

4 Museums Victoria is a centre for technological and scientific expertise and fosters innovation to build economic value

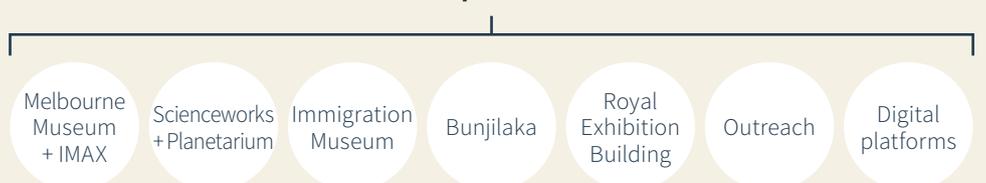
5 Museums Victoria is a sustainable and thriving organisation

BACKBONE FOR DELIVERY

Knowledge



Spaces



ENABLERS

People and culture

Investment in technology

Partnerships

Leveraging our assets

Our strategic plan

Museums Victoria's Strategic Plan outlines our approach to evolve as a dynamic and responsive museum organisation that engages broadly and deeply with audiences across Victoria, Australia and the world.

Three Transformational Themes form the foundation to deliver our Strategic Plan and represent our most important and significant areas of response to our changing context. These themes identify priority actions to drive transformational changes in how Museums Victoria creates knowledge and experiences, exchanges stories about culture, history and science, and makes captivating spaces that open minds and hearts.

Our five Strategic Objectives, underpinned by a set of accompanying principles, chart our path and set our targets towards becoming an unmissable experience; a cherished and renowned centre for innovation and scientific excellence; and creating a culture of inclusivity that celebrates and welcomes diversity.

The Backbone for delivery of the plan is formed by our Knowledge and Spaces, in recognition that our collections and research underpin all that we do, and our spaces — physical and virtual — are integral to the experiences we offer.

Implementation of the Strategic Plan will be enabled by developing our people and enhancing our culture, investing in our technology, strengthening our extensive partnerships network and leveraging our assets.

Transformational themes

Theme 1

Develop and implement a strategy that ensures Museums Victoria, in partnership with our First Peoples, inclusively sets First Peoples' living cultures, histories and knowledge at the core of Museums Victoria's practice

Theme 2

Develop a set of foundation narratives that tell the story of the Universe, Life and Humans, and which align all of Museums Victoria's sites, experiences, research, collections, exhibitions and programs

Theme 3

Develop a Digital Life for Museums Victoria that takes the wonder and inspiration of our collections, knowledge and expertise beyond our walls through audience-centred experiences that connect with hearts and minds

Strategic objectives

Strategic objective 1

Museums Victoria provides unmissable experiences for all audiences

Principle	We will grow our audiences by creating unique, engaging and contemporary experiences of global relevance that harness our collections, research and stories
Priority initiatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1.1 Introduce a layer of interpretation reflecting First Peoples' history and culture to Museums Victoria's experiences1.2 Create innovative and engaging experiences across all sites, platforms and channels that fulfil our Vision and Mission, connect to the foundation narratives and contribute to Museums Victoria's sustainability1.3 Deliver unique and engaging content to audiences through Museums Victoria's Digital Life strategy1.4 Develop and implement a plan to grow international visitation
Performance targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• First Peoples' stories, experiences, cultures and history are integrated into all of Museums Victoria's exhibitions and programs• Museums Victoria has grown total annual visitation to 3.25 million and tripled our annual digital reach by 2025, securing its place among the world's top 10 most visited museums• Digital Life strategy developed and one key initiative well established by the end of 2018• Museums Victoria has developed and embedded a process of assessing current and proposed collections, research, experiences, exhibitions and programs for alignment with the Vision and Transformational Themes

Strategic objective 2

Museums Victoria has the primary material collection that inspires and allows excellent enquiry into our region's big contemporary and historical questions

Principle	Our collections and research focus on subjects and material where there is regional relevance, where we have comparative advantage or where they are required to support a compelling presentation of our three narratives
Priority initiatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none">2.1 Develop and implement a strategy to partner and collaborate with First Peoples to ensure a culturally respectful and appropriate approach to our collections and research2.2 Develop and implement a sustainable research and collections strategy2.3 Develop strategic partnerships that grow Museum Victoria's external research funding base2.4 Develop new collection preservation and access facilities based on a sustainable collections strategy2.5 Review and update Museums Victoria's <i>Collection Digitisation Plan 2016–2019</i> to ensure compatibility with Museums Victoria's Digital Life strategy and future digital initiatives
Performance targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Museums Victoria's total annual research funding has grown to \$1.4 million by 2025• 85% of Museums Victoria's annual research publications are of regional significance by 2025• 85% of Museums Victoria's collection development is of regional significance by 2025• Museums Victoria has secured funding for new collection preservation and access facilities by December 2020

Strategic objective 3

Museums Victoria engages with, welcomes and celebrates all communities

Principle	We welcome and are inclusive of all communities and actively seek to engage under-represented audiences
Priority initiatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none">3.1 Transform the Immigration Museum to be a vibrant living multicultural centre for the exploration of identity and multicultural life in Melbourne and Victoria3.2 Develop and implement a strategy to increase Museums Victoria's inclusiveness of under-represented audiences3.3 Develop a coordinated strategy that broadens and deepens engagement with regional and rural communities3.4 Strengthen Museums Victoria's multi-lingual services
Performance targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transformation of the Immigration Museum is complete by December 2019• Museums Victoria's annual visitation from under-represented audiences — including Indigenous individuals and communities, people with disability or who experience social or economic disadvantage, those from rural and regional areas, and non-English speaking communities have each doubled by 2025• Museums Victoria has doubled its annual offsite activity and audience engagement in regional Victoria by 2025

Strategic objective 4

Museums Victoria is a centre for technological and scientific expertise and fosters innovation to build economic value

Principle	We create economic value by driving innovation and enterprise through creating experiences that engage public and commercial audiences with the possibilities of the future
Priority initiatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none">4.1 Reposition and redevelop Scienceworks as a Museum of the Future4.2 Develop the strategic capability to rapidly deliver programs and exhibitions that respond to emerging opportunities and the world around Museums Victoria4.3 Establish an incubator that works with partners to seed, develop and fund new concepts that drive economic value and contribute to Museums Victoria's sustainability4.4 Develop and launch a dedicated learning lab that facilitates learning for visitors from pre-school age through to retirement
Performance targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scienceworks has been redeveloped and launched as the Museum of the Future by 2025• Three of Museums Victoria's incubator projects have attracted third party funding by December 2021• Scienceworks has doubled its number of active education and industry partners by 2025

Strategic objective 5

Museums Victoria is a sustainable and thriving organisation

Principle	Our future is underpinned by financial growth, a strong brand and an engaged and high-performing workforce
Priority initiatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none">5.1 Collaborate with First Peoples to develop and implement an employment strategy for First Peoples across all areas of Museums Victoria5.2 Develop a high-performing workplace that is diverse, innovative, responsive, inclusive, safe, and reflects Museums Victoria's values5.3 Grow Museums Victoria's sustainable funding base through new philanthropic, corporate and commercial revenue streams and by optimising existing funding streams5.4 Refresh the Museums Victoria brand and strengthen marketing and promotion of Museums Victoria, the individual museums and their unique proposition5.5 Develop a performance measurement framework that enables tracking, reporting and analysis of performance of Museums Victoria, including performance against our environmental, social and economic impact
Performance targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The number of Indigenous Museums Victoria employees has doubled by December 2021• Museums Victoria's EBIT position has returned to positive by FY18/19 and remains positive• Museums Victoria has an annual operating margin of 5%• Museums Victoria has developed and launched its new brand by June 2018• Museums Victoria annually tracks its workplace performance through the 'Great Place to Work' survey and breaks into the top 100 rankings by 2020• Museums Victoria has established growing philanthropic and commercial partnership revenue streams by 2019



Backbone for delivery

At the core of the delivery of Museums Victoria's Strategic Plan is our Knowledge, founded in the state's collection, and our Spaces, both physical and virtual.

Knowledge

Museums Victoria will partner and collaborate with First Peoples to share research and collections relating to the world's oldest living cultures.

Our research efforts will generate deep knowledge that is valuable and accessible to communities both local and far away. We will harness this knowledge to have regional relevance and to provide deep connections with and between the people we serve.

Additionally, we will leverage our knowledge across all digital platforms, creating audience-centric experiences that are accessible and impactful.



Spaces

Museums Victoria will connect to our communities by providing powerful experiences that impact and enhance their lives.

Reinvestment in our physical and digital spaces will support increased visitation and engagement by making our sites more welcoming for diverse communities. As part of this, we will continue to protect our physical infrastructure by ensuring our facilities across all sites are always of high quality.



Our values

Strive | Embrace | Explore | Respect | Illuminate | Sustain

Museums Victoria's values support our vision and shape our culture. Our values represent the essence of who we are, how we behave and what we think is important in work and in life.

- **Strive** – We are intrepid and enjoy a challenge.
We achieve excellence by taking strategic risks and having the courage to disrupt our own and others' ways of thinking. We grow as individuals and as an organisation through the joy of endeavour
- **Embrace** – We are a place where everybody belongs.
We seek and value the inclusion of cultures, identities, capabilities and beliefs in our daily work. We exchange and engage in a rich, diverse pool of knowledge, experience, perspectives and creativity for making decisions
- **Explore** – We passionately search for bold new ideas and smarter ways of doing things.
We seek new ideas and knowledge and implement more effective and innovative approaches. We co-create our shared future, and make a positive impact on our people, audiences, collections, and communities
- **Respect** – We walk in the shoes of those we meet.
We appreciate everyone's abilities, qualities and unique skills, the collections we care for and the land on which we work, with thoughtfulness and consideration
- **Illuminate** – We ensure our knowledge, actions and decisions are visible, and welcome investigation.
We shine a light on ourselves and our endeavours, and ensure they are explained and understood
- **Sustain** – We nourish and care for ourselves and the things we are responsible for.
We act thoughtfully and tenaciously in the pursuit of our goals to ensure the longevity of our people, our organisation, our collections, and our impact within society.

Museums Victoria's values empower us to be the best we can be in working towards Museums Victoria's future. They work together to inspire us in our daily work and shape opportunities for growth and development.

Our enablers

People and culture

People

Our staff are the heart and the face of our organisation.

Museums Victoria recognises that our strength lies with our passionate and expert staff. Success in delivering our Strategic Plan will depend on investing further in developing our people to be able to engage more deeply with broader audiences, including:

- Developing cultural awareness, enabling staff to engage with and assist our increasingly diverse audience and partners, including First Peoples and international tourists
- Building on our ability to engage with our community audiences using effective communication and presentation methods
- Staff learning and development to support individuals and teams

We also recognise the need to strengthen capabilities in certain functions of the organisation. These include cultural expertise in our First Peoples and First Nations; marketing and tourism; foreign languages; and inclusive design capability. To provide new experiences across multiple platforms, we will build and strengthen our expertise in digital media content production as well as digital experience commercialisation that will open up opportunities to diversify our revenue streams.

Culture

Museums Victoria's culture is characterised by passionate staff, driven towards excellence in museum practice and audience experiences. A high-performing, accountable and outcomes-driven culture will complete the foundation required to achieve our strategic ambitions.

Our leadership will reinforce a supportive and strong culture. It will enable our people to embrace challenges and work collaboratively and with agility to pursue new innovations. We will work continuously to model our desired values and behaviours to create a truly supportive workplace culture.

Achievement of our strategic objectives will require embedding an innovative culture that embraces a healthy attitude towards risk-taking and growing Museums Victoria's commercial offer. We must be outward looking and willing to work in different ways to rapidly develop new experiences and exhibitions that respond to what is happening in the world around us. This will fortify a culture of investing in new opportunities, ideas and ways of doing things that is responsive to current affairs and global trends. To support a highly engaged culture, we will implement tools that support effective organisational communication. Together these embedded traits will form a culture that successfully enables delivery of Museums Victoria's Strategic Objectives.

Investment in technology

Museums Victoria recognises the importance of technology as a key enabler to achieving each of our objectives. We will invest in our existing technologies and in efficient internal systems and processes that support sustainability. Adoption of upgraded digital systems will enable our staff to deliver more impactful, relevant and engaging experiences to our diverse audiences.

Digital media content production

Museums Victoria will require the right technology infrastructure and expertise to enable the production of digital content across multiple platforms. We will invest in technologies that facilitate the creation of visual and audio experiences beyond the capabilities of the traditional museum. And a new digital asset management system will allow us to improve the translation of our collections into engaging digital experiences.

Customer relationships management

To pursue all market segments, we will develop our capability to build strong and personal relationships with audiences and strengthen our customer relationship management systems and culture. Improved customer relationship management will deliver better analysis and reporting, supporting our staff to make decisions that reflect our audiences' changing needs and wants.

Partnerships

Museums Victoria's impactful, collaborative and enduring partnerships and networks will position us and raise our profile as an innovative and inclusive museums organisation. Sharing experience, culture and resources with our partners and networks will extend our collective reach and impact. Our partnerships will create new opportunities for innovation and discovery and will unite communities. In particular, we will strengthen our partnerships and networks with:

- Victorian Indigenous communities and organisations
- Tourism operators, domestically and internationally
- Other museums and cultural organisations, locally and globally
- The Victorian Department of Education and Training and schools and education institutions in Victoria
- Innovative entities seeking collaborative environments
- Victorian community organisations
- Research institutions and universities

Leveraging our assets

Better leveraging of Museums Victoria's rich inventory of assets will support the realisation of our strategic objectives.

Delivering a long-term infrastructure plan will position us to ensure that, as custodians, our locally and globally significant sites are well maintained for audiences today and into the future.

Museums Victoria's brand can be better leveraged to commercially market and promote the museums. We will implement a new and invigorated brand strategy and narrative that succinctly unites our three museums and creates clarity around what our organisation is and does.

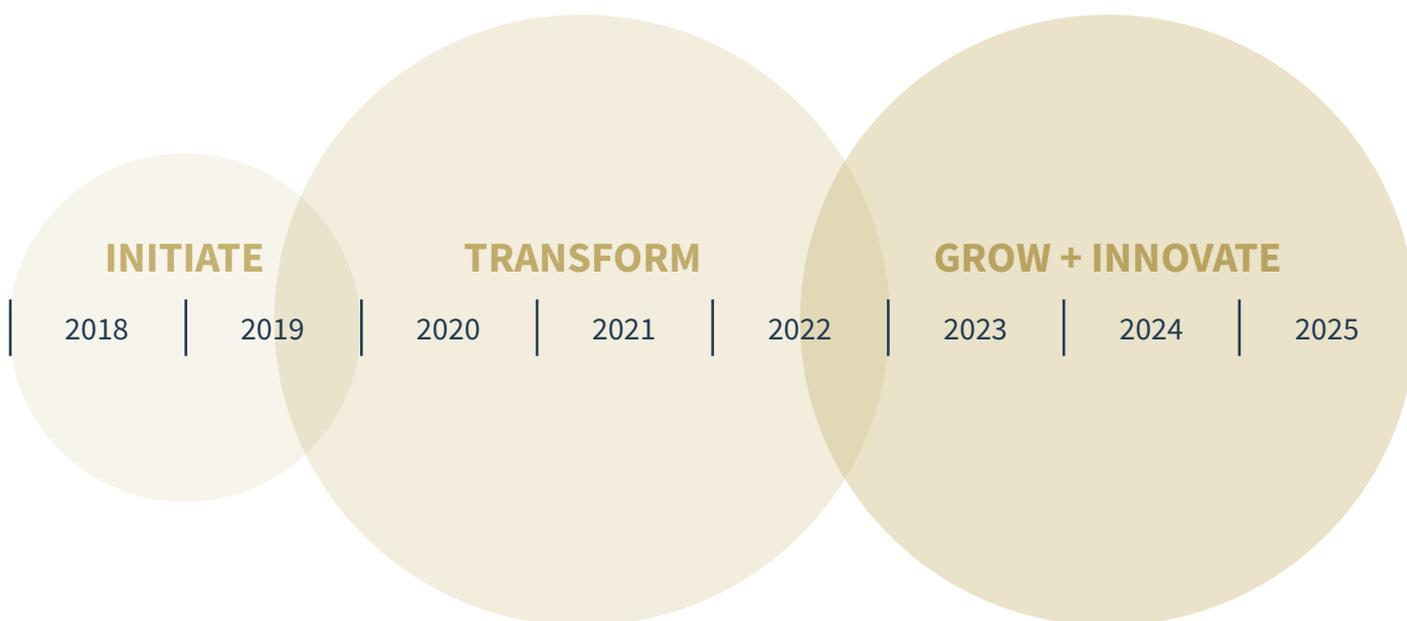
Our collections provide the foundation for our exhibitions, experiences and programs. We will leverage our collection-related content across all platforms to create experiences that are accessible, engaging and impactful to increasingly connected audiences. We will also continue to be an industry leader in collection care standards.

Our resources and approach

We will take a staged approach to implementation of the Strategic Plan. In order to ensure Museums Victoria has sufficient resources to pursue its strategy, we will:

- Support all investments with strong business cases and plans
- Undertake annual business planning

Museums Victoria envisages a three-horizon delivery of its Strategic Plan as shown below.



In the first horizon, Museums Victoria will focus on initiating and laying the foundations of the Strategic Plan, including implementing the foundation narratives. This phase will include consolidating our financial position and pursuing priorities such as brand renewal and establishing an organisational performance measurement framework.

In the second horizon, Museums Victoria will innovate and transform. Key developments will include the transformation of the Immigration Museum, delivery of the Museum of the Future and developing our innovation capability. Museums Victoria will make selective investments to accelerate or pursue key initiatives, particularly those linked to audience or revenue growth.

In the final horizon, Museums Victoria will be positioned to grow and accelerate. The focus in horizon three will be capitalising on the solid foundations and clear direction created in horizons one and two. We will be in a position to accelerate growth in reach and revenue and further invest in innovative, commercial partnerships that will help shape our future beyond 2025.

The staged approach will allow Museums Victoria to pursue our strategy in a way that reflects the organisation's capability and capacity, and balances pursuit of the strategy with delivery of our core business. The phasing of priority and annual initiatives will be a part of the annual business planning process and will allow us to respond as our capabilities grow and opportunities arise.





**MUSEUMS
VICTORIA**