

Annual Report

2025–26
Museums Board
of Victoria

MUSEUMS VICTORIA



This annual report has been produced in accordance with FRD 30 *Standard requirements for the publication of annual reports*, in order to minimise our impact on the environment.

If you need this document in an accessible format please contact Museums Victoria via phone 13 11 02 or email *AskUs@museum.vic.gov.au.*

Further information about Museums Victoria is available at museumsvictoria.com.au

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools have been used to check spelling and grammar, and to refine language for clarity.

Declaration of the Responsible Body

In accordance with the *Financial Management Act 1994*, I am pleased to present the Annual Report for the Museums Board of Victoria for the year ending 30 June 2026.

Mary Stuart
President
Museums Board of Victoria
21 September 2026

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Australasian Reporting Awards GOLD AWARD 2026

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Front cover:
Van de Graaff generator, Lightning Theatre, Scienceworks
Source: Museums Victoria | Photographer: Thomas Breakwell

Inside front cover:
Our Wondrous Planet, Melbourne Museum
Source: Museums Victoria | Photographer: Tim Carrafa

Inside back cover:
Culture Connects Us All event, Immigration Museum
Source: Museums Victoria | Photographer: Tim Carrafa

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Acknowledgement of Country

Museums Victoria acknowledges the Woi Wurrung (Wurundjeri) and Boon Wurrung peoples of the eastern Kulin Nations where we work, and First Peoples language groups and communities across Victoria and Australia.

Our organisation, in partnership with the First Peoples of Victoria, is working to place First Peoples' living cultures and histories at the core of our practice.

President's message



It is my pleasure to present the 2025–26 Annual Report on behalf of the Museums Board of Victoria. This year has been one of challenges, milestones and much success, and I am proud of what we have accomplished and enormously proud of all of our staff and their achievements.

Across our museums, audiences engaged with a diverse range of exhibitions, programs and research, with 3.6 million admissions to our sites this year, and 116.6 million connecting with us digitally. Behind these numbers is our commitment to experiences that are accessible, engaging and relevant for Victorians.

Nowhere was this more evident than in one of the year's true highlights: the opening of *Our Wondrous Planet* at Melbourne Museum. The culmination of many years of vision, planning and collaboration, this landmark exhibition brings together Museums Victoria's world-class collections and research in a powerful experience that inspires curiosity, connection and understanding.

Advancing our strategic priorities

This year marked continued progress in delivering our 2025–30 Strategic Plan. Our focus has been on four key priorities: transforming the Immigration Museum, advocating for redevelopment planning for Scienceworks and our collection stores, a new vision and masterplan for the Royal Exhibition Building, and renewing Melbourne Museum through content masterplanning. Together, these priorities will ensure our museums continue to be contemporary, welcoming and sustainable for generations to come.

Education and engagement

Education remains central to our work. With student participation in education programs exceeding 595,000 sessions this year, Museums Victoria continues to play a leading role in supporting learning across the state. Through onsite programs, supporting curriculum and exhibition-led content, and outreach delivery to more than 62,800 school and kindergarten students, we are making curriculum-linked learning accessible to students across every part of Victoria.

This year, we embarked on a landmark partnership with Swinburne University of Technology, bringing together two leading institutions to create transformative learning experiences for our youth audience. By connecting young people with STEM, design thinking and real-world applications, this partnership inspires curiosity, creativity and a lifelong passion for knowledge.

Immigration Museum – community voice and participation

The Immigration Museum continues to play a vital role as a place for community connection and storytelling. This year, we were honoured to host the Australian Vietnamese Women's Association's 50th Anniversary Celebration, an event attended by the Prime Minister of Australia and of deep significance to the community.

We also delivered IMagine: Be part of our future, welcoming more than 650 participants from 96 cultural backgrounds to contribute to the museum's future direction. This work strengthens our commitment to inclusive engagement and community-led participation.

Royal Exhibition Building – civic and cultural significance

At the Royal Exhibition Building, we were proud to lead a historic commemoration marking 125 years since Australia's first Federal Parliament. Bringing together national and state leaders, First Peoples and communities, this event highlighted the importance of civic participation and social cohesion.

By opening this World Heritage-listed site to the public through accessible programming and dialogue, we reaffirmed its role as a place for connection, reflection and shared understanding. The event also strengthened momentum for future advocacy as we look towards the building's 150th anniversary in 2030.

Looking to the future

We continue to progress planning for major projects, including the advocating for redevelopment of Scienceworks and improvements to collection storage, to strengthen access to the State Collection and support future growth. As an expanded, international destination in Melbourne's west, Scienceworks will draw a growing number of visitors each year with immersive STEM experiences and scientific discovery, while new collection facilities will open public access to the State Collection.

Recognising our supporters

We are deeply grateful to our supporters for their generosity and commitment. Philanthropy plays a vital role in enabling Museums Victoria to inspire curiosity, foster learning, preserve and share our collections, and create meaningful experiences for communities across Victoria. I extend my sincere thanks to Andrew and Geraldine Buxton and their family for their significant support of the new Andrew and Geraldine Buxton Family Playspace at Melbourne Museum, which we look forward to opening in late 2027.

I also acknowledge with gratitude the Gabo Foundation and the Gandel Foundation, through John Gandel AC and Pauline Gandel AC, Dr William N. Holsworth, the King Family Foundation, the Italian Australian Foundation, our Director's Circle Patrons, and all those who support Museums Victoria through philanthropy and bequests.

This year marks the conclusion of our transformative partnership with the Scanlon Foundation. Through initiatives including the Culture Makers program, and collaboration with Welcoming Australia, this partnership has strengthened how our museums foster belonging, inclusion and social cohesion – work that will continue to shape our practice. We are proud of the progress achieved together and sincerely thank the Scanlon Foundation, the Scanlon Foundation's Chair, Sophie Duggan, Chief Executive Officer Dr Sonja Hood AM, and Chief Executive Officer of the Scanlon Foundation Research Institute Anthea Hancocks, for their vision, leadership, and lasting contribution to Museums Victoria.

Acknowledgements

I thank the Victorian Government, Minister for Creative Industries Vicki Ward MP and former Minister for Creative Industries, The Hon Colin Brooks MP, for their support.

I extend my sincere appreciation to my colleagues on the Museums Board of Victoria for their dedication, insight and commitment throughout the year. In particular I would like to acknowledge outgoing Board members, Linda Bardo Nicholls AO and Peter Tullin for their significant contributions over their tenure. Their leadership and service have left a lasting and positive impact on Museums Victoria.

I also warmly welcome new Board member Cassy Liberman and thank her for bringing her experience and expertise to Museums Victoria.

I acknowledge the valuable contribution of our Board subcommittees and their external members, whose expertise and generosity of time play a critical role in supporting strong governance across the organisation.

Finally, I thank Lynley Crosswell, Chief Executive Officer and Director, the executive team, and all staff and volunteers. Their dedication, professionalism and passion underpin everything we achieve.

This year's achievements give us real confidence in our direction. As we look ahead, we do so with ambition to broaden our impact, deepen our connections with community, and strengthen a Museums Victoria that will thrive for years to come.



Mary Stuart
President, Museums Board of Victoria

Chief Executive Officer and Director's message



I am pleased to present the 2025–26 Annual Report. This has been a year in which we delivered an outstanding program while responding to a challenging operating environment with discipline, focus and ambition.

Delivering impact

A defining achievement this year was the opening of *Our Wondrous Planet*, a major new permanent exhibition at Melbourne Museum. The result of extensive research, conservation and design, the exhibition showcases our collections and expertise at their very best. This multi-award-winning exhibition is a powerful expression of our mission, connecting audiences with science and inspiring wonder and action, and has already welcomed more than 500,000 visitors.

Across the year, our exhibitions program drew strong and diverse audiences, from the global appeal of *LEGO® Star Wars™: The Exhibition* to *ROME: Empire, Power, People* at Melbourne Museum, alongside the migrant food stories of *Order Up: A City Fed by Many Cultures* at Immigration Museum and STEM-based play in *Tinkertown* at Scienceworks.

ROME: Empire, Power, People was developed in collaboration with Contemporanea Progetti and leading Italian institutions, including Museo Nazionale Romano and Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Firenze, with support from the Italian Ministry of Culture. These partnerships demonstrate our ability to collaborate on a world stage and bring globally significant content to Victorian audiences.

Our after-hours programming also continued to grow audiences, with strong attendance across Nocturnal: Museum After Dark, Museum Sleepovers, and signature events such as Halloween at the Museum and Discoteca Italiana. These programs expand how audiences engage with our museums, and their popularity reflects strong demand for distinctive after-hours experiences.

Extending our reach

Our touring program expanded our reach beyond Victoria, with exhibitions presented nationally and internationally, including *Illuminate: How Science Comes to Light* at Questacon and *Air Playground,* exhibited across multiple venues in New Zealand. We also established new partnerships with the Palace Museum in Beijing, and the Hong Kong Palace Museum, supporting future collaboration.

Advancing knowledge and discovery

Our Research Institute continues to deliver significant contributions across both humanities and scientific disciplines, reinforcing Museums Victoria's role as a trusted source of knowledge.

This year, we strengthened our contribution to humanities research with the launch of *PRISM*, a new open-access journal designed to explore and challenge ideas connected to museum collections and human histories, complementing the long-standing scientific journal, *Memoirs of Museums Victoria*.

Highlights from our field research included surveying marine life and collecting specimens in the Coral Sea Marine Park, identifying a new prehistoric whale species from Victoria, and advancing *Hearing Victoria's Birds*, a machine learning initiative transforming 30 years of acoustic recordings into a powerful tool for monitoring and conserving Victoria's birdlife—demonstrating the global reach and impact of our scientific work.

We were also delighted to acquire the winning works from the Gold Jewellery Acquisitive Prize into the State Collection. These contemporary pieces will sit alongside historic works from the Victorian gold rush, continuing to build a collection that reflects both heritage and contemporary practice.

The State Collection is the foundation of Museums Victoria, making its care and stewardship central to everything we do. This year, the five-yearly valuation of more than 15 million collection items was conducted. This is one of the largest and most complex exercises of its kind in Australia and ensures we meet our regulatory requirements while maintaining the integrity and accessibility of the collection.

Preserving an iconic landmark

This year, we progressed important conservation works at the Royal Exhibition Building, supported by state government funding. This work will improve accessibility and protect this significant World Heritage site.

The building also remained a major destination, welcoming more than 730,000 visitors across major events, festivals and gatherings.

Honouring First Peoples

Returning First Peoples Cultural Property held in the State Collection is among the most important and sensitive work we undertake. This year, Museums Victoria's First Peoples teams completed three repatriations in partnership with Traditional Owners, Communities of Origin, and recognised Cultural Authorities.

This year's exhibitions and experiences included *Transmutation: Our Origin Stories* at Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre and the *Moana Wan Solwara Sound Archive* activation, which reconnected cultural objects with community knowledge holders.

Looking ahead

As we continue to deliver on our 2025–30 Strategic Plan, our focus remains on ensuring our museums and collections are protected, accessible and relevant for future generations. Masterplanning is underway across our sites, alongside progress on collection storage improvements and the next phase of works at Merri-bek Collection Facility. These initiatives will strengthen our infrastructure, improve access to the State Collection and support long-term growth.

This work is guided by our vision to enrich people through discovery and knowledge, while our mission places First Peoples at the centre of museum practice and connects culture, science and history to help people understand the world. Together, these priorities will strengthen our impact and keep Museums Victoria relevant, resilient and ready for the future.

Financial sustainability

In a constrained financial environment, we have maintained a disciplined approach to operations while continuing to grow revenue and partnerships. Self-generated income contributed 42.7% of our operating result in 2025–26, and strengthening our commercial offerings and philanthropic and corporate partnerships remain key priorities.

We are grateful for the vital support of our corporate partners, whose collaboration is instrumental in extending our reach and impact.

Our continued Major Partnership with VicHealth supported the delivery of our new permanent exhibition, *Our Wondrous Planet*, as well as Climate Cafe and Student Climate Commons education and wellbeing programs for young people and early-years programs encouraging healthy eating in young children. We are deeply grateful to Major Sponsor EY for their support of major exhibitions, *Our Wondrous Planet* and *ROME: Empire, Power, People*. Our partnership with the Department of Education's *Best Start, Best Life* initiative continues to engage young children, families, and early-years educators through the Tiny Tours, Little Kids Day In, and Week In programs, as well as Teacher Professional Development events.

This year, we were delighted to welcome Swinburne University of Technology as our exclusive STEM and Design Learning Partner, bringing to life exhibitions and programs that immerse learners in STEM principles and design thinking. Combining Swinburne's leadership in education and research with Museums Victoria's reach across learners of all ages, this partnership strengthens pathways into STEM, nurtures curiosity-led learning, and helps build the confidence, capability, and skills to shape the future.

In celebration of *ROME: Empire, Power, People* and the very best of Melbourne's Italian culture, our partnership with Brunetti Classico brought a pop-up cafe to Melbourne Museum, enriching the visitors' experience through food, atmosphere, and connection.

Acknowledgements

I am deeply grateful for the continued support of our audiences, members, donors and corporate partners. Their engagement and generosity make our work possible.

We are proud to work alongside a strong network of partners across government, education and industry. I thank the Victorian Government, the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions, Creative Victoria and Visit Victoria, as well as our many corporate and philanthropic partners. I extend my thanks to the Minister for Creative Industries, Vicki Ward MP, and the former Minister for Creative Industries The Hon Colin Brooks MP, for their continued support of our museums.

I acknowledge the Yulendj Advisory Group and First Peoples Committee for their ongoing guidance and generosity in sharing knowledge and cultural insight.

My sincere thanks also to all our Board and committee members for their commitment and support throughout the year, especially to Board President Mary Stuart, whose leadership and advocacy have been instrumental in guiding our work and achievements.

I would also like to recognise and thank Dr Nurin Veis, who departed this year after a distinguished 24-year career. Nurin held pivotal roles, including Senior Curator of Medicine, General Manager of Scienceworks, and the inaugural Director of the Museums Victoria Research Institute. Her contributions across research, leadership and STEM engagement have been exceptional and leave a lasting legacy for Museums Victoria. Nurin will continue with Museums Victoria as Curator Emeritus.

I also sincerely thank our staff and volunteers, whose resilience, expertise and commitment continue to define this organisation. The outstanding work of our staff has continued to be recognised both nationally and internationally. This year, Museums Victoria staff earned a range of prestigious awards, including honours from the Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Materials. Colleagues also took up significant appointments across global museum and scientific communities, reflecting the depth of expertise and leadership within Museums Victoria.

This year also brought challenges, including organisational change and the departure of valued colleagues. I acknowledge their contributions with the deepest gratitude and thank them for the valued contribution they have made to Museums Victoria.

The past year's achievements have reinforced the strength and resilience of our organisation and our shared purpose. Reflecting on the year, I am proud of what we have achieved together through collaboration, adaptability, and dedication. We move forward energised and committed to delivering engaging and meaningful experiences, advancing knowledge and ensuring Museums Victoria continues to serve and inspire communities now and into the future.



Lynley Crosswell
Chief Executive Officer and Director

Calendar of highlights and events

For further information on our achievements this year, please refer to Year in Review *(pages 18–39)* and Our Performance *(pages 52–53)*.

2025

JULY

- Playbound! Festival is delivered in collaboration with the City of Melbourne.
- Museums Victoria leads a world-first deep-sea DNA study published in *Nature*, reshaping understanding of global marine connectivity.
- Climate Cafe is held at Melbourne Museum with Major Partner VicHealth, delivered in partnership with Headspace and Orygen Youth Health.

AUGUST

- *Treasures of the Viking Age: The Galloway Hoard* opens at Melbourne Museum.
- National Science Week programs are delivered across Melbourne Museum and Scienceworks.
- Little Kids Day In: Caring for Country is held at Scienceworks with support from *Best Start, Best Life.*
- The Future of Space is presented at Melbourne Museum as part of the Now or Never festival, featuring astronaut Katherine Bennell-Pegg and Dr Tanya Hill.

SEPTEMBER

- *Our Wondrous Planet* opens at Melbourne Museum.
- *Southern Sky Astrophotography* opens at Scienceworks.
- Father's Day event is held at the *Star Wars™* Galactic Cafe.
- Science is a Superpower Festival is held at Scienceworks.
- Museum Sleepovers commence for 2025–26 season at Melbourne Museum including adults-only sessions.

OCTOBER

- *Order Up: A City Fed by Many Cultures* opens at Immigration Museum.
- *Air Playground* opens at Te Whare Taonga o Waikato Museum & Gallery, New Zealand.
- Halloween at the Museum is held at Melbourne Museum.
- Melbourne Museum celebrates 25 years at Carlton Gardens.
- Romp & Stomp: Into the Wild with Emma Memma is presented at Melbourne Museum.

NOVEMBER

- Kaleidoscope of Joy, an immersive musical event linked to the *Joy* exhibition, is held at Immigration Museum.
- IMAX Melbourne hosts *Wicked: For Good: Friends for Good* event.
- Family Sleepovers are held at Melbourne Museum.
- *Kismet* Community Film Screening and Cultural Night is presented at Immigration Museum.
- Museums Victoria Research Institute staff present research at Deakin University's Researching the Future of Collections symposium.

DECEMBER

- *Transmutation: Our Origin Stories* opens at Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre.
- *Avatar: Fire and Ash 3D* opens at IMAX Melbourne.
- A new foyer display featuring the *Australian Children's Folklore Collection* is unveiled at Melbourne Museum.

2026

JANUARY

- Dome Under Film Festival is held at the Melbourne Planetarium, Scienceworks.
- Best Biggest IMAX Film Festival (BBIFF) returned to IMAX Melbourne.
- *Tinkertown* presented as a free pop-up STEM workshop as part of MPavilion's kids program is delivered in partnership with Engineers Australia.

FEBRUARY

- Lunar New Year celebrations are held at Melbourne Museum and Immigration Museum.
- Phar Lap's 100th birthday display opens at Melbourne Museum.
- Museums Victoria Research Institute, in collaboration with Barwon Coast personnel and the Wadawurrung People as Traditional Owners, excavates a 21-million-year-old fossil toothed whale at Ocean Grove, relocating the specimen to Melbourne Museum for preparation and research into whale evolution.
- K-Publishing: Korean Art and Book Making for All Kids seven-part workshop series commences at Immigration Museum.
- Valentine's Day Under the Stars, an adults-only after-hours event, held at Scienceworks.

MARCH

- *Colour: See the World in a New Light* opens at Scienceworks.
- *Top Designs 2026* opens at Melbourne Museum.
- Fulldome Flicks 2026 season commences at the Melbourne Planetarium, Scienceworks.
- *Project Hail Mary* opens at IMAX Melbourne.

APRIL

- *ROME: Empire, Power, People* opens at Melbourne Museum.
- IMagine: Be part of our future is held at the Immigration Museum.
- Earth Day is celebrated at Melbourne Museum with a full day of programming including IMAX screenings of *The Giants* with Bob Brown, a live Q&A and evening conversation on rainforest conservation.

MAY

- Events marking the 125th anniversary of Australia's First Parliament are held at the Royal Exhibition Building.
- *Air Playground* opens at Te Manawa Museum of Art, Science & Heritage, New Zealand.
- Drawing Under the Dome is held in the Royal Exhibition Building.
- Winning pieces of the inaugural Gold Jewellery Acquisitive Prize are formally acquired into the State Collection.

JUNE

- *Home is Football: Belonging in Australian Soccer* opens at the Immigration Museum.
- Discoteca Italiana is held at Melbourne Museum.
- Scienceworks After Dark: Celebrate the Solstice is held at Scienceworks.

About Museums Victoria

Founded in 1854, we are the custodian of the State Collection of scientific and cultural heritage, an invaluable record of Victoria's history. Our museums present unique and exceptional experiences for audiences worldwide to be inspired, to discover and to learn about themselves and the world we inhabit.

Our Sites

Melbourne Museum Precinct

Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre

Situated within Melbourne Museum, Bunjilaka celebrates the vibrant cultures of Indigenous Australia with its rich traditions of performance, storytelling and artwork.

Melbourne Museum

The iconic Melbourne Museum stands adjacent to the historic Royal Exhibition Building in Carlton Gardens. Melbourne Museum showcases Australian social history, Indigenous cultures, the environment and the Museums Victoria Research Institute discoveries and exploration in fields such as marine biology, geology, palaeontology and mineralogy. Melbourne Museum is also home to Horridus, the world's most complete *Triceratops* fossil.

IMAX Melbourne

IMAX Melbourne is home to one of the world's largest cinema screens, measuring 32 metres in width by 23 metres in height, and is the only theatre in Australia with an IMAX 1570 Film projector.

Immigration Museum

The Immigration Museum explores themes of migration, identity, citizenship and community through multiple perspectives. It is situated in the historic Old Customs House, on Flinders Street in Melbourne.

Merri-bek Collection Facility

Merri-bek Collection Facility is the offsite collection storage facility for Museums Victoria, housing the largest proportion of the collection items. It complements the collection stores at Melbourne Museum and Scienceworks.

Royal Exhibition Building

Located in Carlton Gardens adjacent to Melbourne Museum, the Royal Exhibition Building was constructed for the 1880 Melbourne International Exhibition and continues to host exhibitions and other events. The building and gardens were inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage register in July 2004.

Scienceworks

Featuring interactive exhibitions and STEM experiences for curious minds of all ages, Scienceworks is located in Spotswood and includes the historic Spotswood Pumping Station, the Lightning Room and Melbourne Planetarium.

Collection storage facility

Museums Victoria operates an offsite collection storage facility in Spotswood.

About our Strategic Plan

Museums Victoria's 2025–30 Strategic Plan builds on the significant transformation, growth and momentum our organisation has achieved over the previous period during our 2017–25 Strategic Plan. By leveraging this strong foundation, we will grow our economic and social value for today's and future generations of Victorians.

The Museums Victoria 2025–30 Strategic Plan takes us to our next milestone—our 175th anniversary in 2029—with a focus on strengthening and enhancing our collections, sites and operations to best serve our visitors and the people of Victoria, now and into the future.

Creative State 2028

Museums Victoria contributes to *Creative State 2028*, the Victorian Government's strategy for creative industries, through its role in preserving and sharing Victoria's collections, enabling creative practice, and broadening access to culture across the state.

In 2025–26, Museums Victoria supported Creative State priorities through public programs and exhibitions, First Peoples–led interpretation, creative partnerships, workforce development initiatives, digital access to collections, and environmental sustainability initiatives. Performance against organisational key performance indicators demonstrates Museums Victoria's ongoing contribution to a thriving, accessible and resilient creative sector in Victoria.

Highlights and achievements demonstrating Museums Victoria's contribution to Creative State 2028 and its own strategic directions are detailed in Year in Review *(pages 18–39)* and Our Performance *(pages 52–53)*.

2025–30 Strategic Plan overview

Vision

People enriched by wondrous discovery and trusted knowledge.

Society compelled to act for a thriving future.

Mission

We place First Peoples' living cultures and histories at the core of museum practice.

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

We are innovative in creating captivating experiences within and beyond our walls.

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

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

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.

Strategic directions

Over five years, five strategic directions will guide how we engage, invest and innovate to deliver impact across audiences, collections, people, places and sustainability.

Our exhibitions and experiences

We grow our audiences and increase our impact through outstanding exhibitions, programs, educational experiences and digital content that reach far beyond our walls.

Our research and collections

The Museums Victoria Research Institute works to protect our region's unique biodiversity and strengthen communities and culture through innovative, multidisciplinary research.

By preserving and developing the State collections—and providing the storage facilities essential to its long-term care—we ensure Victoria's cultural, scientific and technological heritage will be available for future generations.

Our people

Our welcoming and inspiring workplaces reflect the diversity of Victoria's communities and drive Museums Victoria's success.

Our places

We ensure our museums, sites and facilities are safeguarded for future generations.

Our future sustainability

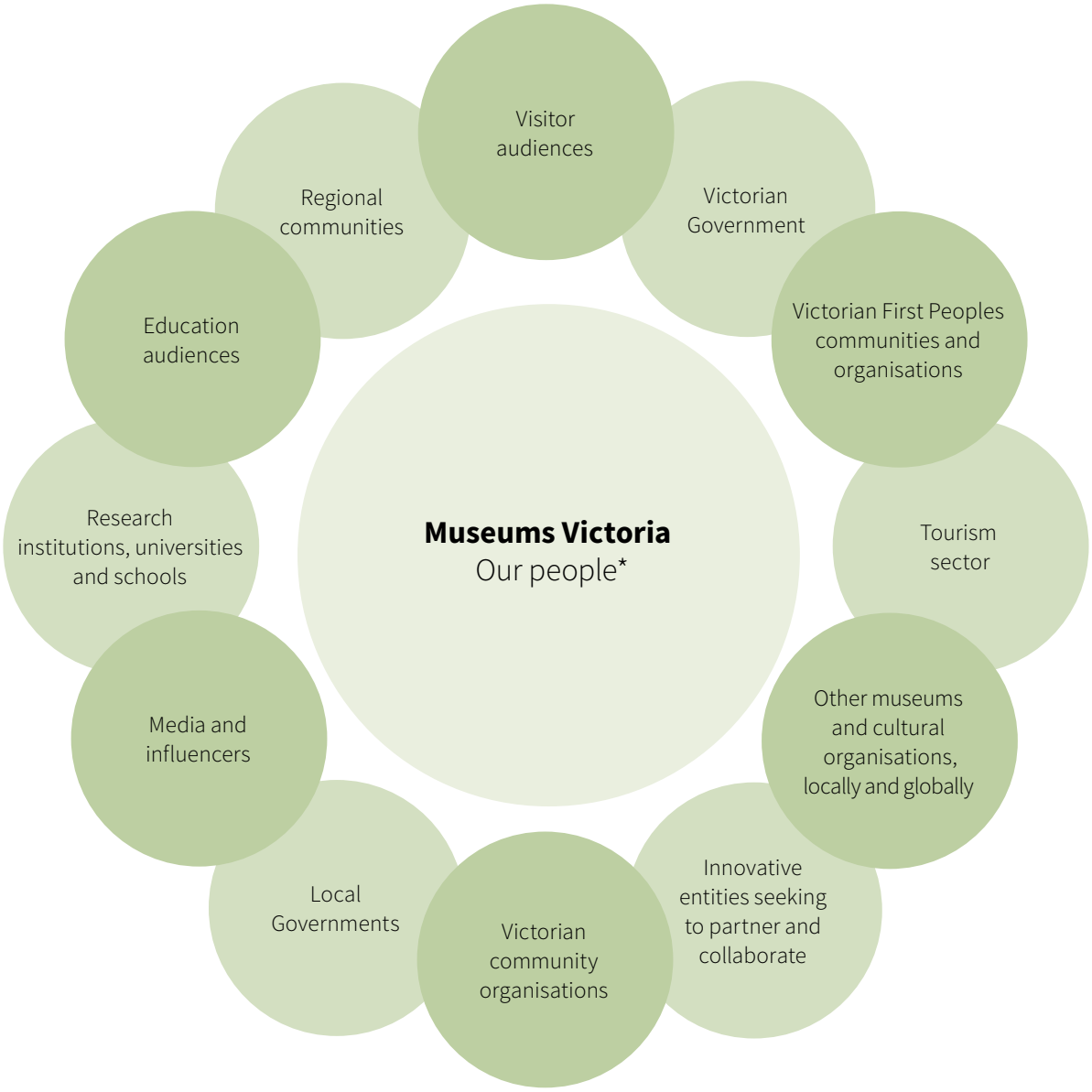
Our fit-for-purpose business assets, robust operations and sustained revenue growth ensure Museums Victoria is resilient and future-ready.

The Museums Victoria 2025–30 Strategic Plan can be found on our *website*.

Our stakeholders

Museums Victoria engages with a diverse and wide-ranging stakeholder base. Our collaborative and enduring relationships, partnerships and networks support our role as an innovative and inclusive museum organisation, extending our reach and enabling shared impact across communities, sectors and disciplines. Through these relationships, we create opportunities for innovation, learning and discovery.

Due to the extent of Museums Victoria collaborations, stakeholder groups detailed below are illustrative rather than exhaustive.



* Refer to *pages 71–73* for details of our staff profile.

Key examples of stakeholder engagement this year are detailed below.

First Peoples communities and organisations

Museums Victoria works with First Peoples communities across Victoria, Australia and internationally to connect cultural materials in the State collections with the people and Country they belong to.

The First Peoples Experiences team partners with First Peoples artists and communities to present exhibitions in the Birrarung Gallery at Melbourne Museum and works closely with Public Programs and Education teams to share First Peoples knowledge through events and learning initiatives. Within the Research Institute, First Peoples Research and Collections places First Peoples' knowledge and voices at the core of research, leading culturally informed work in repatriation, community-led research and addressing the ongoing impacts of colonisation on collections and museum practice.

Further information on programs centred on First Peoples knowledge and perspectives can be found in *Year in Review and Museums Victoria in Regional Victoria (pages 18–39)*. Museums Victoria also engages with a range of First Peoples advisory groups, including the Yulendj Advisory Group and the First Peoples Committee. *See the Governance section for further detail on Board Committees (pages 62–67)*.

Other museums and cultural organisations

Museums Victoria collaborated with local, interstate and international museums and cultural organisations throughout the year, including through incoming and outgoing collection loans and touring exhibitions. Details of temporary and touring exhibitions are outlined in *Year in Review (pages 40–45)*.

Education audiences

Museums Victoria deepened engagement with education stakeholders this year through sustained partnerships with the Department of Education, the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority and the Victorian Catholic Education Authority, alongside a new three-year learning partnership with Swinburne University of Technology supporting flagship exhibitions and programs. We strengthened connections with schools, educators and communities across Victoria through our Outreach Program and Learning Access Fund, increasing access to curriculum-aligned STEM learning and exhibition-led school excursions across Melbourne Museum, Scienceworks and the Immigration Museum. Further information is available in *Year in Review and Museums Victoria in Regional Victoria (pages 18–39)*.

Regional communities

Museums Victoria's regional engagement emphasises collaboration, exchange and local connection, supporting relationships with communities across Victoria's regions and sharing stories rooted in place. Further information on regional engagement during the financial year can be found in *Year in Review and Museums Victoria in Regional Victoria (pages 18–39)*.

Research institutions, universities and schools

Researchers from the Museums Victoria Research Institute collaborated with partners from research institutions, universities and schools across Victoria, Australia and internationally throughout the year. Collaborations included partnerships with the Australian Research Council, the University of Melbourne and other institutions nationally and internationally. Further information is available in *Year in Review and Museums Victoria in Regional Victoria (pages 18–39)*, with additional detail published in the Museums Victoria Annual Report Supplementary Information on our *website*.

Tourism sector

Museums Victoria's tourism strategy focuses on regional, intrastate and interstate markets, alongside targeted engagement with key international audiences. Partnerships with the City of Melbourne, Visit Victoria and inbound tourism operators supported year-round ticket sales and major exhibition campaigns. This year, Museums Victoria strengthened its offer through an expanded program of premium and seasonal experiences, including Halloween events, Museum Sleepovers for families and adults, after-hours programming and premium tours, designed to attract new visitors and drive repeat visitation. Further information can be found in *Year in Review (pages 18–39)*.

Media activity

Museums Victoria strengthened its global profile this year through extensive international editorial coverage and targeted media partnerships that amplified the reach of its research and major exhibitions. Partnerships with outlets including *Il Globo*, JCDecaux, Smooth FM and 3KND supported engagement with key audiences, while high-impact stories on the discovery of a new ancient whale species from Jan Juc, brittle star research published in *Nature*, and fossil excavations at Ocean Grove attracted coverage across leading international and national media, including BBC News, *The Guardian*, and major Australian television networks.

This global attention was complemented by strong coverage of major exhibitions launched during the year including *ROME: Empire, Power, People*, alongside high-profile moments such as the commemorative event marking 125 years since the opening of Australia's first Federal Parliament, originally held at the Royal Exhibition Building in 1901.

Together, these outcomes reinforced Museums Victoria's position as a trusted source of scientific expertise and cultural insight, with growing reach across both domestic and international audiences. Further information can be found in *Year in Review – Strategic direction five: Our future sustainability (pages 34–37)*.

Museums Victoria awards and nominations

The awards received this year recognise the collective expertise, creativity and commitment of Museums Victoria's staff and collaborators, and reflect the organisation's ongoing leadership in research, exhibitions, learning, public engagement and cultural stewardship.

2025 Corian Design Awards

Winner, Overall Commercial for *Our Wondrous Planet*

2026 Australian Interior Design Awards

Winner, Installation for *Our Wondrous Planet*

2025 Victorian Premier's Design Awards

Finalist, Communication Design for *Tinkertown*

Finalist, Communication Design for *Antopia: Explore a World of Secret Senses*

2025 Time Out Arts and Culture Awards

Winner, Best Museum Exhibition (Critics' Choice) for *Māreikura – Ka rere te rongoā*

2026 Trip.com Global Best 100

Winner, Trip.com Global Best 100 Family-Friendly Attraction for Museums Victoria

2026 NSW Literary Awards

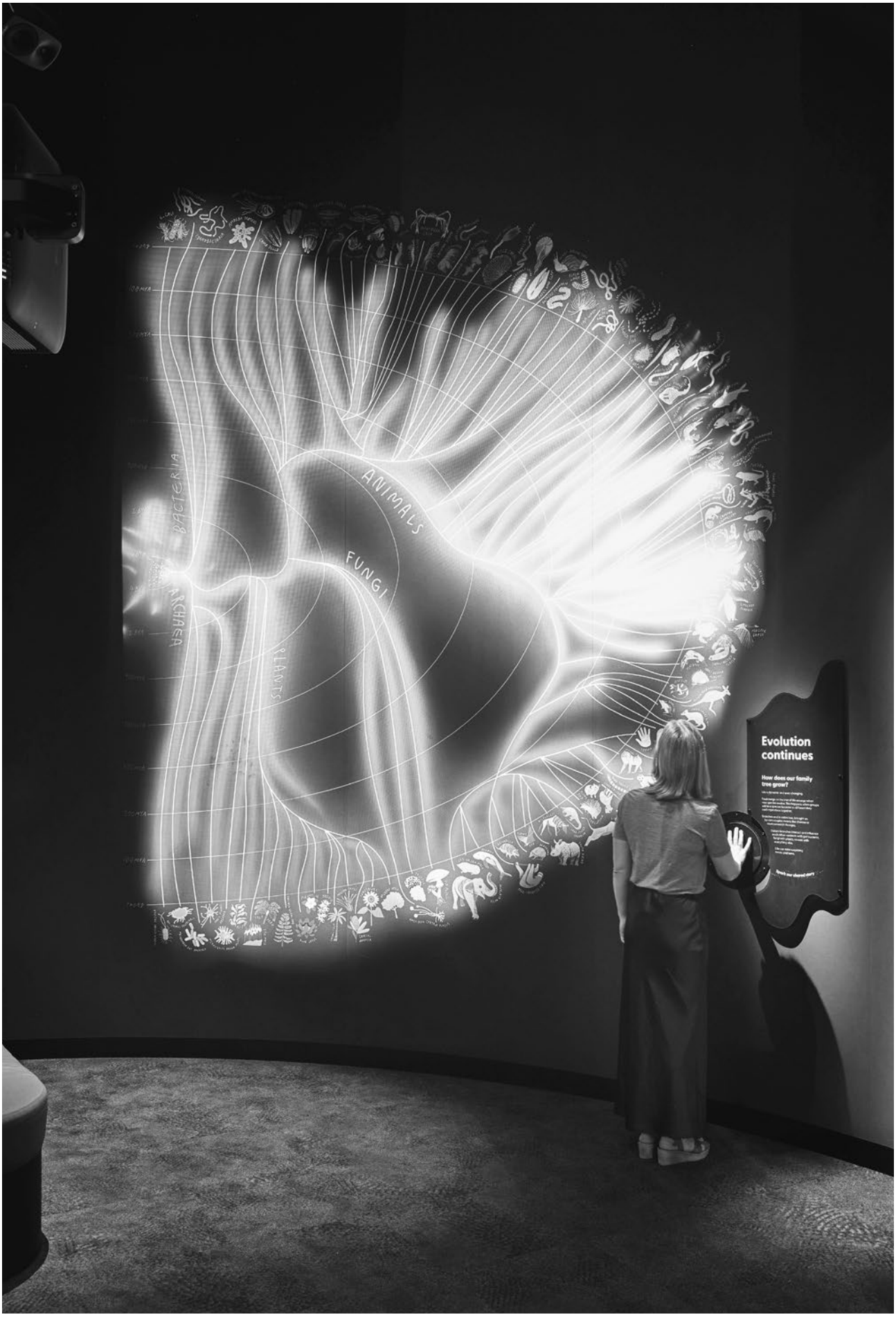
Shortlisted, Patricia Wrightson Prize for Children's Literature for *An Ant's Guide to Being an Ant* by Zoe Meagher and Julia Darling

Shortlisted, UTS Glenda Adams Award for New Writing for *An Ant's Guide to Being an Ant* by Zoe Meagher and Julia Darling

2026 Australasian Reporting Awards

Winner, Gold, for 2024–25 Annual Report

Finalist, Best of Industry Sector Award (Public Administration – State) for 2024–2025 Annual Report



Our Wondrous Planet, Melbourne Museum
Source: Museums Victoria | Photographer: Thomas Breakwell

Museums Victoria's Reach and Engagement

Each year, Museums Victoria creates impact across Victoria and around the world in a myriad of ways.

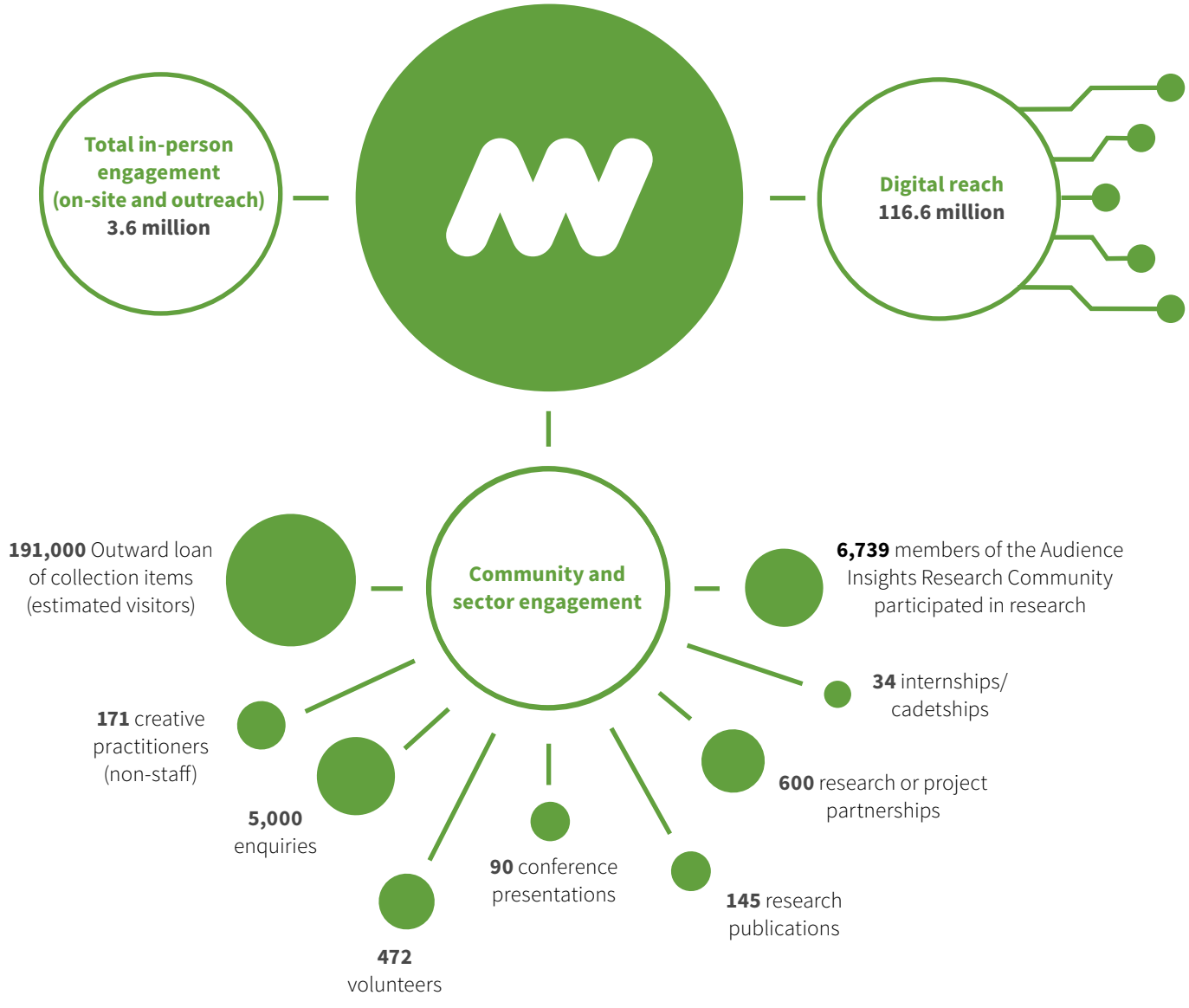
This Reach and Engagement section supplements our annually reported admissions data and illustrates the depth and diversity of connections between Museums Victoria and the communities we serve. These interactions—with our museums and physical sites, digital channels, expert staff and the State Collection—create significant social value for Victoria and Victorians and amplify the economic, cultural and educational benefits we generate every year.

Data is reported in three key sections:

1. In-person engagement: Admissions to our venues, outreach programs including in-person education, admissions to outbound touring exhibitions, and visitors to Museums Victoria's venues and events.

2. Community and sector engagement: Published papers and publications, conference presentations, research and project partnerships, creative collaborations, outward loans of objects and images, information enquiries, learning kits and reminiscing kits, volunteers and internships.

3. Digital reach: Website sessions, YouTube views, social media reach and unique email opens.



2025–26 highlights

Museums Victoria education sessions:
595,119 student participation

288,917 visitors to Melbourne Museum Touring Hall

Outreach Education Program:
62,824 students from **1,000** schools and kindergartens

22,000 visitors attended the commemorative weekend marking 125 years since Australia's First Parliament

650 visitors to IMagine: Be part of our future

9 new exhibitions across our sites

>2,000 Public Program events

817 zoological specimens displayed in *Our Wondrous Planet*

2,100 visitors to Discoteca Italiana

IMAX Melbourne:
280,744 admissions, **130** films, **2,256** sessions

81,187 Museums Victoria Publishing books sold

Museum Sleepovers:
501 visitors
14 sessions

4,200 visitors to Halloween at the Museum

187,409 estimated visitors to outbound touring exhibitions

15,577,679 website sessions

Science is a Superpower series
4,860,111 views to date

Media profile
1,865 media items
229,149,498 potential reach

Pop-up restaurants
58,000 visitors to the *Star Wars™* Galactic Cafe
23,000 visitors to Brunetti Classico

Further detail about our activity during the year can be found in *Year in Review (pages 18–39)*.

2025–26 Year in Review

The 2025–26 financial year has been a remarkable one for Museums Victoria, marked by major exhibitions, significant research, strong public engagement and progress in our masterplanning, all of which contributed to the extraordinary impact we deliver for the communities we serve. Among our achievements for the year, Museums Victoria:

- Launched a new strategy and masterplan to reimagine the future of the Immigration Museum, engaging communities across Victoria through IMagine, a free, one-day festival that opened the museum to all.
- Achieved national and international research impact through the Museums Victoria Research Institute, including multiple world-first scientific studies and significant new contributions to evolutionary science.
- Opened multi-award-winning *Our Wondrous Planet*, Museums Victoria's largest science and biodiversity gallery with 1,800 square metres of permanent, immersive exhibition space at Melbourne Museum.
- Undertook the five-yearly valuation of the State Collection, collaborating with external valuers to provide access to over two million records and assess more than 4,000 items.
- Commemorated the 125th anniversary of the opening of Australia's Federal Parliament at the World Heritage-listed Royal Exhibition Building, celebrating 125 years of public engagement, learning and cultural leadership.
- Delivered nine exhibitions and more than 2,000 public program events across Melbourne Museum, Scienceworks and the Immigration Museum.
- Museums Victoria remained the largest provider of education programs in Victoria, outside the Department of Education, delivering sessions to 595,119 participants.
- The award-winning Science is a Superpower STEM series has seen close to five million views since its launch.
- Established a three-year partnership with Swinburne University of Technology, launched at Scienceworks to deliver innovative STEM learning experiences and position Swinburne as Museums Victoria's exclusive Learning Partner for STEM and Design across flagship exhibitions, festivals and education programs.
- Launched *PRISM*, a new annual, open-access humanities journal from the Research Institute, showcasing interdisciplinary research and expanding our publishing program to share diverse stories, ideas and histories with global audiences.
- Museums Victoria's expertise was recognised through multiple industry awards for excellence in exhibition design, conservation and professional practice, including accolades for the outstanding work of our conservators. This recognition reflects the strength of our work across the year.

The key achievements and stories that follow highlight our progress against the Museums Victoria Strategic Plan 2025–30.



IMagine: Be part of our future event, Immigration Museum
Source: Jacinta Keefe Photography | Photographer: Jacinta Keefe

Strategic objective: We grow our audiences and increase our impact through outstanding exhibitions, programs, educational experiences and digital content that reach far beyond our walls.

Performance against our Strategic Plan

- ✓ Nine exhibitions presented at our museums including the highly acclaimed *ROME: Empire, Power, People*, *Treasures of the Viking Age: The Galloway Hoard*, *Order Up: A City Fed by Many Cultures* and *Transmutation*.
- ✓ Opened *Our Wondrous Planet*, a new permanent science and biodiversity gallery at Melbourne Museum.
- ✓ Entered into a strategic learning partnership with Swinburne University of Technology to support future exhibition and education initiatives.
- ✓ More than 1,100 outreach education programs delivered across Melbourne and regional Victoria.
- ✓ Engaged students and educators across Victoria, delivering sessions to 595,119 participants.
- ✓ Shared Museums Victoria stories, collections and expertise with audiences online, reaching an average of 10 million each month and 15.5 million website sessions over the year.

The 2025–26 financial year saw Museums Victoria deliver a dynamic mix of experiences, events and digital content that sparked curiosity and engaged people of all ages.

First Peoples highlights

Museums Victoria celebrated NAIDOC Week in July with a NAIDOC Family Day followed by Nocturnal: Next Gen at Melbourne Museum, connecting with the year's theme 'The Next Generation: Strength, Vision & Legacy'.

In December *Transmutation: Our Origin Stories* opened at Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre, featuring the work of leading Papua New Guinean artists. Curated by multidisciplinary artist Weniki Hensch, the exhibition explored alchemy through movement, textiles and painting, from intergenerational storytelling to the transformative nature of the female body as a vessel for ancestral knowledge.

Melbourne Museum's new permanent science and biodiversity gallery, *Our Wondrous Planet,* is also guided by First Peoples knowledge, highlighting the deep and enduring relationship between First Peoples and the natural world by weaving Indigenous knowledge throughout the exhibition. A dedicated First Peoples-led space in the exhibition, Our Roots, invites visitors to experience concepts of care, reciprocity and connection to Country, while stories from First Peoples across the globe are interwoven with scientific perspectives to demonstrate the interconnectedness of all life.

Exhibitions and program highlights

LEGO® Star Wars™: The Exhibition continued in the Melbourne Museum Touring Hall until January 2026. Created by Ryan 'Brickman' McNaught, the only LEGO Certified Professional in the Southern Hemisphere, this popular exhibition welcomed more than 234,000 visitors during its run, placing it among the most visited Melbourne Museum Touring Hall exhibitions. *LEGO® Star Wars™: The Exhibition* was made possible with the support of Visit Victoria, Ryan McNaught, LEGO, Disney, Linfox and V/Line.

At the Immigration Museum, the much-loved *Joy* concluded its two-year season in February 2026. A vibrant celebration of the work of seven Victorian artists, the exhibition opened in February 2024 and attracted an estimated 182,000 visitors, inspiring audiences with its uplifting themes and striking creativity. *Joy* was made possible with the support of Museums Victoria's Colour Partner, Taubmans, our Flooring Partner, Godfrey Hirst and GH Commercial and Nova Entertainment.

Our outbound touring program continued to develop this year across interstate and international venues. *Air Playground* opened at Te Whare Taonga o Waikato Museum & Gallery in Hamilton, New Zealand in October, running until April 2026, before opening at Te Manawa Museum of Art, Science & Heritage. *Illuminate: How Science Comes to Light* completed its run at the Bendigo Discovery Science and Technology Centre in July 2025 before opening at Questacon, Canberra in February 2026. Both exhibitions, originally developed and presented at Scienceworks, invite families to explore STEM learning in a hands-on, interactive manner.

Other exhibition highlights across the year included *Treasures of the Viking Age: The Galloway Hoard* at Melbourne Museum, *Colour: See the World in a New Light*, and *Southern Sky Astrophotography* at Scienceworks and *Order Up: A City Fed by Many Cultures* at the Immigration Museum. A full list of exhibitions can be found on *pages 40–45*.

Our Wondrous Planet

Opened in September 2025, *Our Wondrous Planet* is Museums Victoria's largest science and biodiversity gallery with 1,800 square metres of permanent, immersive exhibition space at Melbourne Museum. Delivering *Our Wondrous Planet* required more than two years of integrated work spanning conservation science, biodiversity research, First Peoples knowledge systems, multimedia production, interactive design, sensory environment design, and science communication.

The gallery delivers across multiple dimensions: immersive environmental design that recreates four global biomes (reef, rainforest, ice and soil) through light, sound and form; interactive digital experiences enabling visitors to traverse atmospheric currents and connect to underground root networks; story-led multimedia drawing on rare State Collection objects; and a dedicated collaborative space, Our Moment, which is designed to drive collective civic engagement with ecological challenges. *Our Wondrous Planet* extends beyond the gallery walls, connecting audiences to the Museums Victoria Research Institute's active biodiversity and conservation programs, and providing pathways for citizen science participation.

The multi-award-winning biodiversity exhibition has attracted more than 500,000 visitors since opening, with many visitors rating it as their favourite gallery experience. *Our Wondrous Planet* is generously supported by Major Partner VicHealth, Major Sponsor EY and Tourism Partner V/Line.

Museums Victoria delivered a continuous program of experiences and events across the year, including Midsumma, Melbourne Design Week, PayPal Melbourne Fashion Festival, Melbourne International Comedy Festival, National Science Week, Melbourne Fringe and Cultural Diversity Week, contributing to an exciting calendar of events enjoyed by communities across Melbourne.

The Museums Victoria-led Playbound! festival in July attracted more than 28,000 attendees who enjoyed free and affordable programs across 16 days including performances, workshops, exhibitions, story times and hands-on activities. Playbound! was presented in partnership with ACCA, City of Melbourne, Global Play Lab, Gowrie Victoria, Orchestra Victoria, Road to Zero, State Library of Victoria, The Wheeler Centre and Creative Victoria.

Melbourne's Now or Never festival ran in August, with Museums Victoria hosting several events including *MATRIA*, a monumental new installation by Barcelona-based collective Penique Productions, and The Future of Space, a discussion presented by Melbourne Museum, Now or Never and the Australian Space Agency. The discussion brought together Dr Tanya Hill, Museums Victoria's Senior Curator of Astronomy and Katherine Bennell-Pegg, Australia's first astronaut under the national flag.

In September, Scienceworks hosted the Science is a Superpower Festival, a two-day event for young learners. Attendees enjoyed hands-on activities, inspiring talks and live shows that revealed the science behind strength, curiosity, kindness, energy and more. The festival was presented with the support of the Piers K Fowler Scholarship Fund, and Industry Partners: ARC Centre of Excellence in Plants for Space, Robogals, Engineers Australia, PayPal Melbourne Fashion Festival, Monash University Nova Rover Team and Headspace.

As we celebrated Lunar New Year across our museums and welcomed the Year of the Horse, we launched the Phar Lap 100th birthday installation at Melbourne Museum, recognising this iconic racehorse remains one of our most popular and enduring exhibits. Commemorative retail products were released to mark the anniversary, including a special anniversary edition of Museums Victoria's publication *Phar Lap: A True Legend*.

In 2025, Museums Victoria commenced a three-year programming partnership with the Italian Australian Foundation, which will work to advance appreciation of Italian culture, skills, language and heritage, through an expanded program of adult and family learning experiences celebrating Italian culture and the impact of Italian Australians in Victoria.

Highlights from the partnership's first year included Drawing under the Dome at the Royal Exhibition Building, Discoteca Italiana and the first iteration of Museums Victoria Courses delivered in alignment with the *ROME: Empire, Power, People* exhibition.



ROME: Empire, Power People, Melbourne Museum
Source: Museums Victoria | Photographer: Thomas Breakwell

ROME: Empire, Power, People

The splendour, drama and humanity of Rome was brought to life in *ROME: Empire, Power, People*, a Melbourne-exclusive exhibition that opened at Melbourne Museum in April and welcomed more than 72,300 visitors in its first three months.

A vibrant exploration of Rome's political, cultural and social life, *ROME* features more than 150 objects dating from the Imperial period 1st century CE to the 3rd century CE, with all of the objects on display in Melbourne for the first time.

The exhibition was designed by Museums Victoria and developed in collaboration with Contemporanea Progetti and curators from Museo Nazionale Romano, featuring the extraordinary collections of the Museo Nazionale Romano and Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Firenze, and presented with the support of the Ministero della Cultura, Dipartimento per la valorizzazione del patrimonio culturale and Direzione regionale Musei nazionali Toscana.

A rich program of events and learning experiences extended the exhibition's reach and impact, engaging audiences of all ages through adult learning opportunities, Creative Lab programming and school holiday activities. Highlights included a Brunetti Classico pop-up cafe, the IMAX Il Grande Cinema film series, supported by *Il Globo* celebrating the enduring legacy of Italian cinema and culture, and Italian-language exhibition tours for primary and secondary students and adults, delivered in partnership with CO.AS.IT.

The extraordinary experience was made possible with the generous support of Major Sponsors EY and Brunetti Classico; Major Donor the Pellicano Family, Cultural Partners Consulate General of Italy, Melbourne; The Italian Cultural Institute of Melbourne; Italian Australian Foundation; CO.AS.IT; and Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Australia (Victoria and Tasmania), Sponsor Pronto Concrete, Supporters the Crema Family; the Lanteri Family; and the Scalzo Family, along with Media Partners *Il Globo*, JCDecaux and Smooth FM and Tourism Partners Melbourne Airport and V/Line.

The Melbourne Planetarium at Scienceworks continued to be one of the year's most popular drawcards, immersing visitors in the night sky through programs such as Fulldome Flicks, Planetarium Nights and Valentine's Day Under the Stars.

In January, the Planetarium hosted the return of the Dome Under Film Festival, bringing the newest and most innovative immersive films from around the globe. It also attracted broad media coverage including Channel 10 News, ABC Radio Melbourne (Evenings), Triple R, 3CR (On Screen) and *The Herald Sun*. This is the only festival in Australasia dedicated to fulldome cinema. The festival was sponsored by the Australasian Planetarium Society, Fulldome.pro, American Museum of Natural History, Brno Observatory and Planetarium, COSM, NSC Creative, Render Area, and Zeiss, and supported by Fulldome Database and Grazeland.

Community engagement at Immigration Museum

The Immigration Museum continued to bring people together this year through large-scale, community-led programming. On 22 March, it hosted Culture Connects Us All, a celebration of 50 years of Vietnamese Australians' contributions to Victoria. Delivered in partnership with the Australian Vietnamese Women's Association, the event welcomed community members, stakeholders and dignitaries, including the Prime Minister and federal and state parliamentarians—affirming the museum's place as a trusted civic space for reflection, recognition and celebration.

In April, the museum opened its doors for IMagine: Be part of our future, a free public event inviting communities to help shape the museum's next chapter. More than 650 attendees from 96 different cultural backgrounds took part, sharing ideas, stories and aspirations through creative activities and facilitated conversations. Gathered as part of early masterplanning, their input will help ensure a wide range of voices shape the museum's future.

Digital reach and engagement

Through digital storytelling, Museums Victoria continued to broaden our reach beyond our walls, maintaining an average monthly digital reach of 10 million across platforms. Video-based storytelling on YouTube and social media supported engagement with science, collections and research, including family-friendly series such as Science is a Superpower and *Creature Features*, the supporting series to *Our Wondrous Planet*.

Education

Education and learning remained core to Museums Victoria's work, with our programs engaging more than 595,000 participants across the year. Our popular Little Kids Day In series continued, introducing families with young children to STEM-focused, play-based events for early learners, supported by the Victorian Government's *Best Start, Best Life* initiative. STEM Design Sprint workshops delivered in partnership with the Victorian Catholic Education Authority, engaged secondary students in real-world challenges that built problem-solving, collaboration and innovation skills.

Museums Victoria also developed exhibition-specific education programs, including for *Our Wondrous Planet, Treasures of the Viking Age: The Galloway Hoard* and *ROME: Empire, Power, People*. These programs offered hands-on, object-based learning aligned with the primary and secondary school curriculum.

Through the Outreach Education Program, Museums Victoria engaged more than 62,800 students in 1,000 kindergartens and schools, supporting equitable access regardless of location. Further information regarding our regional educational programming is detailed in Museums Victoria in Regional Victoria *(pages 38–39)*.

In January, Museums Victoria brought its Scienceworks exhibition, *Tinkertown*, to MPavilion in the Queen Victoria Gardens for a two-day pop-up. Set within Tadao Ando's award-winning pavilion, the free workshop, a collaboration between Scienceworks and Engineers Australia, invited children to design, prototype and solve real-world challenges through creative, collaborative thinking. It was delivered with the generous support of the Naomi Milgrom Foundation and the Antipodean Family Foundation.

This year marked the final year of Museums Victoria's four-year partnership with the Scanlon Foundation, established to advance participation, cultural diversity and belonging across our museums and workplace. Spanning community partnerships, career pathways, inclusive workforce initiatives, and new approaches to audience experience, the partnership has supported Museums Victoria in deepening co-creation, shared authority, and community-led practice. Along the way, the partnership delivered more inclusive and representative programming, built lasting, trust-based relationships with communities, strengthened both community and institutional capability, and positioned the organisation as a leader in equitable cultural practice. Further information on our partnership with the Scanlon Foundation can be found in *Strategic direction three: Our people (pages 28–29)*.

Looking ahead

Looking to 2026–27, Museums Victoria will focus on deepening audience connection and expanding impact through the delivery of major exhibitions, inclusive learning programs and accessible digital experiences. Our exhibition program will build on the recently opened *Home is Football: Belonging in Australian Soccer* at the Immigration Museum, with *Barbie®: The Exhibition* opening at Melbourne Museum and *ngiyama mirrim baany yulendj: Wake Up Rising Water*, delivered in partnership with Monash University, opening in the First Peoples Touring Gallery, and *On Country* at the Immigration Museum to come. We will also expand our outbound touring exhibition program, with *Air Playground* and *Illuminate* continuing to tour and further exhibitions being scoped.

Renewing our museums and sites will also be a key focus as detailed in *Strategic direction four: Our places (pages 30–33)*. We will progress masterplanning for the Immigration Museum, with a focus on gallery upgrades; refresh content at Melbourne Museum; and redevelopment planning for Scienceworks, underpinned by continued investment in our partnership with Swinburne University, positioning the site as a flagship for STEM engagement, immersive experiences and family learning.



Home is Football: Belonging in Australian Soccer, Immigration Museum
Source: Museums Victoria | Photographer: Eugene Hyland

Strategic objective: The Museums Victoria Research Institute works to protect our region's unique biodiversity and strengthen communities and culture through innovative, multidisciplinary research.

By preserving and developing the State collections—and providing the storage facilities essential to its long-term care—we ensure Victoria's cultural, scientific and technological heritage will be available for future generations.

Performance against our Strategic Plan

- ✓ Launched *PRISM*, a new open-access humanities research journal.
- ✓ Surveyed previously unexplored areas of the Coral Sea Marine Park.
- ✓ Laid the foundation for large-scale monitoring, community engagement, and improved conservation outcomes for native birds in Victoria.
- ✓ Recovered and described a new prehistoric whale species from Victoria.
- ✓ Gold Jewellery Acquisitive Prize works acquired into the State Collection.
- ✓ First Peoples engagement remained central to Museums Victoria's operations through repatriation, community visits and cultural activation projects.

Throughout 2025–26, the Museums Victoria Research Institute reinforced its role as a world-leading, multidisciplinary and collaborative research organisation, producing significant studies and contributions that strengthened its international reputation.

Research

During the year, the Research Institute conducted and contributed to research across science, conservation, and the humanities. Within the Institute, the First Peoples team led a distinct program of work, spanning research, collections and cultural practice.

The Research Institute commenced work on a new Australian Research Council – Linkage Project titled *Uncovering Aboriginal culture and histories through artefact collections* being led by Monash University and the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation. The project focuses on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung artefacts made from stone and wood that are currently held at Museums Victoria and will generate new knowledge of how these peoples lived and managed Country using innovative archaeological techniques, ethnohistory and traditional cultural knowledge.

Research Institute staff participated in the final project workshop titled *Translocated Nature from Australia as Indigenous Cultural Belongings* held at the Museum für Naturkunde in Berlin in October. The workshop brought together museum professionals and academics from Germany, Australia and the United Kingdom to examine questions about Berlin's extensive natural history collections from Australia and to learn more about the important role First Peoples played in forming these collections. The workshop marked the end of Museums Victoria's current involvement in the project, which was funded by the German Lost Art Foundation.

Two presentations were delivered by Research Institute staff, *Making Museum collection archives accessible: What needs to be done?* and *The benefits of breaking down disciplinary divides,* at Deakin University's Researching the Future of Collections symposium in November.

The Research Institute remained a leader in marine research. *The ancient origins of Southern Australian marine life*, a project led by Research Institute staff, commenced in July. The three-year project, made possible with the generous support of the Gabo Foundation, is investigating the origins and evolutionary history of selected Southern Australian marine fauna, their relationships to counterparts in other regions and how diversification and extinction have shaped the local marine ecosystem.

A major study led by Research Institute staff was published in the prestigious journal *Nature.* The paper, *Spatiotemporal faunal connectivity across global sea floors,* described research mapping the distribution and relatedness of ophiuroids, or brittle stars, across ocean seafloors from coastal areas to the abyssal plains of the deep sea.

Research Institute staff also led the study which described a new species of prehistoric whale, *Janjucetus dullardi.* The study was based on a 26-million-year-old fossil found on Wadawurrung Country near Jan Juc, Torquay. Published in the *Zoological Journal of the Linnean Society*, it offers remarkable insights into the early evolution of baleen whales, the filter-feeding giants that now cruise our oceans.

Research Institute staff also participated in:

- A CSIRO-led, 36-day voyage aboard the Marine National Facility research vessel, *Investigator*, surveying marine life in the southern and eastern areas of the Coral Sea Marine Park. The voyage yielded specimens from the depths of 200 to 3,500 metres, including from previously unexplored areas.
- *Hearing Victoria's Birds: Automated Detection of Species from Ecosystem Sounds*, a project supported by Dr William N. Holsworth. Combining biodiversity science, collection development and machine learning, the initiative is transforming more than 30 years of acoustic recordings into a powerful resource for monitoring and conserving Victoria's birdlife. During the year, researchers validated more than 80,000 bird calls across 192 species and demonstrated the potential of automated detection systems to significantly enhance traditional biodiversity surveys.

In March, the Research Institute hosted *Cell Cryobanking and the Role of Museums*, Boden Research Conference at Melbourne Museum. The event brought together specialist experts from across Australia and overseas to discuss current advances in this rapidly developing field. The conference was made possible with the support of the Australian Academy of Science.

In June 2026, Museums Victoria launched *Innovation Stories*, a digital project showcasing Victoria's long and proud history of innovation, generously funded by the H.V. McKay Charitable Trust. The project highlights four innovations drawn from Museums Victoria's collections: H.V. McKay's Sunshine stripper harvester, 1907 Harvester Judgement (the World's first minimum wage), Black Box flight recorder, and Solar technology. By examining and sharing the diverse ways Victorians have worked to innovate in the past, the project aims to spark new approaches and ways of thinking about how we can address the issues of today and the future.

In September, the Research Institute launched the first volume of *PRISM*, a new online, open-access humanities journal exploring the stories, ideas and histories linked to museum collections. *PRISM* serves as both a companion publication and a counterpoint to Museums Victoria's long-running scientific journal, *Memoirs of Museums Victoria*.

Further research and fieldwork conducted in regional Victoria can be found in Museums Victoria in Regional Victoria *(pages 38–39)*.

The State Collection

Across the year the Research Institute continued to manage and grow the State Collection, which comprises more than 15 million items amassed over 170 years.

This financial year saw the commencement of the five-yearly valuation of the State Collection, undertaken by the Research Institute to fulfil the requirements set out in Financial Reporting Direction 103 *Non Financial Physical Assets*. Throughout the process, Research Institute staff worked with external professional valuers to access more than two million records and assess over 4,000 individual items as part of a sampling and valuation framework.

The Research Institute, in partnership with the University of Melbourne, finalised their joint research initiative titled *Using AI to Accelerate the Registration of Museum Sciences Collections*, funded under a McCoy Project 2025 Seed Fund grant. Called the *Grapto* initiative, the project will use an AI pipeline to apply to key elements of the electronic registration process, data identification and interpretation, from 12,000 unregistered graptolite specimens in the State Collection.

This year saw the completion of the mechanical restoration of the Great Melbourne Telescope, a major item in the State Collection, following close to two decades of tireless work, and more than 120,000 volunteer hours, to restore the historic artefact to its former glory with the integration of a modern optical system. Restoration of the Great Melbourne Telescope was made possible through the support of Creative Victoria, the King Family Foundation, The Copland Foundation, The Myer Foundation, The Ian Potter Foundation and H.V. McKay Charitable Trust. The Great Melbourne Telescope restoration was a joint venture partnership of Museums Victoria, the Astronomical Society of Victoria Inc., and Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria. This project will create an enduring record of one of Australia's most significant heritage science conservation projects, providing an invaluable resource for future conservators, researchers, and historians.

Best-practice conservation

Museums Victoria's Preparation, Conservation and Exhibition Collection Management teams apply specialist expertise to ensure zoological specimens are developed, preserved, and presented to the highest professional standards. Collection development and preservation remain central to the work of the Research Institute, supporting the long-term integrity, accessibility and scientific value of the State Collection.

This expertise was showcased in the 817 zoological specimens featured in *Our Wondrous Planet,* made possible by the coordinated efforts of the Strategic Collection Management, Preparation, Sciences Collection, and Exhibitions teams.

Robust collection management systems supported safe handling, hazardous materials control, specimen tracking and reliable data, helping meet audit and compliance requirements. A dedicated preparation facility enabled careful assessment, secure storage and planning for display, including building and testing large-scale mounts.

Technical innovation underpinned the development of three major taxidermy mounts, Snow Leopard, Orangutan, and Asian Elephant, incorporating 3D scanning, digital modelling, and Computer Numerical Control (CNC) carving to produce accurate body forms. This work was informed by materials testing and in-house tanning research to improve skin preservation and long-term stability. Further outcomes included the creation of 18 newly registered scientific models, and the restoration and preparation of 276 specimens.

The exhibition features 38 museum-grade display cases designed to tightly control air exposure, alongside preventive treatments such as freezing and low-oxygen methods prior to installation, and research into specimen colouration including micro fading analysis to inform display conditions, minimise deterioration and ensure specimens remain representative of the species in the future.

Bong Su

With permission from Zoos Victoria, Museums Victoria carried out the taxidermy of Asian elephant Bong Su with great respect and dignity. Particular care has been taken to reflect his distinctive mannerisms and anatomy, and to highlight his importance as a key species in biodiversity conservation. The resulting display is designed to be world-class, paying tribute to Bong Su as a unique individual.

First Peoples engagement remained central to Museums Victoria's operations, and community access is at the heart of the First Peoples – Research and Collections department's work. The cultural belongings held within the First Peoples, Moana Wan Solwara and International collections belong to the communities and Countries from which they were taken, removed or collected, and access to these collections is an important part of cultural care, reconnection and accountability.



Our Wondrous Planet, Melbourne Museum
Source: Museums Victoria | Photographer: Thomas Breakwell

This year, an estimated 150 attendees from across Australia and around the world participated in nearly 50 collection access visits supported by the department. Participants included First Peoples, Pasifika and diaspora communities, family groups, weaving groups, artists and musicians, university students and researchers, paid placement and careers program participants, museum professionals, government and diplomatic visitors, and partner organisations. These visits provided opportunities for communities to reconnect with cultural materials, share knowledge, correct records, guide future care, and strengthen relationships with Museums Victoria.

Community access to cultural material stored at Museums Victoria helps to ensure that communities lead decisions about their own materials, histories and stories, recognising that they are the rightful knowledge holders and cultural authorities.

In March 2026, a collection highlights showcase featuring the *Moana Wan Solwara Sound Archive: Reawakening the mauri | life force* was unveiled in the Melbourne Museum foyer. The display features selected instruments from the Museums Victoria collection (some collected as early as 1870), that were reactivated and played by cultural knowledge holders for the first time in generations, restoring their living cultural significance and renewing access for Pasifika communities.

Repatriation of First Peoples Cultural Property

Museums Victoria continues to repatriate First Peoples Cultural Property held within the State Collection, returning materials to Country through Traditional Owners, Communities of Origin, and recognised Cultural Authorities. This work acknowledges that these cultural belongings should never have been taken or removed from families, communities and Country.

Led by First Peoples – Research and Collections department, this work supports self-determination for First Peoples communities and strengthens ethical, collaborative relationships. Repatriation activities are undertaken through respectful partnership, building ethical and reciprocal relationships between Museums Victoria and communities.

The First Peoples – Research and Collections department undertook three repatriations this year, including:

- The completion of the Warlpiri repatriation, supported by annual funding from the Indigenous Repatriation Program – Museum Grants Program, administered by the Office for the Arts (Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts).
- Ngaati Naho Hiinaki puurangi taken from the battle of Rangiriri in 1863, from Aotearoa New Zealand.
- A Pou from Te Whare o Heretaunga, also from Aotearoa New Zealand.

Gold Jewellery Acquisitive Prize

In October 2025, Museums Victoria announced the winners of its inaugural Gold Jewellery Acquisitive Prize, a new award recognising excellence and innovation in conceptual jewellery design. Three prizes were awarded: Major Prize (Laura Deakin for *Diggings Ring*), First Peoples Prize (Simone Thomson for *Boorndup Biik*) and Emerging Prize (Lou Wheeler for *The Safest Investment*). The winning pieces were formally acquired into Museums Victoria's State of Victoria Gold Jewellery Collection in May. The 2025 prize was supported by donors including Diana Morgan AM, Ian Armstrong OAM and Mary Armstrong. The next Gold Jewellery Acquisitive Prize is planned for 2027.

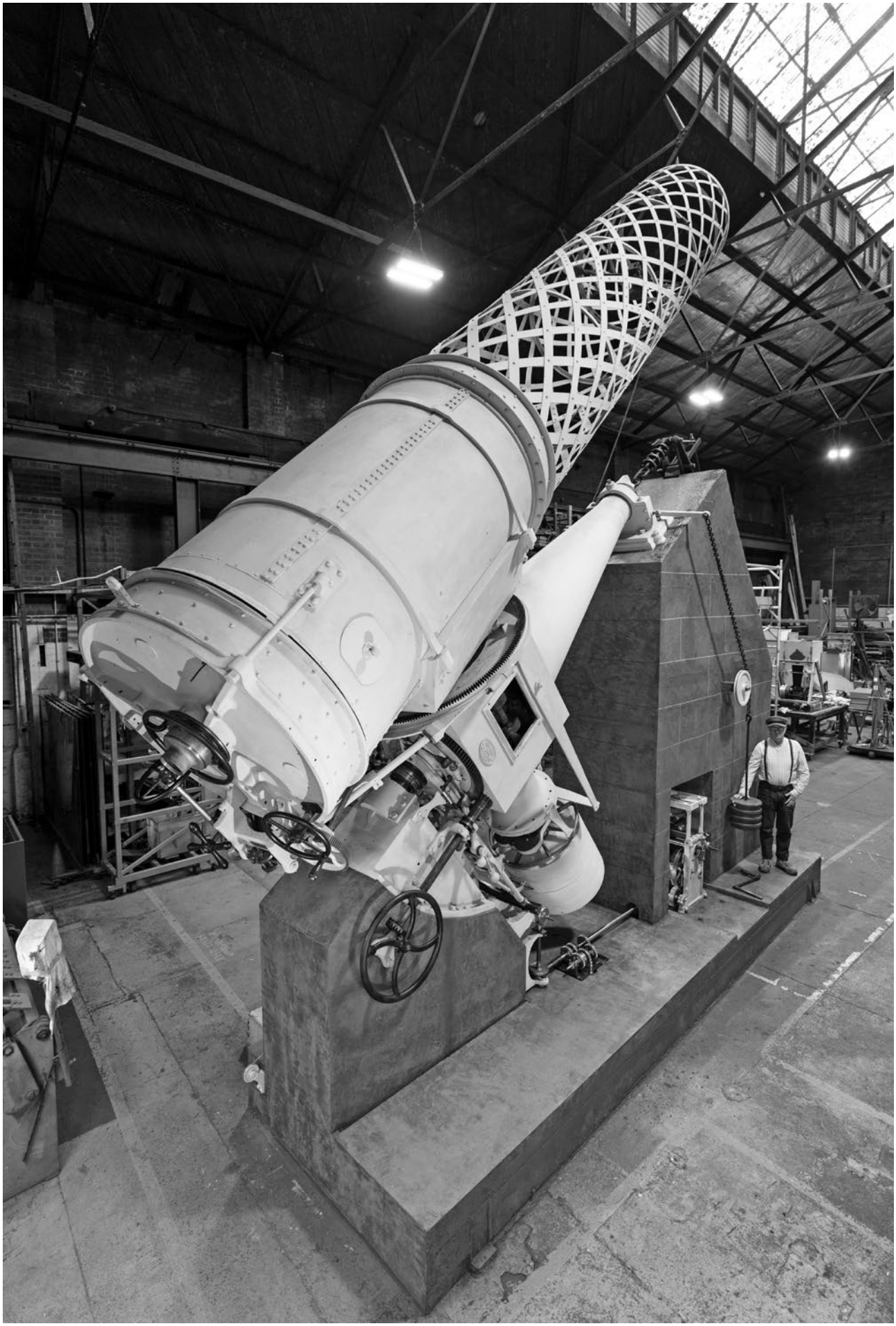
Looking ahead

In 2026–27 and beyond, the Research Institute will continue to expand its impact through:

- Finalisation of the new Research and Collections Strategy, which will define the Research Institute's priorities over the next five years and its contribution to Museums Victoria's strategic goals.
- Collection-based discovery, with the next series of showcases highlighting the State Collection and expanded digitisation to improve access.
- Continued interdisciplinary research, bridging science and humanities through *PRISM* and *Memoirs of Museums Victoria.*



State of Victoria Gold Collection
Source: Museums Victoria | Photographer: Eugene Hyland



Great Melbourne Telescope, Scienceworks
Source: Museums Victoria | Photographer: Rodney Start

Strategic objective: Our welcoming and inspiring workplaces reflect the diversity of Victoria's communities and drive Museums Victoria's success.

Performance against our Strategic Plan

- ✓ Expanded career pathways into the museum sector, through initiatives including the First Peoples Cadetship Program, Careers at the Museum, and Sci Comm Works.
- ✓ Earned national recognition for staff excellence with multiple conservation awards highlighting leadership, research and professional contribution.
- ✓ Invested in workforce capability, delivering leadership development through the Emerging Leaders Program and Courageous Conversations.

In 2025–26 Museums Victoria undertook a structured period of organisational change. The process was guided by consultation, regular communication and support for staff, aiming for a balanced transition that maintains continuity of service while enabling financial sustainability and innovation.

Throughout the year, Museums Victoria continued to build capability, support professional growth and strengthen leadership across the organisation.

The Emerging Leaders Program, a structured and comprehensive leadership development course, was delivered again in 2026, building staff confidence, knowledge and requisite skills needed to lead effectively.

Museums Victoria's succession planning program was also launched, equipping managers with the expertise and practical tools to strengthen staff retention and build future leadership capability.

During the year, Museums Victoria continued to support emerging talent and capability development in science communication through the Sci Comm Works program at Scienceworks. The four-month program provided tertiary students with practical training in communicating science to diverse audiences, combining an intensive induction, expert-led masterclasses and supervised on-floor experience engaging visitors through pop-up science activities, demonstrations and early-years STEM experiences.

Participants gained hands-on experience working with families, school groups and the broader public, while developing skills in facilitation, presentation and visitor engagement under the guidance of Museums Victoria staff and industry practitioners. The program also fostered peer learning and professional networks among participants, strengthening pathways into science communication and cultural sector careers. It also offers ongoing volunteering opportunities, adding to Scienceworks' capacity to deliver engaging public programs.

Museums Victoria is committed to a respectful workplace culture that supports inclusion, wellbeing and shared accountability. In March, the Courageous Conversations workshop was launched to provide staff with the skills and strategies to manage challenging workplace conversations.

Museums Victoria continued to strengthen pathways for First Peoples through initiatives such as the First Peoples Cadetship Program. Supported by The Hugh D.T. Williamson Foundation, the program provides cadets with dedicated coordination, structured development opportunities, mentoring and exposure to a range of roles across the organisation, supporting long-term capability building, career pathways and meaningful employment outcomes.

The Cadetship Program forms part of Museums Victoria's broader commitment to fostering a respectful, inclusive and culturally informed workplace. Working in close partnership with First Peoples communities, we continue to shape employment pathways, training programs and roles grounded in cultural knowledge and community priorities. The First Peoples Cultural Competency Program, a Museums Victoria–developed learning experience that helps staff deepen their understanding of First Peoples cultures, histories and perspectives, also continued this year, with a Cultural Educator appointed to support its delivery.

Through our four-year partnership with the Scanlon Foundation, Museums Victoria has strengthened workforce diversity and capability by creating inclusive career pathways and building staff capacity. Following the successful pilot of the Careers at the Museum program, delivered in partnership with Ubuntu Project and the Scanlon Foundation, we welcomed 10 participants to the program, which supports entry into museum careers for people from diverse communities. Ongoing learning partnerships have also embedded inclusive practice and co-design across the organisation.

This financial year also saw the establishment of the Overseas Qualified Program Placement, which advances the employment of overseas-qualified professionals. The program is a collaboration with Melbourne Polytechnic, funded by the Scanlon Foundation via the Scanlon Inclusion Project.

As part of its commitment to inclusion and workforce diversity, Museums Victoria remains a Welcoming Workplaces member, embedding practices that support inclusive workplace cultures.

Work began this year on our next Gender Equality Action Plan. Building on the actions already underway, it offers an important opportunity to identify practical steps that will

continue strengthening gender equality across Museums Victoria and support a workplace where everyone feels respected, included and safe. Consultation commenced in June 2026, with the finalised plan to be submitted to the Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector in August.

Across the year, diversity and inclusion remained central to Museums Victoria's culture, shaping how we support our people and reflect the communities we serve. Staff-led initiatives were at the heart of this. In February, Museums Victoria again proudly participated in Melbourne's iconic Midsumma Pride March, coordinated by the LGBTQIA+ employee network and joined by friends and family. In March, International Women's Day was marked with a week of events led by the Women at the Museum network, creating opportunities for connection and reflection.

Museums Victoria fostered workplace culture through a range of staff events such as Australia's Biggest Morning Tea, and Take Your Dog to Work Day, creating informal opportunities to strengthen collegial relationships and promote a positive workplace environment.

Museums Victoria's employee networks led events that provided opportunities for shared learning, reflection and cross-organisational connection. Our employee networks also recognised key moments such as World Refugee Day, creating space for awareness and dialogue that reinforces Museums Victoria's commitment to inclusion, diversity and a workplace culture reflective of the communities we serve.

Further detail about Museums Victoria's employee profile and workplace culture can be found on *pages 71–75*.

Recognising excellence in conservation and design

At the 2025 Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Materials (AICCM) Awards, three members of Museums Victoria's conservation community were recognised for their leadership and impact.

Elizabeth McCartney, Manager Conservation, was named Conservator of the Year, in recognition of her leadership, including her response to the flooding incident at the Merri-bek Collection Facility.

Alice Cannon, Manager History and Technology Collections, received the Colin Pearson Award for Outstanding Research in Material Conservation for her work advancing approaches to managing complex materials.

Dr Rosemary Goodall, Honorary Associate and former Materials Scientist, received the Outstanding Service to the Conservation Profession Award for her long-standing contribution to conservation science and knowledge-sharing.

Together, these achievements highlight the depth of expertise across Museums Victoria and reflect the organisation's commitment to developing staff capability and contributing to leadership across the cultural sector.



Sci Comm Works volunteer
Source: Museums Victoria | Photographer: Rodney Start

Looking ahead

In 2026–27, Museums Victoria will continue to develop our people and sustain a workplace culture that is safe, inclusive and enabling.

- We will build on our program of staff engagement activities, employee networks and learning opportunities to further embed collaboration, cultural awareness and a sense of belonging across the organisation.
- We will develop and implement our new Gender Equality Action Plan, working towards an inclusive and respectful workplace that embraces the gender equality principles.
- We will maintain momentum on key commitments in our Accessibility and Inclusion Action Plan 2024–27, and continue to embed the tools, learnings and relationships developed through our partnership with the Scanlon Foundation to support equity, representation and inclusive workplace practice.

Strategic objective: We ensure our museums, sites and facilities are safeguarded for future generations.

Performance against our Strategic Plan

- ✓ Advanced site planning and partnerships at Scienceworks, including a new collaboration with Swinburne University and the commencement of a future vision and redevelopment plan for the precinct.
- ✓ Progressed masterplanning for the Immigration Museum.
- ✓ Strengthened stewardship and activation of the Royal Exhibition Building, delivering priority conservation works and major public programming.
- ✓ Enhanced collection storage and resilience, continuing Merri-bek recovery works, expanding capacity at the Spotswood collection storage facility, and progressing long-term upgrades to meet industry standards, while advancing our sustainability goals.

Museums Victoria's buildings and facilities support both the visitor experience and the protection of the State Collection. We are committed to maintaining safe, accessible environments while investing in long-term preservation and sustainability.

Across 2025–26, our primary focus has been key masterplanning priorities spanning the Immigration Museum, Scienceworks, Royal Exhibition Building and Melbourne Museum.

Immigration Museum

This year Museums Victoria commenced the Immigration Museum Destination Masterplan. The masterplan will act as a blueprint for the site's future development. At its heart is audience impact—deepening visitor connection through rich storytelling and compelling exhibitions, collections, education and events. It will also reimagine the visitor experience, with more welcoming amenities and sustained community engagement that fosters social cohesion. Underpinning these ambitions is a commitment to financial sustainability, achieved through sound commercial and operational planning. Implementation will begin in the coming financial year.

Scienceworks

Scienceworks continues to play a central role in Museums Victoria's delivery of STEM education and public engagement, providing hands-on experiences that connect scientific concepts with real-world applications.

In 2025–26, Museums Victoria and Swinburne University of Technology announced a three-year partnership, positioning Swinburne as our exclusive Learning Partner across exhibitions, festivals and education programs. Launched at Scienceworks, the partnership brings together expertise in research, technology and design to enhance learning experiences and inspire curiosity and innovation in STEM.

As part of this partnership, work commenced in April 2026 on a new vision and redevelopment plan for the Scienceworks precinct. This project takes a research-led, design thinking approach to explore future possibilities for the site. It will inform long-term advocacy for investment and position Scienceworks as a leading example of sustainable, STEM-focused civic redevelopment.

New playspace at Scienceworks

A destination science playspace at Scienceworks is under development, made possible through the generous support of our funding partner Melbourne Water. The playspace will extend Scienceworks' signature hands-on, playful learning in a stunning outdoor environment.

Museums Victoria has undertaken extensive community consultation to ensure the playspace will deliver an experience tailored to the needs and expectations of our visitors. Designed by Playce, the playspace is scheduled to open in November 2027. This major initiative represents the first phase of the masterplan to redevelop the Scienceworks precinct, ensuring this beloved museum continues to engage and inspire generations of children in the dynamic world of science.

Royal Exhibition Building

Museums Victoria stewards a portfolio of heritage buildings, including the Pumping Station at Scienceworks, Old Customs House (Immigration Museum) and the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Royal Exhibition Building. Stewardship of these assets focuses on maintaining their cultural significance while enabling safe and meaningful public use.

The Victorian Government has committed to the protection and conservation of the Royal Exhibition Building as announced in the 2025–26 State Budget. As part of this commitment, support of $5 million was provided during the year from the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions, to progress an integrated program of works focused on safeguarding the building's heritage values while improving public access and safety. This included early-stage conservation, stabilisation and site improvement activities designed to address immediate risks, enhance accessibility, and protect the integrity of key architectural elements.

Work has also continued with Trower Falvo Architects on the development of the future vision for the Royal Exhibition Building.

These works represent an important step in the ongoing stewardship of the World Heritage-listed site, supporting its long-term conservation and continued use as a leading venue for Australia's premier exhibitions and events.

125th Anniversary of Australia's First Parliament commemorated at the Royal Exhibition Building

In May 2026, the Royal Exhibition Building, one of Victoria's most significant heritage places and a UNESCO World Heritage-listed site, opened its doors for a weekend of commemorative events marking 125 years since the opening of Australia's first Federal Parliament.

It was here, on 9 May 1901, that the first Federal Parliament was opened, an event that helped shape Australia's political and civic identity. The program acknowledged this milestone while creating space to reflect on the evolving nature of democracy, representation and national identity.

The formal proceedings, with Board member Jon Faine AM as master of ceremonies, opened with a Welcome to Country by Wurundjeri Elder John Terrick. Speakers included the Governor-General Sam Mostyn AC; Prime Minister Anthony Albanese; Premier of Victoria Jacinta Allan; Co-Chairs of the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria, Meriki Onus and Djaran Murray-Jackson; Speaker of the House of Representatives Milton Dick; and President of the Museums Board of Victoria, Mary Stuart. Their speeches offered reflection, truth-telling and a shared vision for a hopeful future.

The formalities were followed by a weekend open house, with collection objects from the 1901 ceremony on display—including Charles Nuttall's painting *The Opening, Commonwealth Parliament*, recently conserved for future generations. In a contemporary echo of Nuttall's work, official photographer Tiffany Garvie—herself a former Museums Victoria staff member—captured a commemorative image of the 2026 gathering, which will be acquired into the State Collection.

Across two days of free public events, the building welcomed more than 22,000 people. The 1901 Federation objects were among the most popular draws, and visitors were captivated, too, by the Museums Victoria staff and volunteers who hosted, guided and shared the stories of the objects and the place.

Museums Victoria delivered the historic event in partnership with both State and Federal government, community organisations and cultural stakeholders. This event reinforced the Royal Exhibition Building's role as a place of gathering and public memory and created a valuable platform to advocate for its future, particularly as the building approaches its 150th anniversary in 2030.

The event was made possible with the support of our Major Partners, the Scanlon Foundation and McKinnon, and Supporter the John and Myriam Wylie Foundation.

The conservation of Charles Nuttall's *The Opening, Commonwealth Parliament,* was generously supported by Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM, helping to preserve this significant work for future generations.



Commemorative weekend marking 125 years since Australia's First Parliament, Royal Exhibition Building: Southern Italian Music Ensemble – performing music and dance of Southern Italy by Tarantella Melbourne
Source: Museums Victoria | Photographer: Thomas Breakwell

Melbourne Museum

October 2025 marked 25 years since Melbourne Museum first opened at Carlton Gardens. The museum is one of Australia's most visited and valued cultural destinations. Since opening at Carlton Gardens in October 2000, designed by Denton Corker Marshall, Melbourne Museum has continually evolved to remain a vital and contemporary destination. In 2013, the Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre's First Peoples exhibition was redeveloped in close collaboration with the Yulendj Group of Elders and community representatives. The Pauline Gandel Children's Gallery opened in 2016 as one of the museum's most beloved spaces for young visitors. In 2022, the museum opened permanent exhibition *Triceratops: Fate of the Dinosaurs*, and most recently in 2025, opened *Our Wondrous Planet* and created a second temporary space for touring exhibitions. Together, these renewals reflect a sustained commitment to keeping Melbourne Museum fresh, relevant and engaging for every generation of visitors.

Sustaining this momentum is essential. Continuing to refresh gallery content, in step with new research and the expectations of contemporary audiences and activating more pop-up displays that bring the breadth of the State Collection into public view, is a priority focus for the coming year.

Andrew and Geraldine Buxton Family Playspace

Opening in 2027, the Andrew and Geraldine Buxton Family Playspace at Melbourne Museum will be a truly inclusive environment where children and families can learn, explore and connect through play.

Covering over 1,000 square metres, and located in the northern end of Melbourne Museum, the Playspace will encourage curiosity, imaginative play, and social connection for kids with a wide range of physical, neurological, and intellectual abilities.

The playspace, designed in collaboration with Jeavons Landscape Architects, who are Australian leaders in inclusive play, will also offer a welcoming space for rest and renewal for accompanying guardians and caregivers.

Made possible through the generosity and vision of the Andrew and Geraldine Buxton Foundation, Andrew and Geraldine Buxton and their family, and supported by Learning Partner Swinburne University of Technology, this landmark project will help create a new destination for play, learning and connection in the heart of Melbourne.

Collection storage facilities

The major flooding incident at the Merri-bek Collection Facility in November 2024 had a significant impact on the State Collection, affecting thousands of objects and prompting an immediate, coordinated response. The commitment and expertise of staff across Museums Victoria enabled a rapid transition from emergency response to recovery, demonstrating strong organisational capability and collaboration.

Work continued on the Merri-bek Flood Recovery Project during the year, including infrastructure repairs, temporary conservation facilities and expanded storage at the Spotswood collection storage facility to support in-house processing.

As a collections-based organisation, the right storage facilities are essential to supporting the strategic collections work at the heart of everything we do. Investigations into long-term storage solutions are ongoing as part of the Collection Storage Upgrade Project.



Dani Measday, Conservator, Natural Sciences, treats mould-affected collection items at Merri-bek Collection Facility
Source: Museums Victoria | Photographer: Rodney Start

Environmental sustainability

Museums play an important role in advancing environmental awareness and supporting climate action. At Museums Victoria, sustainability is embedded across operations and programming, contributing to global efforts while reducing our organisational impact.

In 2025–26, sustainability initiatives progressed across the organisation. These included the transition to zero-emissions fleet vehicles and a new facility services contract introducing progressively increasing waste diversion targets to reduce landfill. Feasibility studies were also completed to support the shift from gas-fired to electric heating at Scienceworks, the Merri-bek Collection Facility and the Immigration Museum, informing future upgrades to more sustainable infrastructure.

Our environmental performance report can be found on *pages 54–61*.

Looking ahead

In 2026–27, Museums Victoria will continue to advance its strategic priorities, with a focus on sustainability and long-term planning across all sites. Priorities include progressing work towards our net zero goals, strengthening environmental, social and governance (ESG) planning, and advancing masterplanning for the Immigration Museum, Melbourne Museum Plaza, Royal Exhibition Building and Scienceworks.

In the coming year, we will focus on creating a long-term vision and redevelopment plan for Scienceworks.

We will also renew Melbourne Museum's galleries and exhibitions through a Content Masterplan that reinforces its position as a national and international leader in research-driven storytelling, exceptional visitor experiences and large-scale exhibition delivery.

Work will continue to finalise a vision and masterplan for the Royal Exhibition Building that safeguards its World Heritage values while unlocking opportunities for activation, public access and commercial use.



Scienceworks
Source: Museums Victoria | Photographer: Thomas Breakwell

Strategic objective: Our fit-for-purpose business assets, robust operations and sustained revenue growth ensure Museums Victoria is resilient and future-ready.

- ✓ Expanded premium after-hours programming, with Nocturnal: Museum After Dark and themed events attracting new adult audiences and lifting per-capita spend.
- ✓ Grew flagship experiences such as Halloween at the Museum and Scienceworks After Dark, demonstrating strong demand for immersive, ticketed events aligned with the museum and the State Collection.
- ✓ Launched new commercial experiences, such as *Eonarium Enlightenment* at the Immigration Museum, meeting growing demand for innovative, technology-driven cultural activations in heritage spaces.
- ✓ IMAX Melbourne entertained more than 280,000 visitors, reinforcing demand for premium large-format cinema, blockbuster releases and signature film festivals.

In 2025–26, Museums Victoria continued to strengthen its long-term financial sustainability by growing self-generated revenue, expanding high-performing commercial experiences and deepening philanthropic and corporate partnerships.

During the year we focused on premium event programming, distinctive retail and publishing offers to enhance both audience engagement and commercial yield. Revenue growth was driven by strong performance across after-hours programming, IMAX Melbourne, retail innovation, publishing and major venue hire.

IMAX Melbourne: Premium content and distinctive experiences

IMAX Melbourne welcomed more than 280,000 visitors during the year, with 130 different screenings across 2,200 sessions, ranging from blockbuster releases, anniversary screenings, premium event cinema and signature festivals.

IMAX Melbourne hosted 16 Melbourne film premieres, including a special evening with Baz Luhrmann, who introduced a screening of *Epic: Elvis Presley in Concert*. Luhrmann delighted a sold-out audience of die-hard Elvis fans with stories from the filmmaking process and his discovery of previously unheard Elvis recordings. He also visited IMAX Melbourne earlier in the year, using the cinema to finalise the film's sound mix.

Signature programming remained central to IMAX Melbourne's performance. We screened our new documentary *Australia 3D* more than 250 times, drawing over 17,000 admissions. Our popular film festivals BBIFF (Best Biggest IMAX Film Festival) and SPACETEMBER returned this year, celebrating iconic large-format cinema and encouraging strong repeat visitation from highly engaged audiences.



Baz Luhrmann in person at *Epic: Elvis Presley in Concert*, IMAX Melbourne
Source: Museums Victoria | Photographer: Thomas Breakwell

Premium experiences

Premium after-hours experiences remained a cornerstone of Museums Victoria's commercial strategy in 2025–26, lifting per-capita spend and attracting new adult audiences to the museums.

Nocturnal: Museum After Dark, the monthly adults-only series continued to offer a diverse mix of curator-led talks and tours, live performances, DJs, culturally responsive programming and participatory workshops across the year. A highlight was the NAIDOC Week Nocturnal, which integrated talks, tours, Drag Trivia, a live performance by Miss First Nations Supreme 2023 Cerulean, and a paid creative workshop delivered in partnership with Gammin Threads.

Discoteca Italiana, an after-dark evening of Roman art, culture and Italo disco was held in June at Melbourne Museum. More than 2,100 people attended, enjoying sets from Euro and Italian disco DJs Tanzer, Dischi Marciano and Hysteric along with food and beverage offers from Brunetti Classico, Segafredo and Floridia Cheese. This program was made possible thanks to the generous support of the Italian Australian Foundation.

Halloween at the Museum expansion

Following its successful launch in 2024, Halloween at the Museum built on that momentum in 2025, attracting more than 4,200 attendees and demonstrating strong audience demand for immersive, after-hours experiences grounded in Museums Victoria's collections. Its popularity reinforced its value as both an engagement and revenue driver, appealing to intergenerational audiences through a unique blend of science, storytelling and entertainment.

At Scienceworks, the Halloween season was expanded through Scienceworks After Dark: Science in the Shadows, an adults-only event that transformed the museum into a playful, immersive environment. Guests engaged with eerie exhibits, hands-on activities and themed hospitality, while planetarium programming added a distinctive dimension.

Following their successful introduction in 2024–25, Museum Sleepovers continued to expand in 2025–26, with family, teen and adults-only formats. Themed sleepovers linked to major exhibitions and IMAX Melbourne releases have been rated as a premium, high-value museum-exclusive experience, made possible with the support of Partner, Ecosa.

Commercial hire of venues and spaces

The Royal Exhibition Building continued to perform as a flagship commercial venue, hosting several of Melbourne's most significant public events throughout the year. In October, the Melbourne Italian Festa brought a vibrant celebration of Italian culture to the building, featuring around 150 stalls, including 40 food and drink vendors, and attracting an estimated 130,000 attendees to a lively weekend of authentic cuisine, entertainment, and community engagement.

Other major events further reinforced the venue's prominence on the city's cultural calendar. In February, the Royal Exhibition Building again hosted the PayPal Melbourne Fashion Festival, showcasing leading and emerging Australian designers across a program of high-profile runway events. In March, more than 100,000 visitors attended the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show, the largest horticultural festival in the Southern Hemisphere, and in April, the Royal Exhibition Building and Melbourne Museum jointly hosted Cultural Women's Night as part of Women Deliver 2026, welcoming 4,000 delegates.

Eonarium Enlightenment

Eonarium Enlightenment at the Immigration Museum was a standout commercial success this year, attracting more than 21,000 visitors and demonstrating the growing demand for innovative, ticketed cultural experiences. Developed by internationally renowned collective PROJEKTIL in collaboration with Fever, the 30-minute immersive light and sound installation transformed Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* into a captivating 360-degree visual experience. *Eonarium Enlightenment* highlighted the versatility of the historic Long Room, showing how heritage architecture can be reimagined through contemporary technology to deliver premium, revenue-generating programming.

Retail and publishing

Retail remained a key contributor to self-generated revenue in 2025–26, underpinned by exclusive collections, exhibition-linked merchandise and strategic brand collaborations.

A major highlight was the launch of the Phar Lap Centennial range, which included exclusive merchandise and a special centenary edition publication.

Other key releases included *For Her Love of Birds: The Extraordinary Untold Story of Jane Ward Tost* by Dr Jane Melville AM, Senior Curator, Terrestrial Vertebrates, Research Institute. The biography follows the life of Jane Ward Tost, Australia's first and most accomplished female taxidermist of the 19th Century. The book explores themes of women in science, resilience in the face of adversity, migration and the wonders of the natural world.

Museums Victoria retail again capitalised on the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show through an on-site pop-up, supporting both revenue growth and brand visibility in a highly aligned audience environment.

Partnerships

Partnerships continued to play a vital role in enabling exhibitions, education programs and improved access. In 2025–26, Museums Victoria welcomed new partnerships with EY, Viking, Brunetti Classico, Consulate General of Italy Melbourne, Italian Cultural Institute of Melbourne, CO.AS.IT, Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Australia (Victoria and Tasmania), Pronto Concrete, *Il Globo*, JCDecaux, and Swinburne University of Technology, while renewing

support from Ecosa, Engineers Australia, Inspiring Victoria, AIG, Taubmans, Smooth FM, V/Line, and the Department of Education through the *Best Start, Best Life* initiative.

With VicHealth's support, Climate Cafe public programs were complemented by a new free Student Climate Commons program for secondary schools delivered in partnership with Headspace and Orygen Youth Health, combatting climate anxiety and inspiring students to be part of a better future.

In February, on the International Day of Women and Girls in Science, Museums Victoria proudly announced a new three-year partnership with Swinburne University of Technology, appointing Swinburne as its exclusive Learning Partner for STEM and Design across a suite of flagship exhibitions, festivals and education programs. The partnership brings together two of Victoria's most influential institutions in education, research and public engagement, united by a shared commitment to inspiring curiosity, innovation and a lifelong love of learning in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Over the next three years, Swinburne will work with Museums Victoria to deliver programs that immerse students in STEM principles and design thinking, including through major exhibitions and events such as *Top Designs* at Melbourne Museum and the Science is a Superpower Festival at Scienceworks.

Marketing and media

Museums Victoria is one of Australia's most visible and trusted cultural and scientific voices. In 2025–26, an integrated, always-on marketing approach supported strong visitation and generated a continuous stream of national and international coverage across our exhibitions, programs and research.

Media performance grew year-on-year, with total media items, Advertising Space Rate (ASR), and potential audience reach all exceeding the previous year's results. This uplift was driven by a compelling program of major exhibitions and high-impact research stories that resonated with audiences locally and globally. Featured highlights are representative of the profile our work commands throughout the year.

Our research consistently achieves international cut-through. The identification of an ancient whale species from Jan Juc was reported by major outlets, including *The Guardian* and *BBC News*, while brittle-star research led by the Research Institute, published in the journal *Nature*, drew coverage across national and international media. Locally, an in-depth ABC News feature on Melbourne Museum highlighted the scale and significance of its collection of more than 15 million items.

Our exhibition program, including *LEGO® Star Wars™: The Exhibition*, *Our Wondrous Planet*, *ROME: Empire, Power, People* and *Treasures of the Viking Age: The Galloway Hoard*, drew sustained attention across print, broadcast and digital platforms, alongside premium after-hours programming.

The launch of *ROME: Empire, Power, People* generated extensive coverage, including a double-page feature in *The Age* and, through a successful media partnership with *Il Globo*, engagement with culturally and linguistically diverse audiences across the organisation's print, radio, online and subscriber television networks. The Australian Vietnamese Women's Association's 50th Anniversary Celebration at the Immigration Museum, attended by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, reinforced community connection and national visibility, while the 125th anniversary of Australia's first Federal Parliament at the Royal Exhibition Building attracted prominent national reporting, affirming the building's historic role and civic significance. *The Australian* also featured the announcement of the Andrew and Geraldine Buxton Family Playspace, ahead of its opening at Melbourne Museum.

Together, this coverage, only a fraction of the activity generated across the year, reflects the strength of Museums Victoria's brand and its growing profile and reputation as a leading cultural and scientific institution, at home and around the world.



Annual Member Party, Melbourne Museum
Source: Museums Victoria | Photographer: Thomas Breakwell

Our members

As always, we are deeply grateful to our members, whose ongoing engagement is vital to making our work possible. Museums Victoria hosted a robust lineup of Member-exclusive previews, private access, after-hours events, and special celebrations for Museum Members to enjoy, including:

- Preview and after-hours access to the openings of *Our Wondrous Planet; ROME: Empire, Power, People*; and *Treasures of the Viking Age: The Galloway Hoard*.
- Signature Member Events including the Annual Member Party in November, an all-ages evening where members were able to explore Melbourne Museum after-hours along with activities, workshops and entertainment.

Members continued to enjoy year-round benefits including unlimited general entry to our museums, discounted tickets to exhibitions and special events, plus screenings and shows at IMAX Melbourne and the Melbourne Planetarium, and across our retail offerings.

Our supporters

The generous support and ongoing commitment of Museums Victoria's donors are crucial to realising our long-term objectives. Among the significant philanthropic support we received this year were contributions from the Gabo Foundation, the Gandel Foundation, the Scanlon Foundation, the Andrew and Geraldine Buxton Foundation, Dr William N. Holsworth, the King Family Foundation, the Italian Australian Foundation, the Besen Family Foundation, and the Pellicano Family. We gratefully acknowledge with deep appreciation all our donors, philanthropic partners and Director's Circle Patrons, and recognise those who, during the year, demonstrated an enduring commitment by pledging a future gift to Museums Victoria through a bequest. Further information regarding donors and supporters is available in Acknowledgements *(page 129)*.

Looking ahead

In 2026–27, Museums Victoria will continue to expand its commercial offer, presenting new experiences that grow audiences, strengthen revenue streams and deepen engagement across our sites:

- IMAX Melbourne will present an exciting program of large-format cinema, including at least two new films on IMAX 70mm film: Christopher Nolan's *The Odyssey*, the first feature to be shot entirely with IMAX film cameras, and *Dune: Part Three*, which features scenes shot with IMAX film cameras for the first time. IMAX Melbourne will be the only cinema in the Southern Hemisphere to show Nolan's latest epic on IMAX 70mm Film, the director's preferred format.
- Halloween at Melbourne Museum will evolve into a major multi-day program in 2026, introducing premium adults-only experiences, including the new Haunted Gala.
- A strong calendar of culturally significant celebration events will be delivered, designed to increase audience engagement and tourism impact. This suite of events will be complemented by an uplift in guided tour offerings, including increased frequency and multilingual delivery, with programming further enhanced to support major touring exhibitions.
- Museums Victoria will continue to strengthen its governance, risk and operational processes while responsibly adopting emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, to enhance workforce capability and deliver improved, sustainable services across the organisation.
- The Museum Members program will continue to focus on driving membership growth and engagement and continuously improving the overall member experience.

Serving all Victorians.

Our reach and impact continued to grow this year through engagement with communities across regional Victoria. Through place-based research, fieldwork, outreach, tours, public events and education programs, Museums Victoria worked alongside communities to create meaningful, locally relevant experiences. This work extended our museums well beyond their physical sites, improving access and ensuring regional audiences could take part in and connect with culture, science and history.

Touring regionally

Regional touring and outreach gave communities the chance to engage with museum content close to home. The Scienceworks exhibition *Illuminate: How Science Comes to Light* drew strong community participation during its five-month season, where it attracted 17,000 visitors at the Bendigo Discovery Science and Technology Centre and delivered hands-on STEM experiences for regional audiences. It closed in Bendigo in July 2025 and continued on tour, opening at Questacon, Canberra in February 2026.

Regional marketing activity

To engage and encourage regional Victorians to visit our venues, exhibitions, and programs, Museums Victoria allocates at least 15% of its total advertising spend to reach Victorians outside metropolitan Melbourne. Key channels included regional press across the state and out-of-home placements in the regional hubs of Ballarat, Geelong, and Bendigo.

This year, as part of our first targeted social media campaign for regional Victoria, we reached more than 1.2 million people through campaigns across the state's regions.

Marketing was focused on larger-scale exhibitions and events more likely to interest regional audiences, such as *LEGO® Star Wars™: The Exhibition* and *ROME: Empire, Power, People*. Communications were timed to align with the periods when regional Victorians are most likely to visit metropolitan Melbourne such as extended holidays, school holidays and major exhibition openings.

Education and Outreach

Future Innovators

As a key contributor to education across the state, Museums Victoria delivers learning opportunities to students in every local government area. This includes our work in early childhood learning, such as the continued delivery of the Future Innovators program – a Department of Education-funded STEM professional development initiative for kindergarten teachers and educators.

Since launching in 2019, Future Innovators has reached educators in every Department of Education region and area team across Victoria. In 2025–26, the program engaged 607 participants from 410 early childhood services, helping the sector embed STEM in early-learning environments and supporting the learning of more than 17,000 preschool-aged children.

Outreach Program

Museums Victoria's Outreach Program continues to bring high-quality museum experiences to communities and groups for whom visiting our museums may not be possible due to age, distance or other barriers.

As the largest provider of educational kindergarten incursions in Victoria, the program offers a unique 'museum in a van' experience. This year it reached more than 280 kindergartens in regional towns including Warrnambool, Mildura, Bairnsdale, Wangaratta, Mallacoota, Bendigo, Ballarat, Torquay, and Hamilton – delivering STEM learning and cultural experiences directly to the classroom. The Education and Outreach team also delivered the Ocean Wonders Pop-Up Museum to Hume City Council as an outreach session for the January school holiday program.

During the year, Museums Victoria Outreach helped learners from all walks of life connect with STEM, and history, engaging more than 78,000 people through our kindergarten programs, library presentations and pop-ups, community events, and Learning Kit hires.

The Outreach Program is delivered with the support of the Besen Family Foundation.

Road Smart Interactive

The Transport Accident Commission (TAC)'s road safety education partnership with Melbourne Museum continued to grow in Road to Zero's seventh year, with a fourth van added to the Road Smart Interactive fleet this year. Road Smart Interactive, the digital pop-up version of the award-winning Road to Zero Experience at Melbourne Museum, visited more than 12,000 students in 150 schools, almost half of which were regional, expanding the reach of this free digital interactive outreach program to regional and metropolitan Victorian secondary schools unable to visit Road to Zero at Melbourne Museum.

Research, Collecting and Field Work

Working machinery displays

Two machines from the History and Technology Collection were loaned out and activated for public displays. The 1916 Cowley Steam Traction Engine was loaned to Steamrail Victoria and activated for their biennial Newport Railway Workshops Open Day in March 2026. The 1919 Fowler Steam Ploughing Engine, on loan to the Lake Goldsmith Steam Preservation Association, was activated for their Lake Goldsmith Steam and Vintage Rally in May 2026. Significant working equipment such as these engines are restored and maintained in Museums Victoria's own engineering workshop at Scienceworks.

A new discovery in Victoria's Ice Age megafauna

Research led by Research Institute staff, has shed light on an extinct giant echidna that roamed south-eastern Australia during the Pleistocene Epoch. The study was based on a fragmentary skull of Owen's Giant Echidna, *Megalibgwilia owenii*, held in the Museums Victoria collection for more than 120 years, and originally collected during a 1907 expedition to 'Foul Air Cave', Buchan, East Gippsland (on Krauatungalung Country, part of the traditional lands of the Gunaikurnai Nation). The study was published in the Australasian palaeontology journal *Alcheringa* and accompanied by a feature in *The Conversation* in April 2026.

Also in April 2026, mining excavations at the Graymont Quarry near Buchan unexpectedly exposed a fossil deposit containing the remains of hundreds of extinct Pleistocene megafauna. A team from the Research Institute investigated the deposit and retrieved a significant collection of fossils for Museums Victoria. Preliminary analysis has identified nine megafauna species, ranging from the one-tonne marsupial *Palorchestes azael* to wallaby-sized kangaroos. Further studies on the recovered material will examine the range of species found in the cave infill deposit, along with the site's age, climatic conditions, forming process and contemporary ecology.

Fossil whale discovery

In December, Research Institute staff were called in to investigate a fossilised whale skeleton found by members of the public at Ocean Grove. They made a preliminary assessment, finding that it appears to be an archaic dolphin-like cetacean approximately 21 million years old. The Research Institute staff returned to Ocean Grove in February to excavate, supported by Barwon Coast personnel and the Wadawurrung People as Traditional Owners. The specimen was transported to Museums Victoria for further preparation and study to determine its species, how old it was when it died and what it might reveal about the evolutionary history of whales.

Melbourne Museum

Exhibition	Dates	Description
Top Designs 2025	March 2025–July 2025	Celebrating its 25th year, *Top Designs* showcased Victoria's next generation of designers, featuring student works that re-imagine innovative, renewable and inclusive futures. The exhibition was presented in partnership with the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA).
LEGO® Star Wars™: The Exhibition	May 2025–January 2026	Created by renowned LEGO Certified Professional, Ryan 'Brickman' McNaught, the world's first-ever *LEGO Star Wars* exhibition featured the largest collection of life-sized LEGO Star Wars models ever created including fan-favourite C-3PO, meticulously crafted with 'Pearl Gold' LEGO bricks, a unique colour, made specifically for the exhibition. The exhibition was generously supported by Presenting Partner Visit Victoria, Supporter Linfox and Tourism Partner V/Line.
Treasures of the Viking Age: The Galloway Hoard	August 2025–January 2026	*Treasures of the Viking Age: The Galloway Hoard* showcased over 90 objects that form one of the most significant European Viking-age discoveries of the 21st century. Presented in partnership with National Museums Scotland and supported by Partner Viking, the collection included a rare pectoral cross, silver arm rings, beads, brooches, and the largest surviving group of gold objects from Viking-age Britain and Ireland, along with exceptionally rare textiles.
Top Designs 2026	March 2026–July 2026	*Top Designs* is presented as part of the VCE Season of Excellence, a five-month annual festival showcasing outstanding works across art, design, technology, multimedia, film, dance, theatre, drama, music, literature and research—all created by exceptional VCE students. The exhibition is presented in partnership with the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) and has been generously supported by Learning Partner Swinburne University of Technology.
ROME: Empire, Power, People	April 2026–October 2026	The Melbourne-exclusive exhibition *ROME: Empire, Power, People* explores the grandeur and legacy of one of history's most powerful civilisations. The exhibition offers a vibrant insight into Rome's political, cultural and social life. This extraordinary experience was made possible with the generous support of Major Sponsors EY and Brunetti Classico; Major Donor the Pellicano Family, Cultural Partners Consulate General of Italy, Melbourne; The Italian Cultural Institute of Melbourne; Italian Australian Foundation; CO.AS.IT; and Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Australia (Victoria and Tasmania), Sponsor Pronto Concrete, Supporters the Crema Family; the Lanteri Family; and the Scalzo Family, along with Media Partners *Il Globo*, JCDecaux and Smooth FM and Tourism Partners Melbourne Airport and V/Line.



Discoteca Italiana, Melbourne Museum
Source: Museums Victoria | Photographer: Thomas Breakwell

Immigration Museum

Exhibition	Dates	Description
Joy	February 2024–February 2026	Featuring commissioned works by seven leading Victorian-based creatives, *Joy* offered personal reflections on the many ways we experience joy—from the carefree years of childhood to celebrating togetherness and belonging. The exhibition was supported by Museums Victoria Colour Partner Taubmans, Flooring Partner Godfrey Hirst and GH Commercial and Media Partner Nova Entertainment.
We Outside	March 2025–August 2025	Created by Nigerian-Australian photographer Ayooluwatomiwa 'Ibukun' Oloruntoba, and supported by the City of Melbourne Arts Grants, this exhibition brought to life the resilience, diversity and richness of the African-Australian community, offering a glimpse into the complex narrative of this community's shaping of its own identity within the mosaic of Australian society.
Order Up: A City Fed by Many Cultures	October 2025–May 2026	Created by Melbourne-based artists and collaborators Daniel Saade and Redmond Stevenson, the exhibition celebrated the city's vibrant multicultural food scene through an immersive installation made up of hundreds of handwritten, food-stained dockets from 33 iconic Melbourne restaurants.
Home is Football: Belonging in Australian Soccer	June 2026–January 2027	Produced with support from our co-creator Melbourne Victory Football Club and Professional Footballers Australia, *Home is Football: Belonging in Australian Soccer* delves into how the much-loved universal sport is a source of community for Australians from a broad range of groups and identities.

Scienceworks

Exhibition	Dates	Description
Tinkertown	April 2025–February 2026	This interactive in-house designed exhibition village was designed to ignite creativity and innovation, turning the world of engineering and design upside down with fun and playful experiences.
Southern Sky Astrophotography	September 2025–November 2025	The *Southern Sky Astrophotography* Exhibition showcased the winners of the 21st annual David Malin Awards which brings together 22 award-winning photographs that blend science, art and imagination.
Colour: See the World in a New Light	March 2026–January 2027	An interactive science exhibition from Questacon featuring 21 playful exhibits that explore how colour is created, changed and understood. Visitors of all ages are invited to experiment with colour, optics and light in this immersive exhibition for the whole family. *Colour* is supported by Learning Partner Swinburne University of Technology.

Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre

Exhibition	Dates	Description
Stronger Families, Stronger Communities	June 2025–April 2026	This collaborative exhibition with First Peoples community organisation Dardi Munwurro featured a mural painted on the wall of the Birrarung Gallery in Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre.
Transmutation: Our Origin Stories	December 2025–February 2026	Curated by Papua New Guinean born multidisciplinary artist, Weniki Hensch, *Transmutation: Our Origin Stories* explored the idea of alchemy within Papua New Guinean cultural traditions through mixed-media pieces examining the ideas of matriarchal lineage and the body as a vessel for the transmission of Ancestral knowledge, tradition and often spiritual or magical capabilities.

Royal Exhibition Building

Exhibition	Dates	Description
125th anniversary of the opening of Federal Parliament	9–10 May 2026	Melbourne's landmark Royal Exhibition Building hosted a weekend of free public programming on Saturday 9 and Sunday 10 May. The event invited the community to come together through civic dialogue, cultural performance and family-friendly activities, marking 125 years since the opening of Australia's Federal Parliament on 9 May 1901. The event was made possible with the support of our Major Partners, the Scanlon Foundation and McKinnon, and Supporter the John and Myriam Wylie Foundation.



Colour: See the World in a New Light, Scienceworks
Source: Museums Victoria | Photographer: Thomas Breakwell



Drawing Under the Dome, Royal Exhibition Building
Source: Museums Victoria | Photographer: Thomas Breakwell

Touring exhibitions 2025–26

Exhibition	Location	Dates	Description
Illuminate: How Science Comes to Light	Bendigo Discovery Science and Technology Centre	March–July 2025	Museums Victoria's in-house designed exhibition, *Illuminate: How Science Comes to Light* explores what light is, what we can do with it and how we see.
	Questacon	February–November 2026	
Air Playground	Te Whare Taonga o Waikato Museum & Gallery	October 2025–April 2026	This Museums Victoria developed exhibition explores the science of aerodynamics through hands-on experimentation and play.
	Te Manawa Museum of Art, Science & Heritage	May–October 2026	

Our Performance

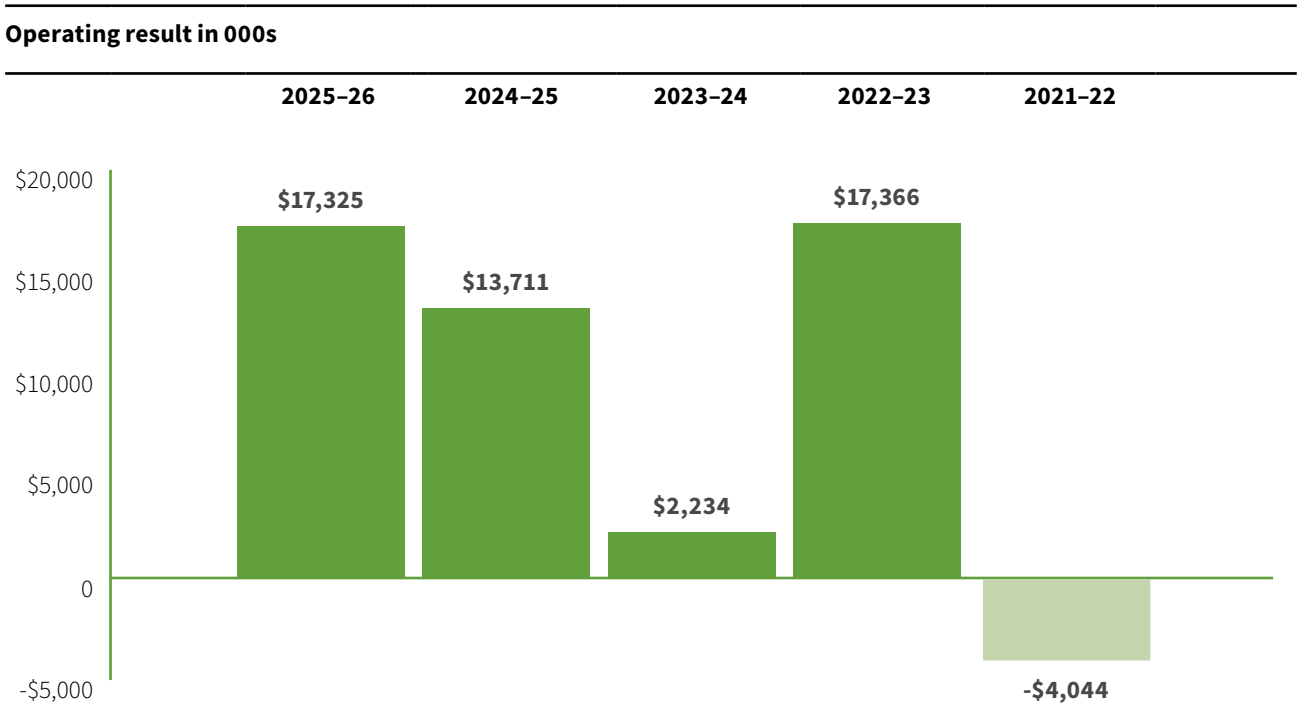
Chief Financial Officer's Report

Museums Victoria's operating result (before depreciation) for 2025–26, as shown in Figure 1, was a surplus of $17.325 million, excluding depreciation of $23.602 million, driven in part by a record level of combined self-generated and other income (non-government funding). This result provides a strong foundation for operations in an increasingly complex financial and operational landscape in the coming years.

Museums Victoria's net result (after depreciation) for 2025–26 was a deficit of $6.277 million, an improvement of $4.128 million compared with the prior year's net result (after depreciation) deficit of $10.405 million. This result demonstrates continued progress toward financial sustainability, driven by growth in revenue alongside a reduction in expenses. As the organisation is not funded for depreciation, maintaining a sustainable operating position before depreciation remains a key financial objective.

Total revenue of $141.457 million increased by $2.162 million, up 2% from the previous year, driven primarily by strong growth in self-generated income (up $7.566 million or 17%). This growth was partly offset by lower government grant funding (down $3.119 million or 4%) and other income (down $2.285 million or 22%). Total expenses of $147.986 million decreased by $1.456 million, down 1% from the previous year, partly driven by lower operating expenses.

Figure 1: 5-year operating result (before depreciation)



Note:
Given the high asset value attributed to Museums Victoria's buildings, depreciation expense continues to have a significant effect on after depreciation results. Like comparable Victorian creative agencies, Museums Victoria is not funded for depreciation and seeks to achieve a sustainable end-of-year financial result before depreciation.

Table 1: Revenue (see Note 2 of the Financial Statements)

Type	2025–26 ($000's)	2024–25 ($000's)
Grants	$81,042	$84,161
Self-generated income	$52,268	$44,702
Other income	$8,147	$10,432
Total	**$141,457**	**$139,295**

Note:
Net assets at 30 June 2026 are $2,429.484 million.

Revenue from government and other grants

Museums Victoria receives Victorian Government funding, comprising base recurrent operational funding and other tied funding. In addition, Museums Victoria receives grant funding from other government entities.

Grants decreased by $3.119 million in 2025–26, down 4% compared to the previous year. This primarily reflects changes in government grant funding, specifically a $10.249 million increase in base uplift funding offset by a decrease of $13.723 million in temporary support funding that had been required due to the non-renewal of lapsing funds in 2022–23, was no longer required due to the provision of base uplift funding. The organisation still faces challenges in relation to long-term gallery operations and exhibition renewal due to the lapsing of funding in 2022–23.

Table 2: Grants Revenue

Type	2025–26 ($000's)	2024–25 ($000's)
Victorian Government Base Funding	$73,612	$63,363
Victorian Government Temporary Support Funding	$0	$13,723
Other Grants from Victorian Government Entities	$5,248	$2,092
Other Grants	$2,182	$4,983
Total	**$81,042**	**$84,161**

Self-generated revenue and other income

In addition to funding received from the Victorian Government and other grants, Museums Victoria produces self-generated revenue and other income.

In 2025–26 Museums Victoria's self-generated revenue and other income reached $60.415 million, an increase of 9.6%, the highest level achieved by Museums Victoria, and surpassing the record year in 2023–24.

Self-generated revenue of $52.268 million is an increase of $7.566 million or 17% from the previous year.

The increase in self-generated revenue and other income was driven by higher admissions revenue of $5.010 million (up 18%), higher shop sales of $0.991 million (up 15%) and higher rent revenue of $1.097 million (up 22%), reflecting sustained visitor demand and strong commercial performance across our sites.

This result was underpinned by a strong exhibition and programming calendar, including *LEGO® Star Wars™: The Exhibition*, *ROME: Empire, Power, People*, *Treasures of the Viking Age: The Galloway Hoard* and *Tinkertown*, alongside strong IMAX Melbourne performance and other programming.

Other income totalled $8.147 million, representing a decrease of $2.285 million or 22% from the previous year comprising cash and in-kind donations, insurance recoups associated with the Merri-bek Flood Recovery Project and interest income.

Museums Victoria continues to build significant momentum in philanthropic and corporate support. The Museums Victoria Foundation, launched in 2022, has already established a strong financial base and is well positioned to grow further through a focused bequests program, supporting delivery of our ambitious vision for the future and reinforcing a key strategy under *Strategic direction five: Our future sustainability:* "to grow self-generating revenue to sustain operations, increase impact and secure Museums Victoria's future".

Figure 2: Revenue – Self-generated revenue and other income

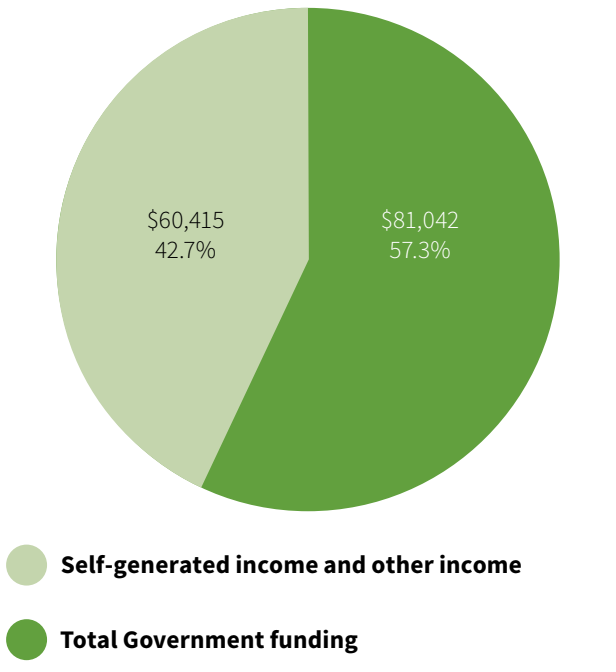


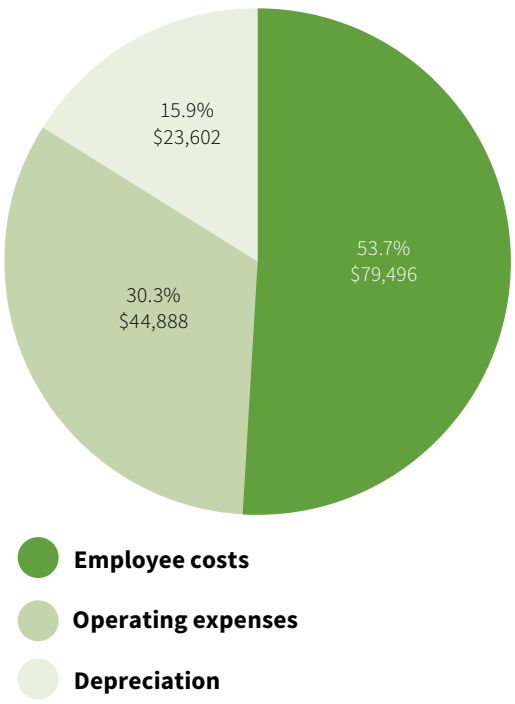
Table 3: Self-generated income and other income

Type	2025–26 ($000's)	2024–25 ($000's)
Fees & Charges (Admissions)	$33,258	$28,248
Sales of goods and services	$7,571	$6,580
Rent revenue	$6,140	$5,043
Sponsorship income	$1,007	$693
Membership income	$1,739	$2,405
Income TAC (education)	$2,553	$1,733
Total Self-Generated income	**$52,268**	**$44,702**
Donations	$2,685	$6,224
Interest	$1,539	$1,489
Royalties	$4	$19
Miscellaneous income	$3,919	$2,700
Total other income	**$8,147**	**$10,432**
Total	**$60,415**	**$55,134**

Expenses

Museums Victoria's core expenses are made up of employee costs, operating costs and depreciation.

Figure 3: Expenses



Employee costs increased by $2.480 million (up 3% from the previous year), primarily due to termination benefit payments, partly offset by lower staff levels. The prior year included an expense provision for the Cultural and Creative Agencies Enterprise Agreement 2025, which was settled in 2025–26.

Operating expenses of $44.888 million represent a decrease of $3.422 million (down 7% from the previous year). This result includes costs associated with timing of museum and exhibition activity (*LEGO® Star Wars™: The Exhibition*, *ROME: Empire, Power, People*, *Treasures of the Viking Age: The Galloway Hoard* and *Tinkertown*), IMAX film royalties, decreased facilities costs and advertising costs.

Depreciation decreased by $0.514 million, mainly reflecting the impact of the overall increased valuation of physical assets since previous financial year. As depreciation is an unfunded, non-cash accounting adjustment and not directly within management's control, the decrease reflects accounting treatment rather than operational or budgetary decisions.

In 2025–26, the Merri-bek Flood Recovery Project has incurred costs of $1.887 million, including staffing, collection storage cleaning and repairs, security and services related to site stabilisation and recovery. Insurance claim reimbursements of $2.064 million were received as partial payments towards the total claim related to this project.

Table 4: Operating expenses

Type	2025–26 ($000's)	2024–25 ($000's)
Costs of goods sold	$2,683	$2,325
Finance costs	$183	$186
Facilities expenses	$15,421	$17,758
Consumables and corporate costs	$11,430	$11,462
Contractors and exhibitions	$11,891	$12,183
Marketing and promotion	$2,926	$4,000
Collections Management	$354	$396
Total	**$44,888**	**$48,310**

Capital expenditure

Museums Victoria continues to invest in its core assets and infrastructure. Capital expenditure of $5.116 million consisted mainly of State collection acquisitions to the value of $0.179 million, Plant & Equipment (including motor vehicles) of $1.144 million and work-in-progress expenditure of $3.793 million, which includes upgrade works to buildings and galleries.

Other business

The Merri-bek Flood Recovery Project is a long-term initiative and will incur further costs, with Museums Victoria seeking insurance reimbursements to support work during 2026–27 and 2027–28.



Halloween at the Museum, Melbourne Museum
Source: Museums Victoria | Photographer: Tim Carrafa



Melbourne Museum Store
Source: Museums Victoria | Photographer: Benjamin Healley

Five-year financial summary

	2025–26	2024–25	2023–24	2022–23	2021–22
Revenue from government	$81,042	$84,161	$51,575	$53,481	$54,853
Total income from transactions	$141,457	$139,295	$110,811	$112,968	$92,412
Total expenses from transactions	($147,986)	($149,442)	($129,615)	($116,191)	($117,828)
Net result (before depreciation)	**$17,325**	**$13,711**	**$2,234**	**$17,366**	**($4,044)**
Net result from transactions (after depreciation)	($6,529)	($10,147)	($18,804)	($3,223)	($25,416)
Net result	**($6,277)**	**($10,405)**	**($18,425)**	**($2,858)**	**($23,465)**
Net cash flow from operating activities	$8,039	$18,675	$33	$22,472	$3,983
Total assets	$2,459,462	$2,136,651	$2,126,566	$2,029,737	$2,028,454
Total liabilities	$29,978	$41,583	$34,469	$35,953	$32,366

Note:
Museums Victoria's reported result includes depreciation, a non-cash expense which is not funded. Maintaining a sustainable operating position before depreciation remains a key financial objective.



Scienceworks Amphitheatre
Source: Museums Victoria | Photographer: Thomas Breakwell

Reporting against output performance measures

Museums Victoria reports to Government on the achievement of output performance measures reported in the Department Performance Statement in the State Budget papers. Results for the reporting period against 2025–26 targets are set out below, along with results from previous years.

Key performance indicators

Museums Victoria has sustained a strong post-pandemic recovery, with attendances, digital engagement and education participation continuing to trend upward. Museums Victoria is pleased to report this consistent multi-year growth trajectory, as sector visitation is inherently cyclical, driven by touring exhibitions, gallery renewals, programming and new collection acquisitions.

In 2025–26 Museums Victoria's website visitation was 15.5 million, reflecting sustained growth in digital engagement over the last five years. This performance reflected compelling online content and strong demand for the organisation's digital offerings and ticket purchases across all venues, supported by improvements delivered through the website's refresh during the year.

Museums Victoria's attendances result reflects sustained strong admissions across our sites. The result also incorporates a revised reporting methodology that brings additional admissions categories into the measure, as documented in the *Department Performance Statement 2026–27*. The 2026–27 target has been set higher to account for this revised methodology and to enable better comparability of attendance levels across Creative Industries Portfolio Agencies.

Melbourne Museum recorded increased attendances during the year, driven by the opening of *Our Wondrous Planet*, touring exhibitions *LEGO® Star Wars™: The Exhibition* and *ROME: Empire, Power, People*, and programs and special events including Halloween at the Museum, Discoteca Italiana and NAIDOC week events.

Attendances at Scienceworks and the Immigration Museum were broadly consistent with the previous year, each having maintained a positive trajectory on average over the last five years. The Immigration Museum result was achieved following on from the successful *Joy* exhibition, which concluded its two-year run in early 2026. Redevelopment planning is underway at Scienceworks and masterplanning at the Immigration Museum, both aimed at growing audiences and ensuring the sites remain sustainable destinations for generations to come.

IMAX Melbourne's performance is inherently tied to the film releases available in any given year, and in 2025–26 it performed strongly, bolstered by *Avatar: Fire and Ash 3D* and *Project Hail Mary*.

Memberships were below target, reflecting planned website development works that affected renewals during the year. Initiatives are in place to rebuild membership levels through 2026–27.

Student attendances at education programs were well above target, driven by the implementation of a new education strategy and the application of an updated counting methodology. Museums Victoria remains the largest and most comprehensive provider of education programs in Victoria, outside the Department of Education, with 595,119 sessions delivered to participants during 2025–26.

Volunteer hours were 14% below target. Volunteer hours fluctuate over time depending on the programs and resources available. On a three-year rolling average basis, volunteer hours were 33,443, showing solid recovery in volunteer participation since the pandemic.

Visitor satisfaction reached 94% this year, up one percentage point on the previous period and close to target, supported by the opening of *Our Wondrous Planet* at Melbourne Museum.

Collection stored to industry standard was 82%, continuing a steady and consistent increase. Setting aside the 2024–25 result, which was affected by the Merri-bek Collection Facility flooding incident, the measure has improved year-on-year and is now very close to target.

Key Performance Indicators	2025–26 actual	2025–26 target	2024–25	2023–24	2022–23	2021–22
Website visitation	15,577,679	6,430,000	9,689,663	11,040,832	9,703,519	7,612,260
Attendances	3,569,503[1]	2,000,000	2,016,911	2,261,334	2,239,849	1,213,181
Memberships	17,145	23,269	25,176	31,208	26,231	25,945
Student attendances at education programs	595,119	297,302	316,833	232,949	258,259	131,817
Volunteer hours	31,312	36,450	38,740	30,277	28,703	10,341
Visitors satisfied with visit	94%	96%	93%	94%	93%	91%
Collection stored to industry standard	82%	84%	73%	80%	78%	76%

Notes:
1 The total Attendances reported of 3,569,503 comprises 3,271,644 attendances by venue (detailed below) and a reconciliation adjustment of 297,859 student participation sessions. The adjustment reflects differences between participation-based attendance counts and individual student headcounts.

Attendances by venue	2025–26	2024–25	2023–24	2022–23	2021–22
Melbourne Museum Precinct[2]	1,475,533	1,139,053	1,379,661	1,375,395	673,180
Scienceworks	390,720	411,530	409,452	426,951	266,170
Immigration Museum	125,715	125,968	102,135	90,252	38,136
Royal Exhibition Building	733,399	627,194	953,853	426,910	174,759
IMAX Melbourne	280,744	248,802	328,393	288,172	222,540
Outreach Program	78,124	80,080	42,023	59,709	17,591
Outbound Touring Exhibitions	187,409	11,718	105,516	0	0

Notes:
2 Includes ticketed admissions to Melbourne Museum, Touring Hall and Royal Exhibition Building Dome Promenade.

Environmental reporting

Introduction

Museums Victoria is committed to environmental sustainability. Through our governance, operations and public programs, we are working actively to improve not only our direct impact on the environment but also that of society more broadly, using our influence as a leading museum and trusted source of information.

Museums Victoria's Net Zero Plan sets a path to achieving our sustainability goals, reflecting our commitment to a more sustainable future and to the Victorian Government targets outlined in the *Climate Change Act 2017*.

At the heart of Museums Victoria's understanding of sustainability is the close connection of First Peoples to Country. We affirm that every part of Victoria has been known, nurtured and loved by First Peoples who have applied a profound knowledge of sustainability for tens of thousands of years.

Our sustainability goals

Museums Victoria recognises the critical issue of environmental sustainability and the need to address the impacts of human activity on the environment, biodiversity and the wellbeing of communities.

Our aspiration is to achieve our goals through the delivery of infrastructure upgrades and operational changes, developed in consideration with Section 20 of the *Climate Change Act 2017* and subject to funding and resourcing, and is linked to *Strategic direction four: Our places* (Museums Victoria 2025–30 Strategic Plan). We have a key focus on reducing operational environmental impacts while engaging and empowering staff and visitors in sustainability efforts.

During 2025–26 Museums Victoria continued its implementation of the organisation's Environmental Sustainability Policy and our Net Zero Plan.

From 1 July 2025 we sourced 100% of our large market electricity (electricity for our large sites and facilities) from renewable sources.

Museums Victoria is also developing a dedicated Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) framework and strategy to further strengthen sustainability practices, enhance accountability and integrate responsible stewardship across operations, collections and community engagement.

Reporting boundary for environmental data

All Museums Victoria's operations and activities are included within the organisational boundary for this reporting period, including Melbourne Museum (including Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre), Immigration Museum, Scienceworks, IMAX Melbourne, the Royal Exhibition Building and our offsite storage facilities in Merri-bek and Spotswood.

Greenhouse gas emissions

Museums Victoria reports its greenhouse gas emissions broken down into emissions 'scopes' consistent with national and international reporting standards.

Scope 1 emissions are from sources that Museums Victoria owns or controls, such as gas-fired boilers, leased fleet vehicles and forklifts.

Scope 2 emissions are indirect emissions from Museums Victoria's use of electricity from the grid, which still uses coal and gas-fired power generation.

A significant milestone was achieved during 2025–26 through the transition to 100% renewable electricity for our major electricity connection points (National Metering Identifiers or NMIs). This increased renewable energy use by 46% in comparison to the previous reporting period and lifted the renewable share of total energy consumption to 52%.

The transition was a key driver of an 83% reduction in Scope 2 greenhouse gas emissions compared with the previous reporting period, alongside lower electricity consumption across sites.

Scope 1 greenhouse gas emissions remained largely unchanged compared with the previous reporting period. A slight increase in natural gas use was offset by lower consumption of other fuels.

Museums Victoria's scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas emissions are detailed below.

Indicator		Unit	2025–26	2024–25	2023–24	2022–23
G1	Total Scope 1 (direct) greenhouse gas emissions	Tonnes CO_2, CH_4, N_2O, other and CO_2-e	1,551.4	1,557.2	1,922.2	1,740.5
G2	Total Scope 2 (indirect electricity) greenhouse gas emissions	Tonnes CO_2-e	615.2	3,680.1	7,416.9	7,917.1

Notes:
Scope 2 emissions are calculated using market-based method in Climate Active's electricity accounting rules.

Looking ahead, Museums Victoria is aiming to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions through additional energy efficiency projects, including the electrification of building heating systems, upgrading fleet vehicles and forklifts to electric, and the installation of more solar photovoltaic systems. Feasibility reports were commissioned during 2025–26 for heating electrification at the Immigration Museum, Scienceworks and the Merri-bek Collection Facility.

Electricity production and consumption

Museums Victoria continues to implement a range of energy efficiency initiatives across its sites to reduce electricity use. These include:

- overnight heating, ventilation and air-conditioning setbacks
- solar (photovoltaic) systems
- energy-efficient lighting upgrades
- electronically commutated fans installed on air-conditioning systems.

During 2025–26 Museums Victoria's total electricity consumption decreased by 5% compared to the previous reporting period.

Indicator		Unit	2025–26	2024–25	2023–24	2022–23
EL1	**Total electricity consumption segmented by source**	**Megawatt hours**	**10,728.3**	**11,263.5**	**11,696.0**	**11,993.5**
	Purchased electricity (breakdown by facility)					
	Melbourne Museum		6,140	6,329	6,703	7,214
	Melbourne Museum Carpark/Lift #9		355	338	365	365
	Melbourne Museum Cafe		196	195	199	174
	Scienceworks		1,036	1,126	1,083	1,113
	Immigration Museum		526	546	540	550
	Royal Exhibition Building – Museum Spaces		164	136	154	140
	Royal Exhibition Building – Base		316	309	321	315
	Royal Exhibition Building – Base Boxes		107	87	112	43
	Merri-bek Collection Facility		374	381	338	341
	Spotswood Storage Facility		176	168	166	155
	IMAX Melbourne		511	516	738	525
	Total		**9,901**	**10,130**	**10,720**	**10,935**
	Self-generated		**827.0**	**1,133.3**	**976.2**	**1,058.8**
EL2	**On-site electricity generated segmented by usage and source**	**Megawatt hours**	**1,076.5**	**1,395.4**	**1,271.4**	**1,285.5**
	Solar photovoltaic		1,076.5	1,395.4	1,271.4	1,285.5
	Consumption behind-the-meter		827.0	1,133.3	976.2	1,058.8
	Exports		249.6	262.1	295.2	226.8

Indicator		Unit	2025–26	2024–25	2023–24	2022–23
EL3	**On-site installed generation capacity segmented by source**	**Megawatt**	**1.09**	**1.09**	**1.09**	**1.09**
	Solar photovoltaic		1.09	1.09	1.09	1.09
EL4	**Total electricity offsets segmented by offset type**	**Megawatt hours**	**9,974.5**	**6,808.9**	**2,532**	**2,596.1**
	Large-scale generation certificates (LGC) voluntarily retired by the organisation		0	0	0	0
	LGCs voluntarily retired on the organisation's behalf		8,262.5	0	0	0
	GreenPower or certified carbon neutral electricity purchased		**1,711.9**	**6,808.9**	**2,532.1**	**2,596.1**
	GreenPower or certified carbon neutral electricity purchased (e.g. through a retailer's contract option)		0	4,965.8	525.4	540.4
	LGCs mandatorily retired as a Renewable Energy Target (RET) liable entity or mandatorily retired on the entity's behalf where LGCs are provided to organisation's retailer for that express purpose		1,711.9	1,843.2	2,006.7	2,055.7
	Renewable Power Percentage (per Climate Active electricity accounting)		17.29%	18.20%	18.72%	18.80%

Notes:
Some electricity bills with uneven billing periods did not include 365 days exactly. In such cases, the kWh amount was multiplied by 365 days and divided by the number of days with billing data to estimate the energy consumption for a representative year.

Some totals may not tally due to rounding.

Stationary fuel use

Sources of emissions from stationary fuel include forklifts, catering equipment and gas-fired boilers for hot water generation for heating systems. Museums Victoria collected data primarily through billing information from retail suppliers.

As part of its Net Zero Plan, Museums Victoria aims to implement electrified heating systems for all buildings and upgrade current fleet vehicles to electric vehicles where practical.

During 2025–26 the total fuels used in buildings and machinery by Museums Victoria remained consistent with the previous reporting period.

Indicator		Unit	2025–26	2024–25	2023–24	2022–23
F1	**Total fuels used in buildings and machinery segmented by fuel type**	**Megajoules**	**29,454,449**	**29,208,471**	**36,311,389**	**32,705,248**
	Buildings*					
	Fuel types:					
	Natural gas					
	Melbourne Museum		19,019,110	19,865,143	25,742,520	21,511,232
	Scienceworks		7,037,524	6,063,862	6,527,675	7,279,304
	Merri-bek Collection Facility		1,922,956	1,708,281	1,966,529	2,028,611
	Immigration Museum		1,444,636	1,540,207	2,043,900	1,857,603
	Total usage		**29,424,226**	**29,177,493**	**36,280,624**	**32,676,751**
	Machinery**					
	Fuel types:					
	LPG		30,223	30,979	28,712	26,445
	Petrol		0	0	2,052	2,052
	Total usage		**30,223**	**30,979**	**30,764**	**28,497**
F2	**Greenhouse gas emissions from stationary fuel consumption segmented by fuel type**	**Tonnes CO_2-e**	**1,518.1**	**1,505.4**	**1,871.4**	**1,685.6**

*Fuel used in heating, cooling, cooking and the provision of other building services.
**Any item of plant or equipment that uses fuel for a defined process that is not already counted in buildings or vehicles (see Indicator T1, for vehicle fuel use).

Notes:
Some natural gas bills with uneven billing periods did not include 365 days exactly. In such cases, the megajoules amount was multiplied by 365 days and divided by the number of days with billing data to estimate the energy consumption for a representative year.

Some totals may not tally due to rounding.

Transportation

During 2025–26, the total energy used in transportation by Museums Victoria decreased by approximately 36% compared with the previous reporting period.

The reduction in transportation energy use is consistent with lower transport activity across the organisation during the reporting period, including reduced fleet vehicle travel and decreased use of mail and delivery services.

Indicator		Unit	2025–26	2024–25	2023–24	2022–23
T1	**Total energy used in transportation within the entity segmented by fuel type and vehicle category**	**Megajoules**	**474,265**	**737,191**	**722,868**	**783,868**
	By road vehicle type					
	Goods vehicles		464,452	715,961	545,005	676,902
	Passenger vehicles		9,813	21,230	177,864	106,966
	By fuel type					
	Diesel		299,590	529,606	543,013	528,899
	Premium unleaded		15,467	29,927	39,525	67,244
	Unleaded		9,813	6,654	8,059	20,676
	Unleaded E10		0	0	1,071	0
	Premium diesel		149,395	171,003	131,201	167,048
T2	**Number and proportion of vehicles in the organisational boundary segmented by engine/fuel type and vehicle category**	**Count**	**23**	**23**	**24**	**19**
	By road vehicle type					
	Goods vehicles		21	21	20	15
	Passenger vehicles (other than omnibuses)		2	2	4	4
	By engine/fuel types					
	Petrol		4	4	8	10
	Diesel		19	19	16	9
T3	**Greenhouse gas emissions from vehicle fleet segmented by fuel type and vehicle category**	**Tonnes CO_2-e**	**33.3**	**51.8**	**50.8**	**54.9**
	By road vehicle type					
	Goods vehicles		32.66	50.33	38.3	47.4
	Passenger vehicles (other than omnibuses)		0.66	1.48	12.5	7.5
	By engine/fuel types					
	Diesel		21.09	37.29	38.2	37.2
	Premium unleaded		1.05	2.02	2.67	4.5
	Unleaded		0.66	0.45	0.54	1.4
	Unleaded E10		0.00	0.00	0.07	0
	Premium diesel		10.52	12.04	9.24	11.8

Notes:
Some totals may not tally due to rounding.

Total energy use

Museums Victoria's total energy use is primarily driven by electricity used for heating, ventilation, air-conditioning and refrigeration, exhibition display and lighting.

Museums Victoria's renewable energy is primarily sourced through on-site solar generation and 100% renewable grid electricity supplied under SEC contracts for our major sites. To mitigate growing energy needs, the organisation has been taking actions as described above in sections related to the use of electricity, stationary fuel and transport fuel.

Museums Victoria has made progress towards minimising its carbon footprint and has invested in numerous energy efficiency projects and 'behind-the-meter' solar photovoltaic. Museums Victoria is working with Energy Services Company (ESCO) to identify and implement further viable energy efficiency projects.

As a result, Museums Victoria has recorded a consistent reduction in energy usage across all four indicators during 2025–26, as detailed below.

Indicator		Unit	2025–26	2024–25	2023–24	2022–23
E1	**Total energy usage from fuels**	**Megajoules**	**29,928,714**	**29,945,662**	**37,034,257**	**33,489,115**
E2	**Total energy usage from electricity**	**Megajoules**	**38,621,819**	**40,548,455**	**42,105,465**	**43,176,488**
E3	**Total energy usage segmented into renewable and non-renewable sources**	**Megajoules**	**68,550,533**	**70,494,117**	**79,139,722**	**76,665,603**
	Renewable		35,939,057	24,542,817	9,149,713	9,375,467
	Non-renewable		32,611,476	45,951,300	69,990,009	67,290,136
E4	**Units of energy used normalised by m2 (floor area)**	**Megajoules–normalised**	**481.4**	**495.0**	**555.7**	**538.3**

Notes:
The energy used is normalised based on the total gross building area of 142,411 m2 which includes all Museums Victoria sites.

Sustainable buildings and infrastructure

Museums Victoria does not have any plans for new buildings at this time. Future plans for the Scienceworks redevelopment will include sustainable design elements.

Indicator		Comment
B1	Discuss how environmentally sustainable design is incorporated into newly completed entity-owned buildings	N/A No newly completed buildings
B2	Discuss how new entity leases meet the requirement to preference higher-rated office buildings and those with a Green Lease Schedule	N/A No new entity leases
B3	NABERS Energy ratings of newly completed/ occupied entity-owned office buildings and substantial tenancy fit-outs	N/A No newly completed buildings
B4	Environmental performance ratings of newly completed entity-owned non-office building or infrastructure projects or upgrades with a value over $1 million, where these ratings have been conducted	N/A No infrastructure projects or upgrades with assigned ratings



International Earth Day 2026 - Bob Brown Q & A at IMAX Melbourne
Source: Museums Victoria | Photographer: Thomas Breakwell

Our Governance

Governance Structure

Museums Victoria is governed by the Museums Board of Victoria (the Board), a statutory body established under the *Museums Act 1983* (the Act). The Board is directly accountable to the Victorian Government through the Minister for Creative Industries, and works with Creative Victoria to deliver policy objectives. During the reporting period (from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026) the responsible Ministers were The Hon Colin Brooks MP (1 July 2025 – 20 April 2026) and Vicki Ward MP (21 April – 30 June 2026).

The Board meets at least six times a year and is supported by a number of committees that focus on specified matters within the Board's responsibilities and provide advice back to the Board.

Museums Victoria consults with several First Peoples advisory groups including the Yulendj Advisory Group and the First Peoples Committee (formerly Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee).

The Chief Executive Officer and Director (CEO) is appointed by the Board with the approval of the Minister. The CEO oversees management of the organisation and reports on the operation of Museums Victoria to the Board and the Minister.

The executive team comprises seven directors that oversee seven divisions (People, Engagement and Museum Operations; Corporate Services; Museums Victoria Research Institute; Exhibitions and Experiences; Communications, Stakeholder and Visitor Engagement; Development and Commercial Operations; and Global Engagement). *For further information on our executive team, please refer to pages 68–70 of this report.*

Museums Board of Victoria

The Museums Board of Victoria may comprise a maximum of 11 members appointed by the Governor-in-Council and is subject to the direction and control of the Victorian Minister for Creative Industries.

The Board is responsible for maintaining the standards of management of Museums Victoria set out in the *Museums Act 1983*, Section 23, which has the following Statutory Functions:

- control, manage, operate, promote, develop and maintain Museums Victoria
- control, manage, operate, promote, develop and maintain the exhibition land as a place for holding public exhibitions and for the assembly, education, instruction, entertainment and recreation of the public
- develop and maintain the State Collection of natural sciences, Indigenous cultures, social history and science and technology
- exhibit material from those collections for the purposes of education and entertainment
- promote the use of those collections for scientific research
- promote the use of the museum's resources for education in Victoria
- research, present and promote issues of public relevance and benefit
- act as a repository for specimens upon which scientific studies have been made or which may have special cultural or historical significance
- provide leadership to museums in Victoria
- advise the Victorian Minister for Creative Industries on matters relating to museums and the coordination of museum services in Victoria.

Board Members volunteer their time and expertise to Museums Victoria and do not receive remuneration.

For other remuneration information please refer to pages 120–123 of this report.

Number of meetings held during the financial year: 7

Board Member	No. of meetings attended
Mary Stuart (President)	7 (of 7)
Tim Goodwin (Deputy President)	6 (of 7)
Dale McKee (Treasurer)	7 (of 7)
Jon Faine AM	7 (of 7)
Prof. Bronwyn Fox AO	5 (of 7)
Clare Kennedy	7 (of 7)
Cassy Liberman (from 19 May 2026)	1 (of 1)
Linda Bardo Nicholls AO	6 (of 7)
Peter Tullin	7 (of 7)

Board member profiles

Mary Stuart – President

Appointed 2019

Mary is Executive Director of the iconic 114-year-old Luna Park Melbourne and held the concurrent position as CEO from 2006 to 2022. Mary holds the positions of Director, Company Secretary and Public Officer of several private companies, including Director of The Australian Amusement, Leisure and Recreation Association (AALARA), Director on the St. Kilda Tourism and Events Board, and is the AALARA Member on the International Standards Harmonisation Working Party.

Mary has a strong background in industrial relations, industry development and corporate governance with national ACTU Officer responsibilities for a range of industries. Mary has also achieved pay equity test cases and professional rates for industry sectors dominated by women.

Mary has held numerous state and federal statutory positions and appointments, and continues to play an active role in a range of community and social justice organisations. She was the inaugural Chair of Her Place, Women's Museum Australia, and currently chairs Museums Victoria's Nominations, Remuneration and Governance Committee and its People, Culture and Industrial Relations Committee. Mary is also a member of the Museums Victoria Foundation Committee, the First Peoples Committee, and the Audit and Risk Committee.

Tim Goodwin – Deputy President

Appointed 2019

Tim is a member of the Yuin people of the South East Coast of New South Wales, and is a barrister at the Victorian Bar practising in commercial and public law. Tim serves on a number of boards including the Aurora Education Foundation, and in 2018 received the Federal Attorney General's National Indigenous Legal Professional of the Year Award.

Tim is Deputy President of the Museums Board of Victoria, Chair of Museums Victoria's First Peoples Committee and a member of the Research Committee.

Dale McKee – Treasurer

Appointed 2021

Dale was a senior partner at PwC with extensive experience serving the firm's largest public company clients in audit, accounting, corporate governance, risk management and capital markets matters in Australia and also whilst posted to PwC in London.

Dale has a Bachelor of Business and is a Fellow of Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand and was formerly a member of the Australian Auditing Standards Board.

After retirement from PwC, Dale has been a director, trustee and committee member of various public, private and not for profit organisations.

Dale is Treasurer of the Museums Board of Victoria and Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee and has served as an independent non-voting member of the Museums Victoria Audit and Risk Committee from January 2020 to October 2022. Dale is also a member of the People, Culture and Industrial Relations and Nominations, Remuneration and Governance Committees.

Jon Faine AM

Appointed 2023

Jon is a Vice Chancellor's Fellow at the University of Melbourne, based in the Law School but with a roving commission across the entire academy.

Jon started professional life as a solicitor in commercial litigation in private practice for four years, then with Fitzroy Legal Service for three. He joined the ABC to present the Law Report on Radio National in 1989 and after four years was offered the chance to instead present talkback programmes on local radio and hosted several TV shows. After 23 years hosting the agenda-setting morning shift on ABC Melbourne, Jon resigned in 2019. He then worked as a weekly columnist for *The Age* until August 2023.

Jon has published two oral histories, the travel best-seller *'From Here To There'* in 2010, telling of an overland drive with his younger son from Melbourne to London, and *'Apollo & Thelma: A True Tall Tale'* in 2022.

He has served on the boards of not-for-profits and the Victoria Law Foundation, won several media awards and was in 2023 presented with the Melbourne Press Club 'Lifetime Achievement Award'.

Jon is Chair of Museums Victoria's Foundation Committee.

Professor Bronwyn Fox AO

Appointed 2021

Bronwyn is Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) at University of New South Wales, where she leads research and innovation to deliver societal and economic impact through world-class discovery, global partnerships, and research translation.

Bronwyn is an internationally recognised materials scientist who has helped reshape carbon fibre and composite manufacturing by connecting fundamental chemistry with real-world industrial production. She co-founded Carbon Nexus, a $100 million open-access facility that catalysed a globally connected composites ecosystem, working with national and international industry partners. Her work has driven advances in energy-efficient manufacturing, high-rate composite production, as well as digital and AI technologies, contributing to new patents, global collaborations and the creation of high-value jobs. A defining feature of her leadership is deep international engagement, particularly with Germany, where she has helped secure major bilateral research programs and position Australia within leading manufacturing innovation networks.

In 2025, she was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia for distinguished service to public administration, scientific research and development, advanced manufacturing, and tertiary education. She is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering, Engineers Australia, the Royal Australian

Chemical Institute, the Royal Society of New South Wales, and the Royal Society of Victoria and serves on multiple national and international boards.

Bronwyn is Chair of Museums Victoria's Research Committee.

Clare Kennedy

Appointed 2023

Clare is a communications and content specialist with extensive content and production experience. A lawyer with a background in legal practice, she has experience working in both private practice and community lawyering, having done her Bachelor of Arts (Honours) and Bachelor of Laws (LLB) at Monash University.

Clare joined the Victoria Law Foundation in January 2017 as the Foundation's legal writer and editor, managing the Foundation's publications and leading executive projects such as the Annual Report. As a member of the research team, she contributed to research projects across the Foundation's program, and its strategic communication. Clare was one of the authors on the Foundation's Community Legal Centres Workforce Survey and Data Mapping Projects reports.

Clare is currently working at the Victorian legal regulator as a Senior Communications Adviser.

Prior to these roles, Clare wrote for newspapers and magazines on books, architecture and design.

Clare is Chair of the Immigration Museum Advisory Forum, and a member of Museums Victoria's People, Culture and Industrial Relations and First Peoples Committees.

Cassy Liberman

Appointed 2026

Cassy began her career as a lawyer, though she has spent most of her career as owner/operator of her family offices; LJCB Investment Group and 5 Pillars Capital. Cassy is passionate about impact investment and using her financial resources to benefit our community and our environment whilst also working within and towards traditional financial return metrics.

Cassy has written and successfully published a series of children's books that aim to inspire Australian children to follow their dreams and believe in themselves, titled *Inspirational Australian Women*. Cassy is a passionate supporter of the Arts, the Environment, Health and Education.

Her previous non-commercial Board and Committee positions have been with the Women's Hospital Foundation, One Disease, the Centre for Community Child Health and Murdoch Children's Research Institute.

Linda Bardo Nicholls AO

Appointed 2017 (retired 30 June 2026)

Linda is a corporate advisor and a non-executive director of a number of leading Australian companies and organisations.

She is Chair of the Royal Melbourne Hospital and a Director of Ingham's Enterprises. Previously, Linda was a Director of Medibank Private, Chair of Japara Healthcare, a Director of Fairfax Media, Olivia Newton-John Cancer Research Institute, Pacific Brands, Sigma Pharmaceuticals and St George Bank; and Chair of Healthscope, Australia Post and Keolis Downer (trading as Yarra Trams). In 2007 she was made an Officer in the General Division of the Order of Australia; in 2014 she was named as a Victorian Distinguished Fellow by the Australian Institute of Company Directors and in 2015 was made a Life Fellow.

Linda's appointment on the Museums Board of Victoria ceased on 30 June 2026. She will continue her involvement with Museums Victoria as an external member of the Audit and Risk Committee.

Peter Tullin

Appointed 2017 (retired 30 June 2026)

A creative entrepreneur, Peter was a Co-Founder of CultureLabel.com, an ecommerce site retailing art and design products from leading international culture brands such as the V&A, Guggenheim and Tate. He is also the Co-Founder of REMIX Summits, a series of leading global ideas conferences hosted in cities including London, New York, Sydney, Istanbul & Dubai that explore the future of the creative industries. Peter also provides strategic consulting services to leading cultural organisations around the globe with clients including the London Museum, Melbourne Arts Precinct and ACMI.

Up until June 2026, Peter was a Trustee of Geelong Arts Centre. He is a former Advisory Board member of Grande Experiences (The LUME) and is currently an advisor to ArtsPay, d'strict / Arte Museum and Iconic Moments.

Peter's appointment on the Museums Board of Victoria ceased on 30 June 2026. He will continue his involvement with Museums Victoria as an external member of the Museums Victoria Foundation Committee.

Committees

The Board has established a number of Committees under the Act, to focus on specified matters within the Board's responsibilities and provide advice back to the Board.

First Peoples Committee (formerly Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee)

The First Peoples Committee provides advice to the Board for governance, compliance and cultural guidance on matters relevant to First Peoples issues, including cultural property and heritage as they apply to Museums Victoria, and on matters referred to it by the Board.

Its members include representatives from First Peoples communities throughout Victoria.

Number of meetings during the financial year: 3

Committee Member	No. of meetings attended
Tim Goodwin (Chair)	3 (of 3)
Prof. Henry Atkinson	2 (of 3)
Dr Carolyn Briggs (Specialist member)	0 (of 3)
Leonard Clarke	3 (of 3)
Marie (Sissy) Havea	1 (of 3)
Peter Hood	2 (of 3)
Robert Hudson	0 (of 3)
Clare Kennedy	2 (of 3)
Melinda Kennedy	1 (of 3)
Diane Kerr OAM (Specialist member)	0 (of 3)
Janice Muir	3 (of 3)
Mary Stuart	3 (of 3)

Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee independently reviews and assesses the effectiveness of Museums Victoria's systems and controls for financial management, performance and sustainability, including risk management. The Audit and Risk Committee is comprised of independent members, including Board and external members.

All members who served on the Audit and Risk Committee during the year were independent members.

Number of meetings during the financial year: 6

Committee Member	No. of meetings attended
Dale McKee (Chair)	6 (of 6)
Mary Stuart	6 (of 6)
Linda Bardo Nicholls AO	5 (of 6)
Matthew Hunt*	6 (of 6)

*External member

Nominations, Remuneration and Governance Committee

The Nominations, Remuneration and Governance Committee provides advice and recommendations to the Board in the areas of Executive recruitment, CEO performance and remuneration, Board member nominations and reappointments, appointment of Chairs of Board committees and oversight of Board assessment.

Number of meetings during the financial year: 3

Committee Member	No. of meetings attended
Mary Stuart (Chair)	3 (of 3)
Linda Bardo Nicholls AO	2 (of 3)
Dale McKee	3 (of 3)

Museums Victoria Foundation Committee

The role of the Foundation Committee is to provide advice and recommendations regarding philanthropic fundraising activities, donations, gifts and bequests to Museums Victoria, and build donor groups and philanthropic networks for Museums Victoria.

Number of meetings during the financial year: 3

Committee Member	No. of meetings attended
Jon Faine AM (Chair)	3 (of 3)
Dean Ireland	3 (of 3)
Mary Stuart	3 (of 3)
Peter Tullin	2 (of 3)
Rilka Warbanoff	2 (of 3)
Nick Yates	3 (of 3)

People, Culture and Industrial Relations Committee

The People, Culture and Industrial Relations Committee provides advice and recommendations to the Board in the areas of People and Culture, Health and Safety, Workforce conditions and enterprise agreement process.

Number of meetings during the financial year: 4

Committee Member	No. of meetings attended
Mary Stuart (Chair)	4 (of 4)
Linda Bardo Nicholls AO	2 (of 4)
Dale McKee	4 (of 4)
Clare Kennedy	3 (of 4)

Research Committee

The Research Committee steers the development, conduct and management of research undertaken by Museums

Victoria. The Committee oversees Museums Victoria's Animal Ethics Committee, which was established in February 2007.

Number of meetings during the financial year: 2

Committee Member	No. of meetings attended
Prof. Bronwyn Fox AO (Chair)	2 (of 2)
Tim Goodwin	1 (of 2)
Prof. Joanna Batstone (from 17 February 2026)	1 (of 1)
Assoc. Prof. Rory Hyde	1 (of 2)
Dr Mark Norman PSM	2 (of 2)
Prof. Gaye Sculthorpe	2 (of 2)

Immigration Museum Advisory Forum

The Immigration Museum Advisory Forum provides strategic advice and advocacy to enhance the Immigration Museum's impact, visitation, and revenue, while strengthening its role within Victoria's multicultural communities.

Number of meetings during the financial year: 4

Committee Member	No. of meetings attended
Clare Kennedy (Chair)	4 (of 4)
Fred Alale AM	4 (of 4)
Maria Dimopoulos AM	2 (of 4)
Gary Lee OAM	4 (of 4)
Dr Belle Lim	3 (of 4)
Anthea Loucas Bosha	1 (of 4)
Miriam Suss OAM (from 12 March 2026)	2 (of 2)
Vedran Drakulić OAM (from 12 March 2026)	2 (of 2)
Daizy Maan (from 12 March 2026)	2 (of 2)
Ahmed Hassan (from 6 May 2026)	1 (of 1)

The Board has established subcommittees for Scienceworks redevelopment planning and the Royal Exhibition Building vision and masterplanning, with membership appointments and committee meetings to commence in the next reporting period.

The Board may establish additional committees from time to time, as deemed necessary to address specific matters or support initiatives.

Security and Risk

Museums Victoria Risk Management Framework

Museums Victoria's Risk Management Policy, Framework and practices are supported by the Victorian Managed Insurance Authority (VMIA), including its risk management training programs.

Museums Victoria recognises that risk management and a positive risk culture are essential to good governance and integral to the delivery of Museums Victoria's objectives. Museums Victoria's Risk Management Policy and Framework outline our commitment and approach to risk management and support our alignment with the requirements of the Victorian Government Risk Management Framework (VGRMF), including Australian Standard for Risk Management – Guidelines AS ISO 31000:2018.

The Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) is a committee of the Board and provides oversight and recommendations to the Board in relation to financial reporting, internal accounting controls, risk management, audit activities, operations management and any other matters referred to it by the Board. The CEO and executive team are responsible for the oversight and management of strategic and operational risks, effective implementation of the organisational systems and processes that support risk management, and for the escalation of critical and strategic risks to the Board.

The Board has set the risk appetite for each of Museums Victoria's strategic risks. Each risk recorded in the Strategic Risk Register is subject to a detailed review and examination which is presented to the Board by the accountable executive progressively throughout each year, and updates made to the Register as required. The Board also approves Museums Victoria's organisational risk appetite statement, establishing expectations as to how risks are to be managed consistently throughout the organisation.

Internal Audit

The internal audit function is a key component of Museums Victoria's governance framework, providing assurance that the financial and operational controls in place are operating in an efficient, effective, economic and ethical manner.

In 2025–26, the internal audit program undertook four internal audits aligned with the organisation's Strategic Risk Register and Strategic Priorities. These audits examined areas including governance and integrity in people processes, financial controls, technology and information security, and the stewardship of philanthropic and donor relationships.

Museums Victoria Risk Management Framework is supported by a three-year rolling internal audit plan that is reviewed annually. The internal audit plan provides independent assurance that Museums Victoria's risk management, governance and internal control processes are operating effectively. A successful internal audit program assists in the achievement of organisational

goals by identifying how well critical systems and processes are working and providing advice about how those systems and processes can be improved.

Cyber security

Museums Victoria is committed to ensuring that staff, authorised users, and the public have reliable and secure access to ICT systems, services, and information. To achieve this, we implement cyber security controls that are proportionate to the sensitivity, value, and risk profile of the information and systems being protected.

Our Cyber Security Policy adopts a risk-based approach, balancing the need to support open, accessible, and effective operations with the responsibility to safeguard Museums Victoria's ICT resources, information assets, and services from cyber security threats.

Artificial Intelligence

Museums Victoria embraces the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to enhance productivity and deliver innovative services and experiences, while prioritising ethical considerations and safe and responsible use.

Risks involved in using AI tools will be assessed and carefully managed, to ensure appropriate use with the right safeguards in place.

Museums Victoria's Use of AI Policy references Australian and Victorian government guidelines. Guidance and fundamentals training in AI has been made available to Museums Victoria staff to ensure the appropriate use of AI in our workplace. Pilot projects are being undertaken and planning is underway for the development of an AI Strategy.

Privacy

Museums Victoria is committed to protecting the personal privacy of audiences, members of the public, staff and other associates of the organisation. The principles that guide Museums Victoria in relation to collecting, handling and storing personal information can be found in our Privacy Policy (*available on the Museums Victoria website*) which has been developed in line with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic).

Resilience Framework

Museums Victoria's Resilience Framework outlines a holistic, integrated approach to managing potential disruptions that may threaten the achievement of strategic and operational objectives. Through a structured, organisation-wide response, the framework safeguards the organisation's people, reputation, brand, value-creating activities and stakeholder interests.

Embedded as a core management function, the framework enables Museums Victoria to identify, assess and respond to sudden and significant disruptions. It facilitates swift incident diagnosis, establishes business recovery priorities and ensures prompt, decisive action to protect people and maintain critical operations and legislative obligations.

The Resilience Framework integrates key preparedness and response components, including:

- Security Risk Management and Counter Terrorism Response
- Business Disruption Plan, which incorporates:
  - Pandemic Emergency Management Plan
  - Business Continuity Plan
  - Emergency and Crisis Management Plan.

Together, these components support the organisation's ability to prepare for, prevent, respond to and recover from adverse events impacting services, personnel, visitors or assets. Three core objectives underpin the framework:

- Ensuring the safety and security of all individuals involved.
- Enabling the efficient and safe restoration of business operations.
- Supporting the rapid normalisation of services post-incident.

The Resilience Framework will continue to evolve and be actively maintained throughout the 2026–27 financial year to ensure Museums Victoria remains a resilient and sustainable organisation.

Ethics and Integrity

Museums Victoria seeks to maintain the highest standards of integrity by displaying values and behaviours that demonstrate that our staff and officials are not unduly influenced by their relationships or interests. Museums Victoria acknowledges its responsibility for the administration of public funds. Museums Victoria seeks to avoid instances of misconduct, conflicts of interest, fraud or corruption that may lead to a lack of impartiality in decision making or harm public perception and confidence in the institution, as well as the confidence of Museums Victoria's valued partners, patrons, supporters, donors and sponsors.

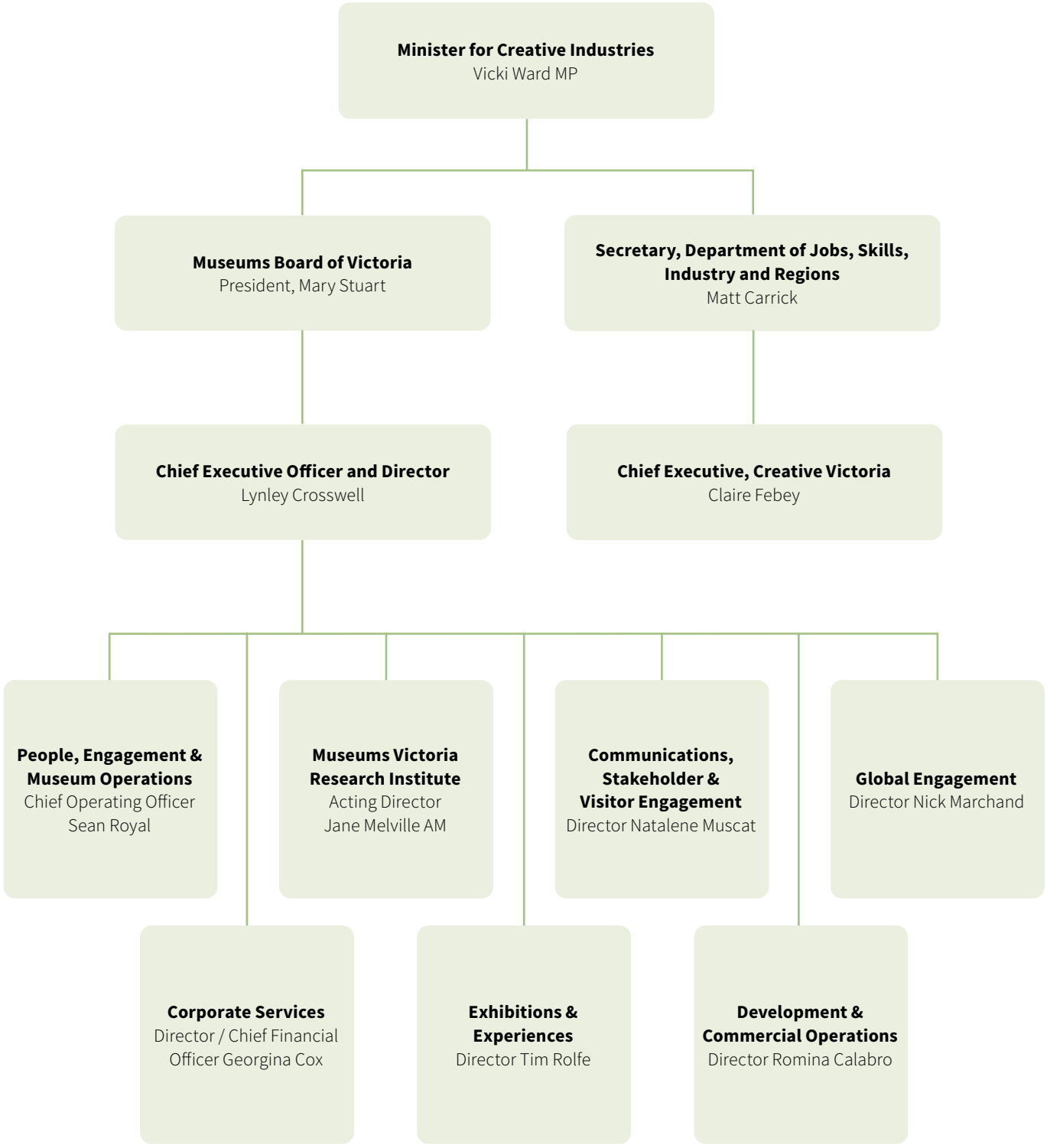
Museums Victoria's Integrity Framework demonstrates our commitment to establishing a comprehensive and strategic approach to promoting integrity across the organisation. It is also intrinsically linked to Public Interest Disclosure Procedures prepared in accordance with the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* *(refer to page 85 of this report for 2025–26 Public Interest Disclosures)* and the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC) guidelines.

Museums Victoria also adheres to the *International Council of Museums (ICOM) Code of Ethics for Museums*. The Code sets minimum professional standards and encourages the recognition of values shared by the international museum community. Further information on the ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums can be found on *ICOM's website*.

Our Workplace

Organisation structure

As at 30 June 2026



Organisation functions and executive team

Chief Executive Officer & Director, Lynley Crosswell

Lynley was appointed in February 2017 and is responsible for providing executive leadership in, and being accountable for, the operations of Museums Victoria.

People, Engagement and Museum Operations

Led by: Chief Operating Officer, Sean Royal

Sean commenced with Museums Victoria in June 2017 and was appointed as Chief People and Engagement Officer in August 2019, and Chief Operating Officer in June 2022.

As Chief Operating Officer, Sean oversees People, Engagement and Museum Operations including the following departments: People and Culture; Bookings and Enquiries; Health, Safety & Wellbeing; Strategic Facilities Management; Security and Emergency Management; Strategic Capital Programs; Royal Exhibition Building Masterplanning; and Scienceworks Masterplanning.

Corporate Services

Led by: Director, Corporate Services / Chief Financial Officer, Georgina Cox

Georgina first joined Museums Victoria in 2019 and commenced as Chief Financial Officer in November 2022.

As Chief Financial Officer, Georgina is responsible for Corporate Services including: Financial and Business Services; Legal, Risk and Assurance; Procurement; Strategic Information and Compliance; Project Office; Technology, Strategy and Delivery; and Governance and Accountability.

Museums Victoria Research Institute

Led by: Acting Director, Museums Victoria Research Institute, Dr Jane Melville AM

Jane commenced with Museums Victoria in 2002 as Curator of Herpetology, becoming the Senior Curator of Terrestrial Vertebrates (Herpetology) in 2008, and was appointed Acting Director of the Museums Victoria Research Institute in 2026.

The Research Institute comprises the following departments: First Peoples Research and Collections; History and Technology; Sciences; and Strategic Management Collection.

The Research Institute is responsible for the development, preservation and promotion of the State Collection through the acquisition and registration of new collection items, by making the collections available to scholars, community groups and other audiences, and by conducting research to address local, national and international issues.

Exhibitions and Experiences

Led by: Director, Exhibitions and Experiences, Tim Rolfe

Tim was appointed Director, Exhibitions and Experiences in November 2024. He had been Head of Exhibitions at Museums Victoria from 2000-2013 before joining Creature Technology Co. where he was General Manager for 10 years.

The Exhibitions and Experiences division includes: Audience Insights and Digital Experiences; Exhibition and Design; Technical Services; First Peoples Experiences; Road to Zero; Production Studios; and general operation of Scienceworks.

Exhibitions and Experiences encompasses onsite, online and offsite engagement with communities and individuals. Key functions include exhibition, education and public programs development across Museums Victoria sites as well as Victoria-wide education and outreach programs.

Communications, Stakeholder & Visitor Engagement

Led by: Director, Communications, Stakeholder & Visitor Engagement, Natalene Muscat

Natalene commenced with Museums Victoria in 2017 and was appointed Director, Communications and Stakeholder Engagement in August 2022. In December 2025 her portfolio expanded to include Visitor Engagement.

The division leads the organisation's internal and external communications. This includes Marketing and Communications, encompassing brand management, marketing, media relations, and the delivery of key strategic events. Natalene also oversees Visitor Engagement, the organisation's Front-of-House Visitor Services at each of our museums.

Development and Commercial Operations

Led by: Director, Development and Commercial Operations, Romina Calabro

Romina was appointed as Director, Development and Commercial Operations in August 2019. Romina drives Museums Victoria's financial sustainability through her leadership of the organisation's philanthropic fundraising, corporate partnerships and memberships program.

Romina also oversees Museums Victoria's commercial departments, comprising Tourism, Premium Visitation & Special Events; Venues & Events; Retail; Car Parking Services; and IMAX Melbourne.

Prior to joining Museums Victoria, Romina held leadership roles at the National Gallery of Victoria, Australian Red Cross, and the Melbourne International Jazz Festival.

Global Engagement

Led by: Director, Global Engagement, Nick Marchand

Nick joined Museums Victoria in January 2025 as Director, Global Engagement. Nick was previously Head of International Programmes at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and has held executive roles at the British Council in Hong Kong, Shanghai and Sydney.

He was also Co-Chair of the International Council of Museums UK Committee.

As Director, Global Engagement, Nick is responsible for developing Museums Victoria's international networks and global touring engagement. He works closely with the Exhibitions and Experiences teams to elevate Museums Victoria-created and produced exhibitions, bringing them to new audiences and expanding global impact. Since January 2026, Global Engagement also oversees the operation of the Immigration Museum and the Immigration Museum Masterplanning.



Lunar New Year Family Day 2026, Melbourne Museum
Source: Museums Victoria | Photographer: Thomas Breakwell

Staff profile

Museums Victoria commenced 2025–26 with 600 full-time equivalent employees (FTE) and ended the period with 536.

Employee Count

	Ongoing Employees				Fixed term & Casual		Total Headcount	Total FTE
	Employees (Headcount)	Full-time (Headcount)	Part-time (Headcount)	FTE	Employees (Headcount)	FTE	Employees (Headcount)	FTE
June 2026	433	303	130	384	263	152	696	536
June 2025	443	308	135	393	330	207	773	600

Notes:
Staffing numbers are as at the last pay cycle in the financial year.

Employees have been correctly classified in workforce data collections.

FTE total may not tally due to rounding as per FRD 29

FTE = Full-time equivalent

Employee gender, age and classification

The following table discloses the head count and full-time equivalent (FTE) employees as at the last full pay period in June 2026, and the previous corresponding reporting period. Movements during the period reflect planned organisational changes, including the transition of several fixed-term and casual employees to ongoing employment arrangements.

	2025–26				2024–25			
	Ongoing		Fixed-term & Casual		Ongoing		Fixed-term & Casual	
	Employees (Headcount)	FTE	Employees (Headcount)	FTE	Employees (Headcount)	FTE	Employees (Headcount)	FTE
Gender								
Female	234	203	149	85	251	216	183	115
Male	191	174	105	63	190	175	137	88
Self-described	8	7	9	4	2	2	10	4
Total	**433**	**384**	**263**	**152**	**443**	**393**	**330**	**207**
Age								
Under 25	10	7	39	15	9	7	54	24
25-34	89	74	104	55	81	68	121	68
35-44	126	114	58	42	124	109	83	63
45-54	114	103	42	29	117	108	45	35
55-64	78	72	11	7	88	81	18	13
Over 64	16	13	9	4	24	20	9	5
Total	**433**	**384**	**263**	**152**	**443**	**393**	**330**	**207**
Classification								
VPS 1	0	0	3	0	0	0	11	1
VPS 2	114	80	163	69	117	84	185	85
VPS 3	113	106	45	36	105	98	63	55
VPS 4	88	83	34	29	95	88	43	39
VPS 5	79	76	10	10	83	81	15	14
VPS 6	35	34	1	1	41	40	6	6
STS 7	4	4	0	0	2	2	0	0
Public Entity Senior Executive	0	0	7	7	0	0	7	7
Total	**433**	**384**	**263**	**152**	**443**	**393**	**330**	**207**

Note:
FTE total may not tally due to rounding as per FRD 29

Executives by gender

Classification	All	Male	Female	Self-described
Public Entity Senior Executive Service - 1	1	0	1	0
Public Entity Senior Executive Service - 2	5	3	2	0
Public Entity Senior Executive Service - 3	1	0	1	0
Total at 30 June 2026	**7**	**3**	**4**	**0**

Reconciliation of executive movements throughout the year

Classification	2026	2025
Public Entity Senior Executive Service	6	6
Accountable Officer (CEO)	1	1
Less Separations	0	0
Total executive numbers at 30 June 2026	**7**	**7**

Note:
Staffing numbers are as at the last pay cycle in the financial year.
Employees have been correctly classified in workforce data collections.

Salary bands of executive staff in 2025–26

The following table discloses the annualised total salary for senior employees at 30 June 2026, categorised by classification. The salary amount is reported as the full-time annualised salary.

Income band (salary)	Executives	Senior Technical Specialist
>$160,000		
$160,000 – $179,999		
$180,000 – $199,999		
$200,000 – $219,999		1
$220,000 – $239,999	1	1
$240,000 – $259,999		
$260,000 – $279,999	5	2
$280,000 – $299,999		
$300,000 – $319,999		
$320,000 – $339,999		
$340,000 – $359,999		
$360,000 – $379,999		
$380,000 – $399,999		
$400,000 – $419,999		
$420,000 – $439,999	1	
Total Headcount	**7**	**4**

Note:
The salaries reported above are at a full-time rate and exclude superannuation.

Our Workplace Culture

Our people are the heart of Museums Victoria. We recognise that our strength lies in the expertise and passion of our staff, and that our continued success depends on building a high-performing, accountable and outcomes-driven workplace culture.

Achievements in staff development, diversity and inclusion, and First Peoples recruitment and retention are detailed in *Year in Review – Strategic direction three: Our people (pages 28–29)*.

Employee relations

Museums Victoria continues to maintain a constructive and collaborative relationship with staff and their primary representative, the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU). Open and effective communication remains a priority, particularly in relation to major issues affecting Museums Victoria.

The Cultural and Creative Agencies Enterprise Agreement 2025 was approved by the Fair Work Commission and commenced on 19 August 2025.

Volunteers

Our volunteers make a vital contribution to Museums Victoria's work, enhancing the visitor experience and supporting research and collection management projects across the organisation.

Volunteers assist with school holiday programs, school visits, exhibitions and events, bringing energy and enthusiasm to our front-of-house teams. The volunteer program is inclusive and welcomes enquiries from all who are interested in contributing.

Behind the scenes, volunteers also play a key role in research and restoration projects through the Museums Victoria Research Institute. This includes contributions to fieldwork, digitisation projects such as the Biodiversity Heritage Library, cataloguing of collection objects and the restoration of the Great Melbourne Telescope.

Attraction and Retention Strategy

Foundational work supporting the Attraction and Retention Strategy is now in place, with the Recruitment for Inclusion project complete.

The Recruitment for Inclusion project, supported by the Scanlon Foundation, explored barriers to employment experienced by people from culturally diverse backgrounds, with the aim of informing more inclusive recruitment practices and strengthening workforce representation.

Gender Equality Action Plan

Museums Victoria continued implementation of its Gender Equality Action Plan 2021–2025 (GEAP) throughout the reporting period.

Of the 30 individual actions contained in the GEAP, 16 have been completed, with a further 14 deemed ongoing actions or in progress. Progress was made against five of the seven Workplace Gender Equality Indicators, including a reduction in the median gender pay gap for women.

Consultation on the next Gender Equality Action Plan commenced, with staff invited to share their views on five themes identified through workforce and employee experience data: building trust, respect and safety; fair and transparent recruitment and progression; inclusive leadership and culture; flexible work, caring and career pathways; and better data, accountability and implementation.

Museums Victoria remains committed to embedding the principles of gender equality into its workplace culture and practices as a foundation for the next Gender Equality Action Plan.

Public sector employment principles

Museums Victoria's recruitment practices reflect Victorian Public Sector employment principles, ensuring that all employees are treated fairly and reasonably, employment decisions are based on merit, career development is supported and that appropriate avenues exist to resolve workplace issues.

Public sector and Museums Victoria values

Museums Victoria adheres to and upholds the Victorian Public Sector Values – Responsiveness, Integrity, Impartiality, Accountability, Respect, Leadership and Human Rights – as outlined in the *Public Administration Act 2004* (the Act). These principles align with Museums Victoria's own organisational values: Strive, Embrace, Explore, Respect, Illuminate and Sustain.

Victorian Public Sector Code of Conduct

Museums Victoria ensures that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under the Victorian Public Sector Code of Conduct. The Code outlines the behaviours that exemplify the values contained in the Act and is embedded into our staff induction and training programs.

Key policies and procedures are made available to new staff on commencement and further explained through our e-learning induction bundle. Ongoing compliance is delivered annually via Museums Victoria's e-learning portal in accordance with the Act, to reinforce these standards and support a culture of integrity and accountability.

Occupational Health and Safety

Museums Victoria is committed to the provision of spaces and experiences for both employees and members of the public that are safe and without risk. Central to this approach is the promotion of health, safety, wellbeing, diversity and inclusion.

Museums Victoria's Employer Performance Rating (EPR), calculated by WorkSafe Victoria, measures workers' compensation claims performance against industry peers, where a rating of 1 represents an intermediate industry benchmark. A rating below 1 indicates stronger than industry performance, while a rating above 1 indicates performance below industry peers. At the end of 2025–26, Museums Victoria's EPR was above 1, driven by a small number of active claims that carried higher costs during the reporting period. Museums Victoria continues to implement robust and proactive return-to-work measures for all employees.

The tables below provide a breakdown of health and safety incidents.

Health and safety incidents

Visitors

	Incidents per 100 visitors
2025–26	0.0210
2024–25	0.0262
2023–24	0.0199

Notes:
Visitor data is from all Museums Victoria's venues (Melbourne Museum, Royal Exhibition Building, IMAX Melbourne, Immigration Museum and Scienceworks).

Staff

	Staff FTE	Incidents	Incidents per 100 FTE staff members	Lost time standard claims	Lost time standard claims per 100 FTE staff members	Average cost per claim
2025–26	536	211	39	2	0.37	$146,419
2024–25	600	108	18	2	0.33	$11,128
2023–24	565	127	22	3	0.53	$21,395

Notes:
Average cost per claim includes payments to 30 June 2026 as well as an estimate on future claims costs.

Increase in staff incident reports: An increase in *Incidents Per 100 FTE staff members* aligns with a greater emphasis on the reporting of incidents, injuries and, in particular, near misses.

Increase in average cost per claim: The increase in costs is a result of two claims which represent 95% of the total cost. Claims costs are expected to reduce in the 2026–27 year.

Statutory Reports

Accessibility

Museums Victoria is committed to advancing access for all and to reducing barriers to our venues, experiences and services. This commitment is grounded in the *Disability Act 2006*, which reaffirms the rights of people with a disability and recognises the shared responsibility of government and the community in upholding them.

This year we have made progress across all six objectives of our Accessibility & Inclusion Action Plan 2024–27. This has included advancing disability inclusion training across the organisation, deepening consultation with Deaf, Disabled and neurodivergent communities, and improving accessible feedback mechanisms. Work has also progressed on physical accessibility audits, wayfinding and access information, and accessible recruitment practices. Education staff have continued to apply neurodiversity-informed approaches in program design and delivery, building confidence in creating inclusive learning environments for young people.

As the Plan approaches its final year, we have commenced planning for the next phase of this work, reflecting our ongoing commitment to inclusion and belonging for visitors and staff alike.

Access and inclusion continue to be a strong focus for public and education programs, ensuring those who face barriers to participation are welcomed and supported in our spaces.

This year we reviewed and updated our Autism Friendly Museum online resources to address identified gaps in our capacity to support neurodivergent adults, and updated our sensory maps to be in line with best practice. Updated neurodiversity support and access content is now incorporated into our general accessibility web resources so that comprehensive accessibility information is available in one central online location. In November our education and public programs teams undertook training with NeuroWild speech pathology to improve inclusive facilitation skills and better support our neurodiverse visitors.

Across the year, 24 low-sensory sessions were held across Melbourne Museum, Scienceworks and Immigration Museum involving adjusted lighting and soundscapes to reduce sensory stimulation. Through this program we aim to create an alternative, more welcoming environment for visitors whose sensory needs make typical levels of multimedia and lighting difficult to manage. This year's focus has been on adapting multimedia experiences based on audience feedback.

Our Scienceworks team delivered Lightning Theatre shows and Rollercoaster Engineer workshops for blind and low-vision students from the Statewide Vision Resource Centre. The shows and workshops included bespoke elements to allow for more tactile and aural learning opportunities. Our team also collaborated with the Statewide Vision Resource Centre to produce a tactile map of the Scienceworks galleries and spaces in Braille.

The Scienceworks education team delivered the Blast Off: Rockets and Forces show for students at the Victorian College for the Deaf. An English-speaking presenter delivered the program alongside two Auslan interpreters. We also continued to offer free Auslan tours at Melbourne Museum as well as interpreted Scienceworks programs.

Our Outreach Team continued to offer bilingual Auslan/English presentations to Victorian Kindergartens. Delivered by a Deaf Learning Facilitator alongside an English-speaking presenter, these sessions aim to make our programs more accessible while also supporting the teaching of Auslan as a second language across the state.

This year we undertook a pilot program for a new Museum Kinder program, with the aim of supporting visits to the museum by children and families who may otherwise not visit due to socioeconomic barriers. This program was undertaken with Connie Benn Early Learning Centre and received positive feedback.

Asset Management Accountability Framework (AMAF)

The Asset Management Accountability Framework (AMAF) is a non-prescriptive, devolved accountability model of asset management that requires compliance with 41 mandatory requirements. These requirements can be found on the *DTF website*.

The maturity assessment was last reported in the 2023–24 Annual Report and is next due to be reported in 2026–27.

Building and maintenance compliance

As at 30 June 2026, Museums Victoria was responsible for six government-owned buildings. Museums Victoria complied with all provisions of the *Building Act 1993.*

All works undertaken by Museums Victoria during 2025–26 complied with the Building Code of Australia, the National Construction Code, and with the relevant Australian Standards for building and maintenance works. Appropriate mechanisms are in place for the service, inspection, completion and monitoring of maintenance and rectification works on existing buildings.

Major works (more than $50,000, excluding GST)

Merri-bek and Spotswood Collection Facilities

- Flood Recovery Works

Royal Exhibition Building

- Door 8 and Door 6 Ceiling Stabilisation Works
- External Decorative Orbs Survey and Removal Works
- External Cornice Netting Works

Scienceworks

- Rooftop Netting Installation

Building permits, occupancy permits and certificates of final inspection

During 2025–26 the following were issued in relation to buildings under Museums Victoria's responsibility:

Building permits	6
Occupancy permits	0
Certificates of final inspection	6
Emergency orders	0
Building orders	0
Buildings brought into conformity with the building standards	0

Competitive Neutrality Policy

Competitive neutrality requires government businesses to ensure that where services compete, or potentially compete, with the private sector, any net advantage arising from government ownership is accounted for if it is not in the public interest. Government businesses that undertake significant business activities are required to apply competitive neutrality measures, such as setting competitive neutral prices, that account for any net advantage arising from public ownership. The competitive neutrality policy supports fair competition between public and private businesses and provides government businesses with a tool to enhance decisions on resource allocation. This policy does not override other policy objectives of government and focuses on removing resource allocation distortions.

Museums Victoria continues to comply with the requirements under the Intergovernmental Agreement on National Competition Policy and Competition and Infrastructure Reform Agreement.

Consultancies

In 2025–26, five consultancies attracted total fees payable of $10,000 or greater. The total expenditure incurred during the year in relation to these consultancies is $179,500 (excluding GST) as outlined in the table of consultancies below.

Consultant	Purpose	Total approved project fee (excl. GST)	Expenditure 2025–26 (excl. GST)	Future expenditure (excl. GST)
Stepping Stones Pty Ltd	2025 Strategic and creative projects advice	$75,000	$37,500	$0
Tanarra Foundation Pty Ltd	Scienceworks redevelopment project	$30,000	$15,000	$0
Stepping Stones Pty Ltd	2026 Strategic and creative projects advice	$75,000	$37,500	$37,500
Trower Falvo Architects	Royal Exhibition Building masterplan project	$49,500	$49,500	$0
Xcentuate	Audience and revenue growth strategy for Immigration Museum	$40,000	$40,000	$0

In 2025–26, two consultancies valued individually at less than $10,000 were engaged. The total expenditure incurred during 2025–26 in relation to these consultancies was $18,040 (excl. GST).

Details of reviews and studies

During 2025–26 there were three reviews and studies undertaken with the total cost of $58,040. Details of individual reviews and studies are outlined in the table below.

Museums Victoria conducted additional internal reviews and commissioned external studies throughout the year which have not been disclosed due to their commercial sensitivity or lack of sufficient structure to warrant inclusion in this report.

Review/ study (portfolio(s) and output(s)/agency responsible)	Reasons for review/study	Review/study scope	Timeline	Anticipated outcomes	Est. cost during 2025–26 (excl. GST)	Final cost if completed (excl. GST)	Publicly available (Y/N) and URL If no, why
Museums Victoria Economic Value Analysis (Colliers International)	To determine the value, impact and return on Museums Victoria exhibitions & programs in 2024–25 and to inform planning	Economic impact analysis to determine benefits generated for the Victorian economy	December 2025 – March 2026	Enhanced planning	$8,500	$8,500	N Study is for organisational planning purposes
Audience and revenue growth strategy for Immigration Museum (Xcentuate)	To obtain expert advice on strengthening the Immigration Museum's audience reach and financial sustainability and strategic modelling advice	Assessment of visitation, market demand, and revenue opportunities to inform future site use, visitor experience, programming, and operating models at the Immigration Museum	April – June 2026	Enhanced visitation, revenue generation and long-term sustainability	$40,000	$40,000	N Study is for organisational planning purposes
Assessment for outbound touring (Evergreen Exhibitions)	To assess commercial potential of outbound touring product	Assessment of touring opportunities, market conditions, and delivery requirements	August – September 2025	Recommendations and opportunities identified for outbound touring	$23,850	$9,540 *	N Study is for organisational planning purposes

Notes:
* Actual expenditure was lower than forecast because travel costs for a potential agency site visit to Australia were included in the estimate but were not incurred.

Disclosure of major contracts

In accordance with the requirements of government policy and accompanying guidelines, Museums Victoria has disclosed all contracts greater than $10 million entered into during the financial year ended 30 June 2026. Details of contracts that have been disclosed in the Victorian Government Contracts Publishing System can be viewed on the *Buying for Victoria Tenders Portal*. Contractual details have not been disclosed for contracts where disclosure is exempted under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Vic) (the FOI Act) and/or government guidelines. Specific contract information has not been disclosed for contracts where such information is withheld under the FOI Act or other laws or government policies.

Disclosure of grants and transfer payments (other than contributions by owners)

For the 2025–26 financial year, Museums Victoria did not provide grants or transfer payments to any government entity (including general government entities and public non-financial corporations), third-party or parties outside the public sector.

DataVic Access Policy

Museums Victoria is committed to the principles of open access to public data and information. Museums Victoria makes more than 1.42 million collection, library, and archive records freely available on the *Museums Victoria Collections website* and shares data with major national and international data aggregators, including:

- *Trove* – the National Library of Australia's portal, through which we share humanities collections data, with approximately 102,000 records available as of June 2026.
- *Atlas of Living Australia and the Global Biodiversity Information Facility* – the national and international biodiversity aggregators through which we share 1.07 million zoology specimen and observation records, of which 62,500 have one or more images. More than 56 million individual records were downloaded from the Atlas between July 2025 and June 2026.
- *EarthBank (previously AusGeochem)* – data for 44,519 petrology and mineralogy specimens have been shared and are available on the platform as of June 2026.
- *DigitalNZ* – through which we share collections data related to New Zealand, with approximately 2,600 items and image records from our collection available.
- *Biodiversity Heritage Library (BHL)* – through which we make Australia's biodiversity knowledge freely available online, digitising library and archive collections from 64 Australian organisations, including museums, herbaria, state libraries, universities, government agencies, royal societies, and field naturalist clubs. In 2025–26, BHL Australia added 91,305 pages, bringing the national total to 766,893 pages. This included 43,172 pages from Museums Victoria's collections, bringing the total number of Museums Victoria pages available through BHL to 252,480.

Museums Victoria supports a range of Victorian collecting agencies via *Victorian Collections* – a web-based, collection management and publishing system developed and hosted by Museums Victoria in partnership with AMaGA Victoria and funded by Creative Victoria, that is freely available to a range of organisations. As of 30 June 2026, the total number of items digitally preserved and added to Victorian Collections is 593,025, including more than 57,185 that were added in 2025–26. More than 700 organisations have contributed.

Freedom of information

The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (the Act) allows the public a right of access to documents held by Museums Victoria. The purpose of the Act is to extend as far as possible the right of the community to access information held by government departments and agencies, local councils, Ministers and other bodies subject to the Act.

An applicant has a right to apply for access to documents held by a government agency. This comprises documents both created by Museums Victoria or supplied to Museums Victoria by an external organisation or individual, and may also include maps, films, microfiche, photographs, computer printouts, computer discs, tape recordings and videotapes. Information about the type of material produced by Museums Victoria is available on Museums Victoria's website under its Part II Information Statement.

The Act allows Museums Victoria to refuse access, either fully or partially, to certain documents or information. Examples of documents that may not be accessed include:

- cabinet documents
- some internal working documents
- law enforcement documents
- documents covered by legal professional privilege, such as legal advice
- personal information about other people
- information provided to Museums Victoria in confidence
- information that is confidential under another Act.

Under the Act, the Freedom of Information (FOI) processing time for requests received is 30 calendar days. However, when external consultation is required under ss29, 29A, 31, 31A, 33, 34 or 35, a 15-day automatic extension applies. Processing time may also be extended by periods of 30 days with the applicant's agreement, and this may occur any number of times. Obtaining an applicant's agreement for an extension cannot occur after the expiry of the timeframe for deciding a request.

If an applicant is not satisfied by a decision made by Museums Victoria, under section 49A of the Act they have the right to seek a review by the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC) within 28 days of receiving a decision letter.

Making a request

FOI requests can be lodged online at online.foi.vic.gov.au. An application fee of $34.50 applies. Access charges may also be payable if the document pool is large and the search for material is time consuming. Access to documents can be obtained through a written request to Museums Victoria's Freedom of Information Officer, as detailed in s17 of the Act.

When making an FOI request, applicants should ensure requests are in writing and clearly identify what types of material/documents are being sought and be accompanied by the application fee.

If you are unable to make a request online, you can request documents in the possession of Museums Victoria by writing to:

Freedom of Information Officer
Museums Victoria GPO Box 666
Melbourne VIC 3001

Enquiries can be made to the FOI Officer via email at *foi@museum.vic.gov.au*.

FOI statistics/timeliness

During 2025–26, Museums Victoria received three Freedom of Information applications. One application was from a member of an organisation and two applications were from a member of parliament. The applications were processed within the statutory timeframes.

Further information

Further information regarding the operation and scope of FOI can be obtained from the Act; regulations made under the Act; and at *ovic.vic.gov.au*.

Availability of Additional Information

In compliance with the requirements of the Standing Directions 2018 under the *Financial Management Act 1994*, details in respect of the items listed below have been retained by Museums Victoria and are available on request, subject to the provisions of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*:

- a statement that declarations of pecuniary interests have been duly completed by all relevant officers
- details of publications produced by Museums Victoria about the museum, and the places where publications can be obtained
- details of changes in prices, fees, charges, rates and levies charged by Museums Victoria
- details of any major external reviews carried out on Museums Victoria
- details of major research and development activities undertaken by Museums Victoria
- details of overseas visits undertaken, including a summary of the objectives and outcomes of each visit
- details of major promotional, public relations and marketing activities undertaken by Museums Victoria to develop community awareness of and engagement with museum venues and the services we provide
- details of assessments and measures undertaken to improve the occupational health and safety of employees
- a general statement on industrial relations within Museums Victoria and details of time lost through industrial accidents and disputes
- a list of major committees sponsored by Museums Victoria, the purpose of each committee and the extent to which its purposes have been achieved
- details of all consultancies and contractors, including those engaged, services provided and expenditure committed to for each engagement.

The information is available on request from:

Freedom of Information Officer
Museums Victoria GPO Box 666
Melbourne VIC 3001

The following information is not relevant to Museums Victoria for the reasons set out below:

- details of shares held by senior officers as nominee or held beneficially in a statutory authority or subsidiary: Museums Victoria does not hold any shares in any company or subsidiary.

Government advertising expenditure

In 2025–26, there were 8 campaigns with total spend of $100,000 or greater (excluding GST). The details of each campaign are outlined below. Planned expenditure may be adjusted throughout the year to accommodate new programs, events and initiatives as they arise. This includes responding to emerging opportunities that enhance the organisation's reputation and/or drive visitation.

Name of campaign	Start/end date	Advertising (media) expenditure (excl. GST)	Creative and campaign development expenditure (excl. GST)	Research and evaluation expenditure (excl. GST)	Print and collateral expenditure (excl. GST)	Other campaign costs (excl. GST)	Total
Museums Victoria **Campaign Summary:** To drive awareness of and visitation to Melbourne Museum, Scienceworks, Immigration Museum, Royal Exhibition Building, and Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre, as well as special events, programs, and exhibitions held outside the Touring Hall.	July 2025 – June 2026	**Planned** $604,700 **Actual** $566,827	**Planned** $167,000 **Actual** $199,805	**Planned** $12,000 **Actual** $13,738	**Planned** $57,300 **Actual** $11,878	**Planned** $399,100 **Actual** $362,147	**Planned** $1,240,100 **Actual** $1,154,393
Tourism **Campaign Summary:** To drive visitation from interstate and international visitors to Melbourne Museum, Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre, Touring Hall exhibitions, Immigration Museum, and Premium Tours.	July 2025 – June 2026	**Planned** $156,000 **Actual** $141,814	**Planned** $0 **Actual** $0	**Planned** $0 **Actual** $0	**Planned** $5,195 **Actual** $4,796	**Planned** $18,805 **Actual** $48,040	**Planned** $180,000 **Actual** $194,650[(a)]
LEGO® Star Wars™: The Exhibition **Campaign Summary:** To drive visitation and revenue, by promoting *LEGO® Star Wars™: The Exhibition*, supporting Victoria's economy, reinforcing Melbourne Museum as a must-visit destination, and encouraging engagement with this world-first exhibition.	February 2025 – January 2026	**Planned** $320,000 **Actual** $384,923	**Planned** $0 **Actual** $0	**Planned** $0 **Actual** $0	**Planned** $2,500 **Actual** $16,616	**Planned** $56,000 **Actual** $32,361	**Planned** $378,500 **Actual** $433,900[(b)]
ROME: Empire, Power, People **Campaign Summary:** To drive visitation and revenue for Melbourne Museum by promoting *ROME: Empire, Power, People*, supporting Victoria's visitor economy, reinforcing Melbourne's reputation as a premier cultural destination, and promoting the broader program of events delivered through exhibition partnerships.	November 2025 – June 2026	**Planned** $251,000 **Actual** $252,356	**Planned** $21,350 **Actual** $18,813	**Planned** $0 **Actual** $0	**Planned** $21,000 **Actual** $22,442	**Planned** $97,650 **Actual** $106,805	**Planned** $391,000 **Actual** $400,416
Treasures of the Viking Age: The Galloway Hoard **Campaign Summary:** To drive visitation and revenue for Melbourne Museum by promoting *Treasures of the Viking Age: The Galloway Hoard*, supporting Victoria's visitor economy and reinforcing Melbourne's reputation as a premier cultural destination.	July 2025 – January 2026	**Planned** $114,000 **Actual** $116,816	**Planned** $0 **Actual** $8,050	**Planned** $0 **Actual** $0	**Planned** $6,026 **Actual** $6,026	**Planned** $23,974 **Actual** $13,327	**Planned** $144,000 **Actual** $144,219

Government advertising expenditure (continued)

Name of campaign	Start/end date	Advertising (media) expenditure (excl. GST)	Creative and campaign development expenditure (excl. GST)	Research and evaluation expenditure (excl. GST)	Print and collateral expenditure (excl. GST)	Other campaign costs (excl. GST)	Total
Our Wondrous Planet **Campaign Summary:** To drive visitation and revenue for Melbourne Museum by promoting *Our Wondrous Planet*, supporting Victoria's visitor economy, reinforcing Melbourne Museum as a must-visit destination, and encouraging engagement with the museum's new permanent gallery.	September 2025 – June 2026	**Planned** $145,000 **Actual** $142,359	**Planned** $2,000 **Actual** $15,879	**Planned** $0 **Actual** $0	**Planned** $15,000 **Actual** $15,792	**Planned** $133,000 **Actual** $88,797	**Planned** $295,000 **Actual** $262,826
IMAX Melbourne **Campaign Summary:** To drive awareness, consideration, engagement and ticket sales to IMAX Melbourne's schedule of movie blockbusters, documentaries, film festivals and events.	July 2025 – June 2026	**Planned** $116,000 **Actual** $157,203	**Planned** $84,000 **Actual** $113,693	**Planned** $0 **Actual** $0	**Planned** $0 **Actual** $0	**Planned** $46,800 **Actual** $101,802	**Planned** $246,800 **Actual** $372,698[(c)]
Members **Campaign Summary:** Designed to drive awareness, engagement and retention of members, and to promote membership incentives.	July 2025 – June 2026	**Planned** $125,000 **Actual** $136,353	**Planned** $8,000 **Actual** $6,854	**Planned** $0 **Actual** $0	**Planned** $78,000 **Actual** $28,697	**Planned** $25,000 **Actual** $28,581	**Planned** $236,000 **Actual** $200,485
							Total Planned $3,111,400 **Total Actual $3,163,587**
							Total Actual Government Advertising Expenditure for campaigns over $100,000 was 1.67% higher than planned

Notes:

(a) Spending on the Tourism campaign was approximately 8% above the planned total, reflecting the strategic use of savings from other campaigns to expand reach and deliver greater exposure to interstate and international audiences.

(b) Spending on *LEGO® Star Wars™: The Exhibition* campaign was higher than budget for the financial year due to the rescheduling of campaign activity from 2024–25 to 2025–26. Overall campaign expenditure remained on budget.

(c) Spending on the IMAX Melbourne campaign appears over budget due to the timing of distributor and IMAX Corporation contributions. Marketing costs are recorded upfront, with associated funding subsequently recognised as revenue.

Information and communication technology expenditure

Museums Victoria's total ICT expenditure for the 2025–26 reporting period is detailed below.

All operational ICT expenditure	**ICT expenditure related to projects to create or enhance ICT capabilities**		
Business As Usual (BAU) ICT expenditure $'000 *Total*	**Non-BAU ICT expenditure $'000** *(Total = Operational expenditure and capital expenditure)*	**Operational expenditure $'000**	**Capital expenditure $'000**
8,798	-	-	-

Local Jobs First – Victorian Industry Participation Policy (VIPP)

The *Local Jobs First Act 2003* (Vic) enshrines the Victorian Industry Participation Policy (VIPP) and Major Projects Skills Guarantee (MPSG) requirements in legislation. Application of the Local Jobs First Policy is mandatory for all Victorian Government departments and agencies, including Museums Victoria.

Projects commenced – Local Jobs First Standard

During 2025–26, Museums Victoria commenced one Local Jobs First Standard Project totalling $22.3 million. The Local Jobs First Policy commitments for this metropolitan Melbourne project are as follows:

- An average of 97 per cent Local Content commitment
- A total of 79.58 jobs (Annualised Employee Equivalent or AEE) were committed, including the creation of 7.96 new jobs and the retention of 71.62 existing jobs (AEE)

During 2025–26, Museums Victoria did not commence a Local Jobs First Strategic project or Major Project Skills Guarantee applicable project. Museums Victoria did not complete any Local Jobs First applicable projects in 2025–26.

Note: 'Standard Project' is used in accordance with the *Local Jobs First Act 2003* (Vic) and includes qualifying goods and services contracts for Local Jobs First reporting purposes.

Public Interest Disclosures

Museums Victoria is committed to the aims and objectives of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* (the Act). Museums Victoria does not tolerate improper conduct by staff or reprisals against those who come forward to disclose such conduct.

Museums Victoria is not a body that can receive public interest disclosures directly. Disclosures of improper conduct or detrimental action relating to the museum should generally be made to the Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC). Information about making such disclosures can be found on the IBAC website: *www.ibac.vic.gov.au*.

As required by s.58(5) of the Act, procedures for protecting people who make public interest disclosures from detrimental action by Museums Victoria or its staff are available on the *museum website*.

Social Procurement Framework

Museums Victoria's Social Procurement activities aim to support the direct and indirect sourcing through social benefit suppliers, improving social, economic and environmental outcomes for all Victorians.

The main requirement and aim of Museums Victoria's social procurement activities is to use procurement spend to create additional social benefit in the community through several societal-facing initiatives in line with the Victorian Government's social procurement objectives which include:

- Employing Victorian priority jobseekers.
- Purchasing from accredited Victorian-based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander majority-owned businesses and increased employment of Victorian Aboriginal people.
- Purchasing from Victorian social enterprises and Australian Disability Enterprises and increased employment of Victorians with a disability.
- Supporting safe and fair workplaces through applying the Fair Jobs Code and the Supplier Code of Conduct to relevant procurement activities.
- Delivering environmentally sustainable outputs through project-specific requirements to use sustainable resources, manage waste and pollution and use recycled content in construction.
- Adopting environmentally sustainable business practices through waste and airborne pollution reduction.

During 2025–26, Museums Victoria delivered the following social procurement outputs:

Social Procurement Objectives	2025–26 Achievement
Number of accredited Victorian-based Aboriginal businesses engaged. (2025–26 Target: 1%)	1.30%
Value of work placed on Victorian-based Aboriginal businesses	$124,394.36*
Social benefit suppliers as a proportion of total suppliers	1.46%
Social procurement direct spend	$133,184.76

* Further work was placed with non-accredited social enterprises, individuals and businesses.

All figures calculated using Department of Government Services supplied ABN Wash Tool.

During 2025–26, our direct expenditure with certified social enterprises increased compared to 2024–25. This increase reflects a shift in prioritisation of direct expenditure with social benefit suppliers for this period.

Museums Victoria remains committed to supporting social procurement as part of our broader sustainability and inclusion objectives and aligned with the Victorian Government's Social Procurement Framework. The organisation will strive to use accredited social benefit suppliers, wherever practicable.

Disclosure of Emergency Procurement

Victorian Government entities must report activation of Emergency Procurement in their annual report including details related to each activation.

Following a disclosure in the previous Annual Report *(Emergency Procurement Disclosure in 2024–25)*, the Emergency Procurement activation was revoked on 6 March 2025 with all new procurement activity being subject to standard procurement processes. Any standing arrangements entered into as part of the Emergency Procurement activation in 2024–25 will continue to the end of the Merri-bek Flood Recovery Project, unless terminated earlier.

In 2025–26 Museums Victoria did not activate any emergency procurement.

Disclosure of procurement complaints

Under the Governance Policy of the Victorian Government Purchasing Board (VGPB), Museums Victoria must disclose any formal complaints relating to the procurement of goods and services received.

During 2025–26, Museums Victoria did not receive any complaints in relation to the procurement of goods and services.

Museums Board of Victoria Financial Management Compliance Attestation Statement

I, Mary Stuart, on behalf of the Museums Board of Victoria, certify that the Museums Board of Victoria has no Material Compliance Deficiency with respect to the applicable Standing Directions under *the Financial Management Act 1994* and Instructions.



Mary Stuart
President, Museums Board of Victoria
21 September 2026



Eonarium Enlightenment, Immigration Museum
Source: Museums Victoria | Photographer: Rodney Start | Artists: PROJEKTIL

About the Financial Statements

The financial statements highlight our financial performance and overall position as at 30 June 2026. The financial statements consist of five parts:

- Comprehensive operating statement
- Balance sheet
- Cash flow statement
- Statement of changes in equity
- Notes to the Financial Statements.

The financial statements are prepared by the Museums Victoria finance area, reviewed by our Chief Financial Officer and Audit and Risk Committee and then audited by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office.

Comprehensive operating statement

The Statement of Comprehensive Income measures an entity's financial performance over a specific period (usually 12 months). The Statement of Comprehensive Income comprises a profit and loss statement which compares revenues received against expenses incurred.

Excess revenue over expenses results is an operating surplus, while excess expenses over revenue results is an operating deficit.

Balance sheet

The Statement of Financial Position provides a snapshot of the financial health of an entity at the end of the reporting period. It presents the value of the assets held, amounts owing (liabilities), and the equity (net worth) of the entity.

Cash flow statement

This statement shows the actual cash movements during the financial year across operating, investing, and financing activities.

Overall, Museums Victoria's available cash increased significantly compared with the prior year. The increase was principally attributable to higher net cash inflows from financing activities and lower net cash outflows from investing activities. These impacts were partially offset by lower net cash inflows from operating activities, reflecting reduced government receipts and employee-related payments associated with voluntary departure packages and Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) back payments.

Statement of changes in equity

Equity is the net worth of the entity and is represented by total assets less total liabilities in the Statement of Financial Position. An entity's equity balance is made up of initial capital (contributions), accumulated surplus/deficit and reserves.

Net worth increased by $334.416 million from $2,095 million to $2,429 million. This increase was due to the $335.134 million upward revaluation of physical assets and capital contributions of $5.559 million received from Creative Victoria. These increases were, however, offset by the after-depreciation deficit of $6.277 million (depreciation of $23.602 million, which is an unfunded expense).

Notes to the Financial Statements

The notes to the financial statements provide a more detailed breakup of line items presented in the financial statements. They also disclose other matters such as the Museums Victoria's accounting policies, outstanding commitments at the end of the reporting period and other financial disclosures including key executive management personnel and remuneration. The financial statements should be read in conjunction with these accompanying notes.

Financial statements

Museums Board of Victoria

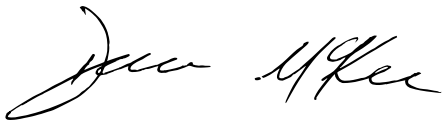
Declaration in the Financial Statements

We certify that the attached financial statements for the Museums Board of Victoria have been prepared in accordance with Direction 5.2 of the Standing Directions of the Minister for Finance under the *Financial Management Act 1994*, applicable Financial Reporting Directions, Australian Accounting Standards, including interpretations, and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.

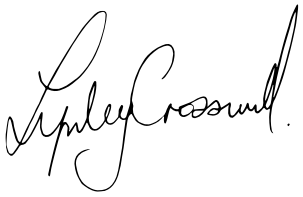
We further state that, in our opinion, the information set out in the comprehensive operating statement, balance sheet, statement of changes in equity, cash flow statement and accompanying notes, presents fairly the financial transactions during the year ended 30 June 2026 and financial position of the Museums Board of Victoria at 30 June 2026.

At the time of signing, we are not aware of any circumstance which would render any particulars included in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate.

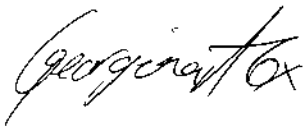
We authorise the attached financial statements for issue on 21 September 2026.



Mr Dale McKee
Treasurer, Museums Board of Victoria



Ms Lynley Crosswell
Chief Executive Officer and Director



Ms Georgina Cox
Chief Financial Officer

21 September 2026

Dated

Auditor–General's report

Independent Auditor's Report

Victorian Auditor-General's Office

To the Board of the Museums Board of Victoria

Opinion	I have audited the financial report of the Museums Board of Victoria (the authority) which comprises the: • balance sheet as at 30 June 2026 • comprehensive operating statement for the year then ended • statement of changes in equity for the year then ended • cash flow statement for the year then ended • notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information • declaration in the financial statements. In my opinion, the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the authority as at 30 June 2026 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of Part 7 of the *Financial Management Act 1994* and Australian Accounting Standards - Simplified Disclosures.
Basis for Opinion	I have conducted my audit in accordance with the *Audit Act 1994* which incorporates the Australian Auditing Standards. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of my report. My independence is established by the *Constitution Act 1975.* My staff and I are independent of the authority in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Victoria. My staff and I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.
Other information	The Board of the authority is responsible for the "other information" included in the authority's Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2026. The other information in the Annual Report does not include the financial report and my auditor's report thereon. My opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information included in the Annual Report. Accordingly, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. In connection with my audit of the financial report, my responsibility is to read the other information when it becomes available and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or my knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact. I have nothing to report in this regard.
Board's responsibilities for the financial report	The Board of the authority is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards - Simplified Disclosures and the *Financial Management Act 1994,* and for such internal control as the Board determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial report, the Board are responsible for assessing the authority's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless it is inappropriate to do so.

Level 31 / 35 Collins Street, Melbourne Vic 3000
T 03 8601 7000 enquiries@audit.vic.gov.au www.audit.vic.gov.au

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report

As required by the *Audit Act 1994,* my responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on the audit. My objectives for the audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the authority's internal control
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Board
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Board's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the authority's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the authority to cease to continue as a going concern.
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Board regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.



MELBOURNE
23 September 2026

Paul Martin
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria

How this report is structured

Museums Board of Victoria (Museums Victoria) has presented its audited general purpose financial statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2026 in the following structure to provide users with information about Museums Victoria's stewardship of resources entrusted to it.

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Financial statements

Comprehensive operating statement for the financial year ended 30 June 2026[i]

	Notes	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Continuing Operations			
Revenue and income from transactions			
Grants	2.2	81,042	84,161
Self-generated Income	2.3	52,268	44,702
Other Income	2.4	8,147	10,432
Total revenue and income from transactions		**141,457**	**139,295**
Expenses from transactions			
Employee benefit expenses	3.2	(79,496)	(77,016)
Operating expenses	3.3	(44,888)	(48,310)
Depreciation	4.2	(23,602)	(24,116)
Total expenses from transactions		**(147,986)**	**(149,442)**
Net deficit from transactions		**(6,529)**	**(10,147)**
Other economic flows included in net result			
Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, plant and equipment		(12)	(174)
Net gain/(loss) arising from revaluation of long service leave liability[ii]		264	(84)
Total other economic flows included in net result		**252**	**(258)**
Net result		**(6,277)**	**(10,405)**
Other economic flows – other comprehensive income			
Items that will not be reclassified to net result			
Changes in physical asset revaluation surplus	4.1.2	335,134	11,857
Comprehensive result		**328,857**	**1,452**

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Notes:
i. This format is aligned to AASB 1049 *Whole of Government and General Government Sector Financial Reporting*.
ii. Revaluation gain/(loss) due to changes in bond rates.

Balance sheet as at 30 June 2026[i]

	Notes	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Financial assets			
Cash and deposits	6.1	36,945	29,639
Receivables	5.1	1,652	1,690
Total financial assets		**38,597**	**31,329**
Non-financial assets			
Property, plant, equipment, exhibitions and collections	4.1	2,416,878	2,100,232
Other non-financial assets		3,987	5,090
Total non-financial assets		**2,420,865**	**2,105,322**
Total assets		**2,459,462**	**2,136,651**
Liabilities			
Payables	5.2	11,556	20,833
Advance from Victorian Government	5.3	1,214	2,174
Leases	6.2.3	2,237	2,260
Employee related provisions	3.2.2	14,971	16,316
Total liabilities		**29,978**	**41,583**
Net assets		**2,429,484**	**2,095,068**
Equity			
Accumulated deficit[ii]		(352,527)	(342,943)
Reserves[ii]		2,143,129	1,804,688
Contributed capital		638,882	633,323
Net worth		**2,429,484**	**2,095,068**

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Note:
i. This format is aligned to AASB 1049 *Whole of Government and General Government Sector Financial Reporting*.

ii. During 2025–26, the presentation of equity was revised to combine Board Reserve within accumulated deficit. Comparative information has been restated accordingly. Refer to the Statement of Changes In Equity.

Cash flow statement for the financial year ended 30 June 2026[i]

	Notes	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Receipts			
Receipts from government		83,596	85,894
Receipts from external parties		60,752	57,614
Interest received		1,519	1,465
Goods and Services Tax recovered from the ATO[ii]		155	2,030
Total receipts		**146,022**	**147,003**
Payments			
Payments to suppliers and employees		(137,983)	(128,328)
Total payments		**(137,983)**	**(128,328)**
Net cash flows provided by operating activities		**8,039**	**18,675**
Cash flows from investing activities			
Proceeds from sale of non-financial assets		(10)	(128)
Purchases of non-financial assets		(4,314)	(16,052)
Net cash flows used in investing activities		**(4,324)**	**(16,180)**
Cash flows from financing activities			
Finance costs		(183)	(186)
Proceeds of advance from Victorian Government and lease liabilities		57	294
Repayments of advance from Victorian Government and lease liabilities		(1,842)	(1,577)
Capital contribution received		5,559	1,518
Net cash flows used in financing activities		**3,591**	**49**
Net Increase/(decrease) in cash held		**7,306**	**2,544**
Cash and deposits at the beginning of the financial year		29,639	27,095
Cash and deposits for the period ending 30 June 2026	6.1	**36,945**	**29,639**

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Notes:
i. This format is aligned to AASB 1049 *Whole of Government and General Government Sector Financial Reporting*.
ii. Goods and Services Tax (GST) recovered/(paid) to the ATO is presented on a net basis.

Statement of changes in equity for the financial year ended 30 June 2026[i]

$'000

	Accumulated deficit[ii]	Trust funds reserves[iii]	Special purpose reserves[iv]	Physical asset revaluation surplus	Contributions by owner	Total
Balance at 1 July 2024	**(336,927)**	**7,206**	**10,986**	**1,779,028**	**631,805**	**2,092,098**
Net result for the year	(10,405)	-	-	-	-	(10,405)
Other comprehensive income for the year	-	-	-	11,857	-	11,857
Transfer (to)/from accumulated deficit	4,389	273	(4,662)	-	-	-
Capital contributions	-	-	-	-	1,518	1,518
Balance at 30 June 2025	**(342,943)**	**7,479**	**6,324**	**1,790,885**	**633,323**	**2,095,068**
Net result for the year	(6,277)	-	-	-	-	(6,277)
Other comprehensive income for the year	-	-	-	335,134	-	335,134
Transfer (to)/from accumulated deficit	(3,307)	485	2,822	-	-	-
Capital contributions	-	-	-	-	5,559	5,559
Balance at 30 June 2026	**(352,527)**	**7,964**	**9,146**	**2,126,019**	**638,882**	**2,429,484**

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Notes:

i. This format is aligned to AASB 1049 *Whole of Government and General Government Sector Financial Reporting*.

ii. The Board Reserve, previously disclosed as a separate component of equity, has been restated and presented within Accumulated Deficit. Comparative information has been restated to conform with the current year presentation.

iii. This represents the balance of unexpended funds from bequests and external trusts, with the proceeds brought to account as revenue upon receipt. Subsequent expenditure is recorded as an expense in the comprehensive operating statement and will decrease the trust fund.

iv. This represents the balance of grants and other external funding received by the entity from various external entities for specific projects, including research, public access, exhibitions and capital. Proceeds are brought to account as revenue upon receipt. Subsequent expenditure is recorded as an expense in the comprehensive operating statement and will decrease the reserve.

Notes to the financial statements

1. About this report

Museums Board of Victoria (Museums Victoria) is a Victorian Government statutory authority of Creative Victoria, a division of the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR).

Its principal address is:
Museums Victoria
11 Nicholson Street
Carlton 3053
Victoria, Australia

A description of the nature of Museums Victoria's operations and principal activities is included in the Report of operations, which does not form part of these financial statements.

Basis of preparation

These financial statements are Tier 2 general purpose financial statements prepared in accordance with AASB 1060 *General Purpose Financial Statements – Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-Profit Tier 2 Entities* (AASB 1060) and Financial Reporting Direction 101 *Application of Tiers of Australian Accounting Standards* (FRD 101).

These financial statements are in Australian dollars and the historical cost convention is used unless a different measurement basis is specifically disclosed in the note associated with the item measured on a different basis.

The accrual basis of accounting has been applied in preparing these financial statements, whereby assets, liabilities, equity, revenue, income and expenses are recognised in the reporting period to which they relate, regardless of when cash is received or paid.

Consistent with the requirements of AASB 1004 *Contribution,* contributions by owners (that is, contributed capital and its repayment) are treated as equity transactions and, therefore, do not form part of the income and expenses of Museums Victoria.

Capital grants which have been designated as contributions by owners are recognised as contributed capital. Other transfers that are in the nature of distributions to or contributions by owners have also been designated as contributions by owners.

Judgements, estimates and assumptions are required to be made about financial information being presented. The significant judgements made in the preparation of these financial statements are disclosed in the notes where amounts affected by those judgements are disclosed. Estimates and associated assumptions are based on professional judgements derived from historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and also in future periods that are affected by the revision. Judgements and assumptions made by management in applying AAS that have significant effects on the financial statements and estimates are disclosed in the notes under the heading: 'Significant judgement or estimates'.

These financial statements cover Museums Victoria as an individual reporting entity and include all the controlled activities of Museums Victoria. There is no entity consolidated into Museums Victoria.

All amounts in the financial statements have been rounded to the nearest $1,000 unless otherwise stated.

Going Concern

As a statutory authority established under the *Museums Act 1983*, Museums Victoria must continue its operations to fulfil its legislative responsibilities, including the custodianship of significant state cultural and scientific assets. Museums Victoria continues to be economically dependent on the Victorian Government and receives operational funding through annual appropriations confirmed for the four-year period 2026–27 to 2029–30 by the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) as part of the State Budget process.

Accordingly, these financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

In accordance with AASB 1060 *Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-Profit Tier 2 Entities*, Museums Victoria has assessed that it is appropriate to prepare the Annual Financial Report for 2025–26 on a going concern basis.

Compliance information

These general-purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the FMA and applicable Australian Accounting Standards (AASs), which include Interpretations, issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB).

Where appropriate, those AASs paragraphs applicable to not-for-profit entities have been applied. Accounting policies selected and applied in these financial statements ensure that the resulting financial information satisfies the concepts of relevance and reliability, thereby ensuring that the substance of the underlying transactions or other events is reported.

2. Funding delivery of our services

Introduction

The objective of Museums Victoria is to enrich the lives of people through wondrous discovery and trusted knowledge. Museums Victoria's role in sharing and exchanging knowledge, experiences, and expertise is critical in helping audiences make sense of this world and fostering a greater understanding of the deep connections we have to each other and our environment.

Museums Victoria meets its objectives through funding from grants, self-generated income (e.g. fees and charges and rent revenue) and other income (e.g. interest income and donations). The grants comprised Victorian government grants, capital funding, research and education grants.

Structure

2.1 Summary of revenue and income that funds the delivery of our services

2.2 Grants

2.3 Self-generated income

2.4 Other income

2.1 Summary of revenue and income that funds the delivery of our services

	Notes	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Grants	2.2	81,042	84,161
Self-generated income	2.3	52,268	44,702
Other income	2.4	8,147	10,432
Total income from transactions		**141,457**	**139,295**

Revenue and income that fund the delivery of Museums Victoria's services are accounted for consistently with the requirements of the relevant accounting standards disclosed in the following notes.

2.2 Grants

	Notes	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Victorian Government grants	2.2.1	78,860	79,178
Commonwealth Government grants		771	412
Other grants		1,411	4,571
Total grants		**81,042**	**84,161**

Grants recognised under AASB 1058

Museums Victoria has determined that the grant income under AASB 1058 has been earned under arrangements that are either not enforceable or linked to sufficiently specific performance obligations.

Income from grants without any sufficiently specific performance obligations, or that are not enforceable, is recognised when Museums Victoria has an unconditional right to receive cash which usually coincides with the receipt of cash. On initial recognition of the asset, Museums Victoria recognises any related contributions by owners, increases in liabilities, decreases in assets, and revenue ('related amounts') in accordance with other Australian Accounting Standards. Related amounts may take the form of:

- contributions by owners, in accordance with AASB 1004 *Contributions*;
- revenue or a contract liability arising from a contract with a customer, in accordance with AASB 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers*;
- a lease liability in accordance with AASB 16 *Leases*;
- a financial instrument, in accordance with AASB 9 *Financial Instruments*; or
- a provision, in accordance with AASB 137 *Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets.*

Grants recognised under AASB 15

Income from grants that are enforceable and with sufficiently specific performance obligations are accounted for as revenue from contracts with customers under AASB 15. Revenue is recognised when Museums Victoria satisfies the performance obligation by providing services and is recognised based on the consideration specified in the funding agreement and to the extent that it is highly probable a significant reversal of the revenue will not occur. The funding payments are normally received in advance or shortly after the relevant obligation is satisfied.

2.2.1 Victorian Government grants

Museums Victoria received the following grants from the Victorian Government.

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Recurrent grant		
Applied to operations	73,612	42,991
Total recurrent grant	**73,612**	**42,991**
Other grants from Victorian Government entities	5,248	36,187
Total Victorian Government grants	**78,860**	**79,178**

2.3 Self-generated income

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Fees and charges	33,258	28,248
Sales of goods and services	7,571	6,580
Rent	6,140	5,043
Sponsorship	1,007	693
Memberships	1,739	2,405
Income TAC - Road to Safety Education Complex (Operational)	2,553	1,733
Total self-generated income	**52,268**	**44,702**

The categories included in the table above are transactions that Museums Victoria has determined to be classified as revenue from contracts with customers in accordance with AASB 15.

Performance obligations and revenue recognition policies

Revenue is measured based on the consideration specified in the contract with the customer. Museums Victoria recognises revenue when it transfers control of a good or service to the customer.

Revenue is recognised when, or as, the performance obligations for the sale of goods and services to the customer are satisfied. Income from the rendering of services is recognised at a point in time when the performance obligation is satisfied when the service is completed; and over time when the customer simultaneously receives and consumes the services as it is provided. Consideration received in advance of recognising the associated revenue from the customer is recorded as a contract liability. Where the performance obligations are satisfied but not yet billed, a contract asset is recorded.

Fees and charges consists of income received from admissions, education and community programs, outreach services and onsite car parking facilities. It is recognised at the time of attendance by visitors paying fees and charges.

Income from sales of goods and services comprise mainly retail shop sales at Melbourne Museum, Scienceworks and Immigration Museum. It is recognised upon delivery of the goods and services to the customer.

Rental revenue at museum venues is recognised in the month when the event is held.

Membership fees are recognised over the membership period to which it relates.

Sponsorship income represents the cash, goods and services received from sponsorship contracts. Goods and services received free of charge are only recognised when the fair value can be reliably determined and control is obtained over any goods and services provided.

2.4 Other income

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Donations	2,256	1,900
Donated cultural assets at fair value	429	4,324
Interest from financial assets	1,539	1,489
Royalties received	4	19
Miscellaneous	3,919	2,700
Total other income	**8,147**	**10,432**

Donations income is recognised on receipt.

Donated cultural assets are recognised when the gift is accepted by Museums Victoria and control of the asset or the right to receive the asset exists. The donated cultural assets are recorded at fair value, which is determined either by independent valuations or by curatorial or other assessments by Museums Victoria.

Interest income is recognised on a monthly basis taking into account interest rates applicable to the financial assets.

Miscellaneous income consists mainly of recoveries of event costs and trust income. All other income for provision of goods and services is recognised when received or receivable.

Voluntary Services: Contributions in the form of services are only recognised when a fair value can be reliably determined and the services would have been purchased if not donated. Museums Victoria does not recognise volunteer services due to lack of reliable measurements.

3. The cost of delivering services

Introduction

This section provides an account of the expenses incurred by Museums Victoria in delivering its objectives. In Section 2, the funds that enable the provision of services were disclosed and in this note the cost associated with the provision of services are disclosed.

Structure

3.1 Expenses incurred in delivery of services

3.2 Employee benefit expenses

3.3 Operating expenses

3.1 Expenses incurred in delivery of services

	Notes	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Employee benefit expenses	3.2	79,496	77,016
Operating expenses	3.3	44,888	48,310
Total expenses from transactions		**124,384**	**125,326**

3.2 Employee benefit expenses

3.2.1 Employee benefits in the comprehensive operating statement

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Salaries and wages, annual leave and long service leave	67,481	69,506
Defined contribution superannuation expense	6,862	6,876
Defined benefit superannuation expense	204	249
Termination benefits	4,949	385
Total employee expenses	**79,496**	**77,016**

Employee expenses include all costs related to employment, including wages and salaries, fringe benefits tax, leave entitlements, termination payments and WorkCover premiums.

The amount recognised in the comprehensive operating statement in relation to superannuation is employer contributions for members of both defined benefit and defined contribution superannuation plans that are paid or payable during the reporting period. Museums Victoria does not recognise any defined benefit liabilities because it has no legal or constructive obligation to pay future benefits relating to its employees. Instead, DTF discloses in its annual financial statements the net defined benefit cost related to the members of these plans as an administered liability (on behalf of the State as the sponsoring employer).

Termination benefits are payable when employment is terminated before normal retirement date, or when an employee accepts an offer of benefits in exchange for the termination of employment. Termination benefits are recognised when Museums Victoria is demonstrably committed to terminating the employment of current employees according to a detailed formal plan without possibility of withdrawal or providing termination benefits as a result of an offer made to encourage voluntary redundancy.

3.2.2 Employee related provisions

Provision is made for benefits accruing to employees in respect of wages and salaries, annual leave and long service leave (LSL) for services rendered to the reporting date and recorded as an expense during the period the services are delivered.

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Current provisions:		
Annual leave	4,409	4,345
Long service leave	7,029	8,043
Provisions for on-costs	2,301	2,494
Total current provisions for employee benefits	**13,739**	**14,882**
Non-current provisions:		
Long service leave	1,028	1,198
Provisions for on-costs	204	236
Total non-current provisions for employee benefits	**1,232**	**1,434**
Total provisions for employee benefits	**14,971**	**16,316**

Wages and salaries, annual leave and sick leave: Liabilities for wages and salaries (including non-monetary benefits, annual leave and on-costs) are recognised as part of the employee benefits provision as current liabilities, because Museums Victoria does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement of these liabilities.

The liability for salaries and wages is recognised in the balance sheet at remuneration rates which are current at the reporting date. As Museums Victoria expects the liabilities to be wholly settled within 12 months of the reporting date, they are measured at undiscounted amounts.

All annual leave liability is classified as a current liability since Museums Victoria does not have a conditional right to defer the settlement of the entitlement.

No provision has been made for sick leave as all sick leave is non-vesting and it is not considered probable that the average sick leave taken in the future will be greater than the benefits accrued in the future. As sick leave is non-vesting, an expense is recognised in the comprehensive operating statement as it is taken.

Employment on-costs such as payroll tax, workers compensation and superannuation are not employee benefits. They are disclosed separately as a component of the provision for employee benefits when the employment to which they relate has occurred. The on-costs provision is immaterial in 2026.

Unconditional LSL is disclosed as a current liability even where Museums Victoria does not expect to settle the liability within 12 months because it will not have the unconditional right to defer the settlement of the entitlement should an employee take leave within 12 months.

The components of this current LSL liability are measured at:

- undiscounted value – if Museums Victoria expects to wholly settle within 12 months; or
- present value which has been discounted using bond rate – if Museums Victoria does not expect to wholly settle within 12 months.

Conditional LSL is disclosed as a non-current liability. There is an unconditional right to defer the settlement of the entitlement until the employee has completed the requisite years of service. This non-current LSL is measured at present value which has been discounted using bond rate.

Any gain or loss following revaluation of the present value of non-current LSL liability is recognised as a transaction, except to the extent that a gain or loss arises due to changes in bond interest rates for which it is then recognised as an 'other economic flow' in the net result.

3.3 Operating expenses

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Cost of goods sold	2,683	2,325
Finance costs	183	186
Facilities	15,421	17,758
Consumables and corporate	11,430	11,462
Contractors and exhibitions	11,891	12,183
Marketing and promotion	2,926	4,000
Collections management	354	396
Total operating expenses	**44,888**	**48,310**

Operating expenses generally represent the day-to-day running costs incurred in normal operations. Operating expenses are recognised as an expense in the reporting period in which they are incurred.

Cost of goods sold is the cost of retail shop inventory sold in the reporting period. When inventories are sold, the carrying amount of those inventories shall be recognised as an expense in the period in which the related income is recognised.

Facilities expenses consist mainly of electricity, maintenance, repairs, cleaning, fire prevention services and security.

Consumables and corporate expenses consist mainly of IT software purchases, IT leases and carpark levy.

Contractors and exhibitions expenses consist mainly of film royalties, exhibition fees and construction costs.

Marketing and promotion is expenditure incurred on advertising, public relations and market research.

4. Key assets available to support service delivery

Introduction

Museums Victoria controls assets that are utilised in fulfilling its objectives and conducting its activities. They represent the resources that have been entrusted to Museums Victoria to be utilised for the delivery of services.

Structure

4.1 Property, plant, equipment, exhibitions and collections

4.2 Depreciation

4.1 Property, plant, equipment, exhibitions and collections

	Gross carrying amount		Accumulated depreciation		Net carrying amount	
	2026 $'000	**2025 $'000**	**2026 $'000**	**2025 $'000**	**2026 $'000**	**2025 $'000**
Land at fair value	449,450	518,650	-	-	449,450	518,650
Buildings at fair value	687,689	648,309	-	(18,169)	687,689	630,140
Plant, equipment and vehicles at fair value	35,365	34,304	(30,952)	(29,823)	4,413	4,481
Exhibitions at fair value	34,340	17,404	-	-	34,340	17,404
Work in progress at cost	4,570	24,340	-	-	4,570	24,340
Collections at fair value[i]	1,234,392	903,498	-	(458)	1,234,392	903,040
Right-of-use assets: plant, equipment and vehicles[ii]	4,878	4,082	(2,854)	(1,905)	2,024	2,177
Net carrying amount	**2,450,684**	**2,150,587**	**(33,806)**	**(50,355)**	**2,416,878**	**2,100,232**

i. Depreciation of collections is for Library (non-rare) assets.

ii. As a result of a change in FRD 104 *Leases* effective for reporting periods from 30 June 2026, right-of-use assets are measured at cost for reporting period 2026. The comparative information for reporting period 2025 is not restated and is reported at the previously determined fair value. For more information, refer to Note 8.7.

Items of property, plant, equipment, exhibition and collections are measured initially at cost and subsequently revalued at fair value less accumulated depreciation and impairment. Where an asset is acquired for no or nominal cost, the cost is its fair value at the date of acquisition. The cost of constructed non-financial physical assets includes the cost of all materials used in construction, direct labour on the project and an appropriate proportion of variable and fixed overheads.

The recoverable amount of primarily non-cash-generating assets of not-for-profit entities, which are typically specialised in nature and held for continuing use of their service capacity, is expected to be materially the same as fair value determined under AASB 13 *Fair Value Measurement*, with the consequence that AASB 136 does not apply to such assets that are regularly revalued. For Museums Victoria, these assets include Land, Buildings, Exhibitions and Collections.

The following tables are right-of-use assets included in the property, plant and equipment (PPE) balance, presented by subsets of plant and equipment.

4.1.1 Total right-of-use assets: plant, equipment and vehicles

	Gross carrying amount	Accumulated depreciation	Net carrying amount	Gross carrying amount	Accumulated depreciation	Net carrying amount
	2026 $'000	2026 $'000	2026 $'000	2025 $'000	2025 $'000	2025 $'000
Plant, equipment and vehicles[i]	4,878	2,854	2,024	4,082	1,905	2,177
Net carrying amount	**4,878**	**2,854**	**2,024**	**4,082**	**1,905**	**2,177**

	Plant, equipment and vehicles at fair value $'000
Opening balance - 1 July 2025[i]	**2,177**
Additions	859
Disposals	(2)
Depreciation	(1,010)
Closing balance - 30 June 2026	**2,024**

i. As a result of a change in FRD 104 *Leases* effective for reporting periods from 30 June 2026, right-of-use assets are measured at cost for reporting period 2026. The comparative information for reporting period 2025 is not restated and is reported at the previously determined fair value. For more information, refer to Note 8.7.

Right-of-use asset acquired by lessees – Initial measurement

Museums Victoria recognises a right-of-use asset and a lease liability at the lease commencement date.

The right-of-use asset is initially measured at cost which comprises the initial amount of the lease liability adjusted for:

- any lease payments made at or before the commencement date less any lease incentive received
- any initial direct costs incurred
- an estimate of costs to dismantle and remove the underlying asset or to restore the underlying asset or the site on which it is located.

Right-of-use asset – Subsequent measurement

Right-of-use assets are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated depreciation, impairment and any adjustments for remeasurement of the lease liability. Museums Victoria depreciates the right-of-use assets on a straight-line basis from the lease commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the right-of-use asset or the end of the lease term. Impairment of right-of-use assets is determined and accounted for in accordance with AASB 136 *Impairment of Assets*.

4.1.2 Reconciliation of movements in carrying amount of property, plant, equipment, exhibitions and collections

2026	Land $'000	Buildings $'000	Plant, equipment & vehicles $'000	Exhibitions $'000	WIP $'000	Collections $'000	Total $'000
Opening balance	**518,650**	**630,140**	**6,658**	**17,404**	**24,340**	**903,040**	**2,100,232**
Additions	-	-	1,144	-	3,793	179	5,116
Disposals	-	-	(2)	-	-	-	(2)
Asset revaluation	(69,200)	69,088	-	3,957	-	331,289	335,134
Transfers	-	7,397	823	15,343	(23,563)	-	-
Depreciation	-	(18,936)	(2,186)	(2,364)	-	(116)	(23,602)
Closing balance	**449,450**	**687,689**	**6,437**	**34,340**	**4,570**	**1,234,392**	**2,416,878**

4.2 Depreciation

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Buildings	18,936	18,170
Plant, equipment and motor vehicles	2,186	1,647
Exhibitions	2,364	4,182
Collections-Library (non-Rare)	116	117
Total depreciation	**23,602**	**24,116**

All buildings, plant and equipment and other non-financial physical assets that have finite useful lives, are depreciated. The exceptions to this rule include land and collections including library rare and high-value books.

Depreciation is generally calculated on a straight-line basis, at rates that allocate the asset's value, less any estimated residual value, over its estimated useful life as determined by management. The estimated useful life for the different asset classes for the current year are included in the table below:

Asset	Useful life (years)
Buildings	3 to 127
Plant, equipment and motor vehicles	1 to 50
Exhibitions	1 to 14
Collections-Library (non-Rare)	50

Right-of-use assets are generally depreciated over the shorter of the asset's useful life and the lease term. Where Museums Victoria obtains ownership of the underlying leased asset or if the cost of the right-of-use asset reflects that Museums Victoria will exercise a purchase option, Museums Victoria depreciates the right-of-use asset over its useful life.

The useful life of Exhibitions has changed from 1–18 years to 1–14 years based on their revaluation in 2025–26. The useful life of Buildings has changed from 17–109 years to 3–127 based on their revaluation in 2025–26. Refer to Section 7.3.1 for further details.

Indefinite life assets: Land and Collections, including rare and high-value library books considered to have an indefinite life, are not depreciated. Depreciation is not recognised in respect of these assets because their service potential has not, in any material sense, been consumed during the reporting period.

5. Other assets and liabilities

Introduction

This section sets out those assets and liabilities that arose from Museums Victoria's operations.

Structure

5.1 Receivables

5.2 Payables

5.3 Advance from Victorian Government

5.1 Receivables

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Contractual		
Debtors	1,465	1,496
Allowance for impairment losses of contractual receivables	(8)	(3)
Interest receivable	81	62
Statutory		
GST input tax credit recoverable	114	135
Total receivables	**1,652**	**1,690**
Represented by:		
Current receivables	1,652	1,690

Contractual receivables are classified as financial instruments and categorised as 'financial assets at amortised costs'. They are initially recognised at fair value plus any directly attributable transaction costs. Museums Victoria holds the contractual receivables to collect the contractual cash flows and, therefore, subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less any impairment.

Statutory receivables do not arise from contracts and are recognised and measured similarly to contractual receivables (except for impairment) but are not classified as financial instruments. Museums Victoria applies AASB 9 for initial measurement of the statutory receivables, and as a result, statutory receivables are initially recognised at fair value plus any directly attributable transaction cost.

5.1.1 Impairment loss

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Impairment loss		
Impairment loss on contractual receivables		
From transactions	(5)	11

In accordance to FRD 114 *Financial Instrument*, all entities shall apply the simplified approach, which requires the loss allowance to always be measured at an amount equal to lifetime expected credit losses for all trade receivables, lease receivables and statutory receivables.

The loss allowances for receivables and contract assets are based on assumptions about risk of default and expected loss rates. The expected loss rates applied as at 30 June 2026 vary from 1 per cent for receivables that are more than 30 days past due to 10 per cent for receivables that are more than 120 days past due (30 June 2025 – from 1 per cent to 10 per cent).

Impairment of financial assets

Museums Victoria records the allowance for expected credit loss for the relevant financial instruments, applying AASB 9's *Expected Credit Loss* approach. Subject to AASB 9 impairment assessment includes the Museums Victoria's contractual receivables and statutory receivables.

Contractual receivables at amortised cost

Museums Victoria applies AASB 9 simplified approach for all contractual receivables to measure expected credit losses using a lifetime expected loss allowance based on the assumptions about the risk of default and expected loss rates. Museums Victoria has grouped contractual receivables on shared credit risk characteristics and days past due and selected the expected credit loss rate based on Museums Victoria's history, existing market conditions, as well as forward-looking estimates at the end of the financial year.

Credit loss allowance is classified as other economic flows in the net result. Contractual receivables are written off when there is no reasonable expectation of recovery, and impairment losses are classified as a transaction expense. Subsequent recoveries of amounts previously written off are credited against the same line item.

Statutory receivables at amortised cost

The statutory receivables is considered to have low credit risk, taking into account the counterparty's credit rating, risk of default and capacity to meet contractual cash flow obligations in the near term. As a result, the loss allowance recognised for these financial assets during the period was limited to 12 months expected losses. No loss allowance has been recognised.

5.2 Payables

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Contractual		
Trade creditors	1,442	651
Other payables	6,588	7,975
Unearned income	2,123	4,001
Accrued salaries	1,039	7,846
Statutory		
Payroll tax	364	360
Total payables	**11,556**	**20,833**
Represented by:		
Current payables	11,556	20,833

Payables consist of:

Contractual payables: Classified as financial instruments and measured at amortised cost. Accounts payable represent liabilities for goods and services provided to Museums Victoria before the end of the financial year and which are unpaid. These amounts are unsecured and usually paid within 30 days following the month of recognition. Unearned revenue comprises Royal Exhibition Building events income and the deferral of membership revenue.

Statutory payables: Recognised and measured similarly to contractual payables, but not classified as financial instruments and not included in the category of financial liabilities at amortised cost, because they do not arise from contracts.

5.3 Advance from Victorian Government

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Advance from Victorian Government	**1,214**	**2,174**
Represented by:		
Current advance	284	959
Non-current advance	930	1,215

These are unsecured loans which bear no interest. The term of a loan is generally agreed by the Minister at the time the advance was provided.

Creative Victoria provided an advance for the Energy Management Program (EMP) to reduce utility costs and carbon emissions ($0.417 million remaining as at 30 June 2026). The portion of EMP advance that is not payable in the next financial year has been reflected as a non-current advance above.

Department of Treasury and Finance provided an advance to acquire the Triceratops fossil ($0.797 million remaining as at 30 June 2026). $0.100 million was repaid in the 2026 financial year.

The interest free advances have been valued according to AASB 1058 *Income of Not-for-Profit Entities*, where the value is recognised at present value using the effective interest method, with the difference recognised as a gain on receipt of an interest-free loan. The gain is recognised in the comprehensive operating statement. The interest rate used in determining the present value of the advance is the Treasury Corporation of Victoria (TCV) yield rate as at 30 June 2026.

6. How we financed our operations

Introduction

This section provides information on sources of finance used by Museums Victoria during its operations.

Structure

6.1 Cash and deposits

6.2 Leases

6.3 Commitments for expenditure

6.1 Cash and deposits

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Cash at call deposits	12,880	11,091
Cash	24,065	18,548
Total cash and deposits	**36,945**	**29,639**

Cash and deposits, including cash equivalents, comprise cash on hand and cash at bank. Museums Victoria's bank accounts are held in the Central Banking System (CBS) under the *Standing Directions 2018*. These balances represent a combination of cash funds and restricted/tied cash funds set aside in special-purpose reserves and trusts.

6.2 Leases

Museums Victoria leasing activities

Museums Victoria leases various IT equipment and motor vehicles. The lease contracts are typically made for fixed periods of 3-5 years, with an option to renew the lease after that date.

6.2.1 Right-of-use Assets

Leases of IT equipment that are under $10,000 are considered low-value items. Museums Victoria has elected not to recognise right-of-use assets and lease liabilities for these leases.

6.2.2 Expense recognised for short-term leases and leases of low-value assets

The following amounts are recognised as expense relating to short-term leases and leases of low-value assets:

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Expenses relating to leases of low-value assets	1,282	757
Total amount recognised as expense	**1,282**	**757**

Museums Victoria has elected to account for short-term leases and leases of low-value assets using the practical expedients. Instead of recognising a right-of-use asset and lease liability, the payments in relation to these are recognised as an expense in profit or loss included in "operating expenses" (see note 3.3) on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

6.2.3 Recognition and measurement of leases as a lessee

For any new contracts entered into, Museums Victoria considers whether a contract is, or contains a lease. A lease is defined as 'a contract, or part of a contract, that conveys the right to use an asset (the underlying asset) for a period of time in exchange for consideration'. To apply this definition, Museums Victoria assesses whether the contract meets three key evaluations:

- Whether the contract contains an identified asset, which is either explicitly identified in the contract or implicitly specified by being identified at the time the asset is made available to Museums Victoria and for which the supplier does not have substantive substitution rights;
- Whether Museums Victoria has the right to obtain substantially all of the economic benefits from use of the identified asset throughout the period of use, considering its rights within the defined scope of the contract and Museums Victoria has the right to direct the use of the identified asset throughout the period of use; and
- Whether Museums Victoria has the right to take decisions in respect of 'how and for what purpose' the asset is used throughout the period of use.

Lease Liability – initial measurement

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments unpaid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease if that rate is readily determinable or Museums Victoria incremental borrowing rate.

Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability comprise the following:

- fixed payments (including in-substance fixed payments);
- variable payments based on an index or rate, initially measured using the index or rate as at the commencement date;
- amounts expected to be payable under a residual value guarantee; and
- payments arising from purchase and termination options reasonably certain to be exercised.

Lease Liability – subsequent measurement

Subsequent to initial measurement, the liability will be reduced for payments made and increased for interest. It is remeasured to reflect any reassessment or modification, or if there are changes in-substance fixed payments.

When the lease liability is remeasured, the corresponding adjustment is reflected in the right-of-use asset, or profit and loss if the right of use asset is already reduced to zero.

Presentation of right-of-use assets and lease liabilities

Museums Victoria presents right-of-use assets as 'property plant equipment'. Lease liabilities are presented as 'leases' in the balance sheet. Note that leases are also reported in the disclosure of PPE (note 4.1) and Leases (note 6.2).

Future lease payments

	Minimum future lease payments[i]	
	2026 $'000	**2025 $'000**
Leases are payable as follows:		
Not longer than 1 year	1,057	836
Longer than 1 year but not longer than 5 years	1,351	1,608
Minimum lease payments	**2,408**	**2,444**
Less future finance charges	(171)	(184)
Present value of minimum lease payments	**2,237**	**2,260**

i. Minimum future lease payments include the aggregate of all base payments and any guaranteed residual.

6.3 Commitments for expenditure

Commitments for future expenditure include operating and capital commitments arising from contracts. These commitments are recorded below at their nominal value and inclusive of GST. These future expenditures cease to be disclosed as commitments once the related liabilities are recognised in the balance sheet.

6.3.1 Total commitments payable

Nominal amounts 2026	**Less than 1 year $'000**	**1 – 5 years $'000**	**5+ years $'000**	**Total $'000**
Capital expenditure commitments	385	30	-	415
Low-value and other lease commitments	284	170	-	454
Operating expenditure commitments	9,414	20,331	-	29,745
Total commitments (inclusive of GST)	**10,083**	**20,531**	**-**	**30,614**
Less GST recoverable				2,783
Total commitments (exclusive of GST)				**27,831**

Nominal amounts 2025	**Less than 1 year $'000**	**1 – 5 years $'000**	**5+ years $'000**	**Total $'000**
Capital expenditure commitments	1,352	611	-	1,963
Low-value and other lease commitments	379	208	-	587
Operating expenditure commitments	5,977	1,658	-	7,635
Total commitments (inclusive of GST)	**7,708**	**2,477**	**-**	**10,185**
Less GST recoverable				926
Total commitments (exclusive of GST)				**9,259**

Commitments increased mainly due to higher operating expenditure commitments driven by a new facilities services contract offset by lower capital expenditure commitments from contracts.

7. Financial instruments, contingencies and valuation judgements

Introduction

It is often necessary for Museums Victoria to make judgements and estimates associated with recognition and measurement of items in the financial statements. This section sets out financial instrument specific information, as well as those items that are contingent in nature or require a higher level of judgement to be applied, which for Museums Victoria related mainly to fair value determination.

Structure

7.1 Financial instruments specific disclosures

7.2 Contingent assets and contingent liabilities

7.3 Fair value determination

7.1 Financial instruments specific disclosures

Introduction

As a whole, Museums Victoria's financial risk management program seeks to manage financial risks and the associated volatility of its financial performance.

The main purpose of holding financial instruments is to prudentially manage Museums Victoria's financial risks within the government policy parameters.

Categories of financial assets

Financial assets at amortised cost

Financial assets are measured at amortised costs if both of the following criteria are met and the assets are not designated as fair value through net result:

- the assets are held by Museums Victoria to collect the contractual cash flows, and
- the assets' contractual terms give rise to cash flows that are solely payments of principal and interest.

These assets are initially recognised at fair value plus any directly attributable transaction costs and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method less any impairment.

Museums Victoria recognises the following assets in this category:

- cash and deposits; and
- receivables (excluding statutory receivables).

Categories of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities at amortised cost

Financial liabilities at amortised cost are initially recognised on the date they originated. They are initially measured at fair value plus any directly attributable transaction costs. After initial recognition, these financial instruments are measured at amortised cost, with any difference between the initially recognised amount and the redemption value being recognised in profit and loss over the period of the interest-bearing liability, using the effective interest rate method.

Museums Victoria recognises the following liabilities in this category:

- payables (excluding statutory payables);
- lease liabilities; and
- advance from Victorian Government.

7.1.1 Financial instruments – Net gain/(loss) on financial instruments by category

$ '000

2026	Carrying amount	Net gain/ (loss)	Total interest income / (expense)	Fee income / (expense)	Impairment loss
Financial assets at amortised cost					
Cash and deposits	36,945	-	1,539	-	-
Trade receivables[i]	1,538	-	-	-	5
Total financial assets at amortised cost	**38,483**	**-**	**1,539**	**-**	**5**
Financial liabilities at amortised cost					
Trade payables[i]	8,030	-	-	-	-
Advance from Victorian Government	1,214	-	(61)	-	-
Lease liabilities	2,237	-	(123)	-	-
Total financial liabilities at amortised cost	**11,481**	**-**	**(184)**	**-**	**-**

i. The total amounts disclosed here exclude statutory amounts (e.g. amounts owing from Victorian Government and GST input tax credit recoverable).

$ '000

2025	Carrying amount	Net gain/ (loss)	Total interest income / (expense)	Fee income / (expense)	Impairment loss
Financial assets at amortised cost					
Cash and deposits	29,639	-	1,489	-	-
Trade receivables[i]	1,555	-	-	-	(11)
Total financial assets at amortised cost	**31,194**	**-**	**1,489**	**-**	**(11)**
Financial liabilities at amortised cost					
Trade payables[i]	8,626	-	-	-	-
Advance from Victorian Government	2,174	-	(84)	-	-
Lease liabilities	2,260	-	(102)	-	-
Total financial liabilities at amortised cost	**13,060**	**-**	**(186)**	**-**	**-**

i. The total amounts disclosed here exclude statutory amounts (e.g. amounts owing from Victorian Government and GST input tax credit recoverable).

7.2 Contingent assets and contingent liabilities

Contingent assets and contingent liabilities are not recognised in the balance sheet but are disclosed, and if quantifiable, are measured at nominal value.

Contingent assets and liabilities are presented inclusive of GST receivable or payable, respectively.

Contingent assets

Museums Victoria is unaware of any quantifiable or non-quantifiable contingent assets in the financial year 2025–26 (2025: Nil).

Contingent liabilities

During the year, the matter giving rise to the contingent liability disclosed in the 2024–25 financial statements was finalised and no further obligations remain. Museums Victoria is unaware of any quantifiable or non-quantifiable contingent liabilities in the financial year 2025–26.

7.3 Fair value determination

This section sets out information on how Museums Victoria determined fair value for financial reporting purposes. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date.

The following assets and liabilities are carried at fair value:

- land, buildings, plant, equipment, exhibitions and collections, with the exception of right-of-use assets arising under AASB 16, which are measured using the cost model.

Museums Victoria determines the policies and procedures for determining fair values for both financial and non-financial assets and liabilities as required.

Fair value hierarchy

In determining fair values, several inputs are used. To increase consistency and comparability in the financial statements, these inputs are categorised into three levels, also known as the fair value hierarchy. The levels are as follows:

- Level 1 – quoted (unadjusted) market prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities;
- Level 2 – valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is directly or indirectly observable; and
- Level 3 – valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is unobservable.

Museums Victoria determines whether transfers have occurred between levels in the hierarchy by reassessing categorisation (based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement as a whole) at the end of each reporting period.

How this section is structured

For those assets and liabilities for which fair values are determined, the following disclosures are provided:

- valuation techniques
- details of significant assumptions used in the fair value determination.

7.3.1 Fair value determination: Non-financial physical assets

Valuation techniques and significant assumptions of non-financial physical assets measured at fair value

AASB 2022-10 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Fair Value Measurement of Non-Financial Assets of Not-for-Profit Public Sector Entities* amended AASB 13 *Fair Value Measurement* by adding Appendix F *Australian implementation guidance for not-for-profit public sector entities*. Appendix F explains and illustrates the application of the principles in AASB 13 on developing unobservable inputs and the application of the cost approach. These clarifications are mandatorily applicable annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2024. FRD 103 permits Victorian public sector entities to apply Appendix F of AASB 13 prospectively in its scheduled formal revaluation or interim revaluation process (whichever is earlier).

The formal full independent valuation of all Museums Victoria's non-financial physical assets was performed by Australian Valuations in 2026. The formal full independent valuation of all Museums Victoria's land and building assets was performed by VGV (Valuer-General Victoria) in 2026. Museums Victoria applied AASB 2022-10, including Appendix F of AASB 13 and the requirements of FRD 103 prospectively as part of the current scheduled revaluation process. The material increase of $335 million in the property, plant, equipment, exhibitions and collections balance and physical asset revaluation surplus reflects the net adjustment arising from asset revaluations during the current period after considering asset movements, depreciation, disposals, additions, and other valuation-related factors.

For all assets measured at fair value, Museums Victoria considers the current use is the highest and best use.

Museums Victoria monitored conditions and events up to the date of signing the financial report for any indications of a decline in the value of Land, Buildings and Collections assets that may need to be adjusted or disclosed in the financial statements. If information was made available post-period end, which impacted the assumptions made in its impairment analysis, Museums Victoria considered whether those assumptions could be reasonably expected to be made at period end. The carrying value of non-financial physical assets is equal to the fair value.

Land valuation

Non-specialised land (at the Merri-bek site) is valued using the market approach, whereby assets are compared to recent comparable sales or sales of comparable assets that are considered to have nominal value.

Valuer-General Victoria performed an independent valuation to determine fair value using the market approach. Valuation of the non-specialised land was determined by analysing comparable sales and considering factors such as land size, location, zoning and development potential. From this analysis, an appropriate rate per square metre has been applied to the land. The effective date of the valuation was 30 June 2026. To the extent that non-specialised land does not contain significant, unobservable adjustments, this asset is classified as Level 2 under the market approach.

Specialised land is valued using the market approach adjusted for the community service obligation (CSO) to reflect the specialised nature of the land being valued.

The CSO adjustment reflects the valuer's assessment of the impact of restrictions associated with an asset to the extent that it is equally applicable to market participants. This approach is in light of the highest and best use consideration required for fair value measurement. It considers the use of the physically possible asset, legally permissible and financially feasible. As adjustments of CSO (20%-30%) are regarded as significant unobservable inputs, specialised land would be classified as Level 3 assets.

Since the 2021 financial year, Museums Victoria performed annual fair value assessments on land using the Victorian Valuer General's indices and under Financial policy and disclosure FRD103 issued by the Assistant Treasurer. Based on Museums Victoria's 2026 full and comprehensive assessment, there was a 13.34% decrease in land valuation since the last independent valuation in 2021. This decrease is mainly due to lower land prices and observable market evidence in all sites, notably Melbourne Museum, Immigration Museum, and the Royal Exhibition Building, adjusted for CSO. When compared with the carrying amount of 30 June 2025, there was a similar net decrease in value between 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026. This is fully supported by the government's guidance materials (FRD 103 *Non-financial physical assets*).

Building valuation

Buildings are valued under a current replacement cost method adjusted for the associated depreciation.

Since the last comprehensive and independent valuation in the 2021 financial year, Museums Victoria has performed annual fair value assessments on buildings under financial policy and disclosure FRD 103 issued by the Minister for Finance.

Based on Museums Victoria's recent full or comprehensive assessment by the Victorian Valuer-General in 2026 financial year, there was a 23.71% increase in the current replacement cost between the 2021 and 2026 comprehensive valuations. Movement in values was primarily driven by increases in the valuation of the current replacement costs, asset additions during the period, and changes to the estimated useful lives of the buildings in the Melbourne Museum and the Royal Exhibition Building. However, these increases in current replacement costs were offset by a lower proportion of the remaining useful life of the buildings, and a revision to the estimated building useful lives. Following the assessment there was a revision to the remaining useful life of the buildings from 17–109 years to 3–127 years.

Plant and equipment is held at fair value, which has been determined using the current replacement cost method. As depreciation adjustments are considered significant, unobservable inputs in nature, Plant and Equipment is classified as Level 3 fair value measurements. There were no material movements in Plant and Equipment in the 2026 financial year.

Exhibitions are held at fair value, which has been determined using the current replacement cost method.

The last comprehensive and independent valuation was performed in 2025 financial year. Based on Museums Victoria's recent full or comprehensive assessment by Australian Valuations in 2026 financial year, there was a 97.31% increase in the carrying amount between 2025 and 2026 comprehensive valuations. Movement in values was primarily driven by increases in the valuation of the current replacement costs in the Melbourne Museum and Scienceworks exhibitions and additions during the current period. Additionally, following the assessment there was a revision to the remaining useful life of the exhibitions from 1–18 years to 1–14 years.

Collections valuation

Museums Victoria is required to undertake a comprehensive revaluation of the State Collection and Library (Collections) every five years under FRD 103 *Non-financial physical assets*. The valuation scope, methodologies, and calculations applied to the Collections' valuation were examined as meeting the relevant Australian Accounting Standards and FRD 103. The Collections were independently valued by Australian Valuations in 2026.

Museums Victoria's Collection comprises more than 15.4 million individual items and specimens across the three main collection areas of First Peoples, History and Technology, and Natural Sciences, together with the Library Collection. As at 30 June 2026, the Collections comprise approximately 3.5 million Collection Registration Units (CRUs).

For the year ended 30 June 2026, fair value assessments were performed on an individual basis for high value Collection items (State Collection items with values of $50,000 or greater and Library Collection items with values of $4,000 or greater) and on a stratified multi-stage sampling basis for lower value Collection items. All valuation techniques have been reviewed to ensure consistency with the requirements of AASB 13 *Fair Value Measurement*.

Due to the Collection's size and diversity, the majority of the Collection was valued using a stratified multi-stage sampling methodology. The sampling methodology involves subdividing the Collection into representative strata for valuation purposes and applying values to randomly generated samples within each sub-collection. This stratification reduces sampling variability and improves the reliability of the valuation outcome. Items determined to be of high value were valued individually. Establishing a fair value for high value items requires expert professional judgement and considers factors including condition, age, rarity, size, provenance and relevant market evidence. Valuation outcomes are assessed for reasonableness against market data, academic research and comparable transactions where available.

The process of extrapolating valuation results from the sampled low value items across the relevant collection populations is considered a significant unobservable input to the valuation. This is demonstrated through the reported relative standard errors (RSEs) for each stratum, which measure the variability of the valuation estimate relative to the sampled population. As this statistical approach relies on sampling techniques, averaging and professional judgement, all sample-based valuations are considered Level 3 fair value measurements.

In 2025–26, Australian Valuations was engaged to undertake a comprehensive independent fair value assessment of Museums Victoria's Collection as at 30 June 2026. The valuation adopted a combination of market and cost (recollection) approaches, consistent with the Council of Australasian Museum Directors (CAMD) Collections Valuation Framework and AASB 13.

As at 30 June 2026, the Collection has an adopted fair value of $1,234,392,000 (unrounded value: $1,234,391,565) with an overall relative standard error (RSE) of 1.8%. The fair value of the Collection comprises: First Peoples ($205,318,019), History and Technology ($202,239,535), Zoology ($552,451,330), Palaeontology ($207,066,154), Geosciences ($52,988,969) and Library ($14,327,558).

The fair value assessment of Museums Victoria's Collection indicated a 38.11% increase in value between the 2021 and 2026 comprehensive valuations. Movement in value was primarily due to increases in the Natural Sciences Collection and the Society and Technology Collections. The increase is primarily attributable to growth in the Natural Sciences collections, including updated recollection cost inputs and type specimen valuations, together with increases across the First Peoples and History and Technology collections arising from market-based valuation outcomes and changes in collection composition.

There were no changes in valuation techniques throughout the period to 30 June 2026.

For all assets measured at fair value, the current use is considered the highest and best use.

Description of significant unobservable inputs to Level 3 valuation

2026	Valuation technique	Significant unobservable inputs	Range (weighted average)
Specialised land	Market approach	Community service obligation (CSO) adjustment (20% – 30%)	20% – 30% (25%)
		Adopted rate per square metre	$500 – $10,000/sqm ($5,250/sqm)
Specialised buildings	Current replacement cost	Direct cost per square metre	$3,500 – $12,000/sqm ($7,750/sqm)
		Useful life of specialised buildings	3 – 127 years
Plant and Equipment	Current replacement cost	Cost per unit	$34 – $826,274
		Useful life of plant, equipment and vehicles	1 – 50 years
Exhibitions	Current replacement cost	Cost per unit	$968/m^2 – $10,200/m^2 ($5,584/m^2)
		Useful life of exhibitions	1 – 14 years
Collections	Market and recollection cost approach	Significant professional judgement by the valuation expert	RSE 1.2% – 9.3% (5.25%)
		Statistical calculation based on extrapolation of sample valuations	Target RSE 5% – 10% (7.5%)

Significant unobservable inputs have remained unchanged since June 2025.

8. Other Disclosures

Introduction

This section includes additional material disclosures required by accounting standards or otherwise, for the understanding of this financial report.

Structure

8.1 Ex gratia expenses

8.2 Responsible persons

8.3 Remuneration of executives

8.4 Related parties

8.5 Remuneration of auditors

8.6 Subsequent events

8.7 Changes in accounting policy

8.1 Ex gratia expenses

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Service Recognition[i]	-	65
Total ex gratia expenses[ii]	**-**	**65**

i. Payment made in recognition of employee service.

ii. Ex-gratia expenses mean the voluntary payment of money or other non-monetary benefit (e.g. a write off) that is not made either to acquire goods, services or other benefits for the entity or to meet a legal liability, or to settle or resolve a possible legal liability or claim against the entity. Ex-gratia expenses are included in employee benefit expenses (Note 3.2).

8.2 Responsible persons

In accordance with the Ministerial Directions issued by the Minister for Finance under the *Financial Management Act 1994* (FMA), the following disclosures are made regarding responsible persons for the reporting period.

Members of the Board act in an honorary capacity.

Names

The following disclosures are made regarding responsible persons for the reporting period:		
Ms Vicki Ward MP	Minister for Creative Industries	21 April 2026 – 30 June 2026
The Hon Colin Brooks	Minister for Creative Industries	1 July 2025 – 20 April 2026
Ms Lynley Crosswell	Chief Executive Officer and Director	1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026
Board Members:		
Ms Mary Stuart (President)		1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026
Mr Jon Faine AM		1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026
Professor Bronwyn Fox AO		1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026
Mr Tim Goodwin		1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026
Ms Clare Kennedy		1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026
Mr Dale McKee		1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026
Ms Linda Bardo Nicholls AO		1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026
Mr Peter Tullin		1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026
Ms Cassy Liberman		19 May 2026 - 30 June 2026

Remuneration

Amounts relating to the Ministers are reported in the financial statements of the State's Annual Financial Report.

The remuneration of the Accountable Officer, who is not a Member of the Board, during the reporting period, is in the range of $510,000 – $519,000 ($490,000 – $499,000 in 2024–25).

8.3 Remuneration of executives

The number of senior executive service members, other than Ministers and accountable officers, and their total remuneration during the reporting period are shown in the table below. Total annualised employee equivalents provide a measure of full-time equivalent executive officers over the reporting period.

Remuneration comprises employee benefits (as defined in AASB 119 *Employee Benefits*) in all forms of consideration paid, payable or provided by the entity, or on behalf of the entity, in exchange for services rendered. Accordingly, remuneration is determined on an accrual basis.

Several factors affected total remuneration payable to executives over the year. A number of employment contracts were completed and renegotiated and a number of senior executive service members retired, resigned or were retrenched in the past year.

8.3.1 Remuneration of executive

(includes Key Management Personnel disclosed in Note 8.4.1)

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Total remuneration	**2,306**	**2,161**
Total number of executives[i]	**10**	**10**
Total annualised employee equivalent[ii]	**8**	**8**

i. The total number of executive officers includes persons who meet the definition of Key Management Personnel (KMP) of the entity under AASB 124 *Related Party Disclosures* and are also reported within the related parties note disclosure (note 8.4.1).

ii. Annualised employee equivalent is based on the time fraction worked over the reporting period. There were no employees acting in vacant executive officer positions during this reporting period. While the Accountable Officer or Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is a Key Management Personnel, they are excluded from the disclosure of remuneration of executives FRD 21 *Disclosures of responsible persons and executive officers in the financial report*.

8.4 Related parties

Museums Board of Victoria is a wholly owned and controlled entity of the State of Victoria.

Key management personnel of the Museums Board of Victoria include the Portfolio Minister, Board members and members of the Executive Team:

Key Management Personnel	Position Title	Period
Ms Vicki Ward MP	Minister for Creative Industries	21 April 2026 – 30 June 2026
The Hon Colin Brooks	Minister for Creative Industries	1 July 2025 – 20 April 2026
Ms Lynley Crosswell	Chief Executive Officer and Director	1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026
Ms Mary Stuart	Board Member and President	1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026
Mr Jon Faine AM	Board Member	1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026
Professor Bronwyn Fox AO	Board Member	1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026
Mr Tim Goodwin	Board Member	1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026
Ms Clare Kennedy	Board Member	1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026
Mr Dale McKee	Board Member	1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026
Ms Linda Bardo Nicholls AO	Board Member	1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026
Mr Peter Tullin	Board Member	1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026
Ms Cassy Liberman	Board Member	19 May 2026 – 30 June 2026
Mr Sean Royal	Chief Operating Officer	1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026
Mr Sean Royal	Chief Executive Officer & Director (Acting)	5 January 2026 – 11 January 2026
Ms Georgina Cox	Chief Financial Officer / Director Corporate Services	11 January 2026 – 30 June 2026
Dr Nurin Veis	Director Museums Victoria Research Institute	1 July 2025 – 31 March 2026
Dr Jane Melville AM	Director Museums Victoria Research Institute (Acting)	4 May 2026 – 30 June 2026
Dr Michelle Stevenson	Director Museums Victoria Research Institute (Acting)	1 July 2025 – 1 August 2025
Dr Michelle Stevenson	Director Museums Victoria Research Institute (Acting)	17 November 2025 – 12 January 2026
Dr Michelle Stevenson	Director Museums Victoria Research Institute (Acting)	23 February 2026 – 1 May 2026
Mr Dermot Henry	Director Museums Victoria Research Institute (Acting)	29 October 2025 – 14 November 2025
Mr Dermot Henry	Director Museums Victoria Research Institute (Acting)	12 January 2026 – 20 February 2026
Mr Tim Rolfe	Director Exhibitions and Experiences	1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026
Mr Tim Rolfe	Chief Executive Officer & Director (Acting)	28 July 2025 – 4 August 2025
Mr Tim Rolfe	Chief Executive Officer & Director (Acting)	19 January 2026 – 30 January 2026
Ms Natalene Muscat	Director Communications, Stakeholder and Visitor Engagement	1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026
Dr Rod Macneil	Director Governance and Strategic Planning	1 July 2025 – 28 November 2025
Ms Romina Calabro	Director Development and Commercial	1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026

Key Management Personnel	Position Title	Period
Mr Nick Marchand	Director Global Engagement	1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026
Ms Rebecca Northeast	Director Corporate Services (Acting)	1 July 2025 – 10 January 2026
Ms Simone Richardson	Chief Financial Officer (Acting)	1 July 2025 – 4 November 2025
Ms Simone Richardson	Director Corporate Services (Acting)	5 November 2025 – 10 January 2026

8.4.1 Remuneration of key management personnel

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Total remuneration[i]	**2,821**	**2,661**

i. Note that KMPs are also reported in the disclosure of remuneration of executive officers (note 8.3.1) and responsible persons (note 8.2).

8.4.2 Related party transactions

Business transactions were carried out with the following related party entities for Key Management Personnel. All transactions were undertaken in the ordinary course of business and were at arm's length and on normal commercial terms.

	2026		2025		KMP	Relationship	Nature of Transactions
	Revenue $'000	Expenditure $'000	Revenue $'000	Expenditure $'000			
University of New South Wales	57	-	54	4	Professor Bronwyn Fox AO, Board Member	Deputy Vice Chancellor Research and Enterprise	Publication Sales
TOTAL	**57**	**-**	**54**	**4**			

As at 30 June 2026, there were no amounts outstanding to Museums Victoria with related parties (2025: Nil).

All other transactions with KMP and their related parties have not been considered material for disclosure. In this context, transactions are only disclosed when they are considered necessary to draw attention to the possibility that Museums Victoria's financial position and profit or loss may have been affected by the existence of related parties, and by transactions and outstanding balances, including commitments, with such parties.

8.4.3 Significant transactions with government-related entities

Museums Victoria received funding from and made payments to government-related entities below. All transactions were undertaken in the ordinary course of business and were at arm's length and on normal commercial terms.

Government-related entity	Transactions	2026 ($'000)
Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions	2025–26 Operating Funding	73,612
Department of Education and Training	Strategic Partnership, Scienceworks Star 6 Funding	587
Department of Education and Training	Early Childhood STEM Professional Learning	195
Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions	Workforce Transition	4,338
Department of Treasury and Finance	Interest Income, Central Banking System arrangement	1,539
Victorian Managed Insurance Authority	Insurance Recoup	2,565
Victorian Managed Insurance Authority	General & specialised insurance	(1,213)
Department of Treasury and Finance	Finance Lease - Vicfleet	(254)
Various Government Departments	Other Minor Transactions[i]	97

i. Other minor transactions are transactions less than $100,000. These transactions relate to government grants offset by finance lease interest on motor vehicles.

Government-related entity	Transactions	2025 ($'000)
Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions	2024–25 Operating Funding	42,991
Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions	CV Grant Allocation	34,095
Department of Education and Training	Strategic Partnership Program	591
Department of Education and Training	Early Childhood STEM Professional Learning	188
Visit Victoria	*LEGO® Star Wars™: The Exhibition*	950
Department of Treasury and Finance	Interest Income, Central Banking System arrangement	1,489
Victorian Managed Insurance Authority	Insurance settlement	1,389
Victorian Managed Insurance Authority	General & specialised insurance	(1,076)
Department of Treasury and Finance	Finance Lease - Vicfleet	(290)
Various Government Departments	Other minor transactions[i]	335

i. Other minor transactions are transactions less than $100,000. These transactions relate to government grants offset by finance lease interest on motor vehicles.

Below are the amounts outstanding to and (by) Museums Victoria with government-related entities.

	Outstanding To/(By)	
Government-related Entity	**2026 ($'000)**	**2025 ($'000)**
Department of Transport & Planning	55	-
Owing to other Government-related entity	49	66
Total Outstanding To Museums Victoria	**104**	**66**
Department of Treasury and Finance	(1,339)	(1,490)
Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions	(360)	(1,239)
Owing by other Government-related entity	(163)	(163)
Total Outstanding By Museums Victoria	**(1,862)**	**(2,892)**
Net Outstanding	**(1,758)**	**(2,826)**

8.5 Remuneration of auditors

	2026 $'000	**2025 $'000**
Victorian Auditor-General's Office		
Audit of the financial statement	148	105
Total remuneration of auditors	**148**	**105**

8.6 Subsequent events

Museums Victoria is unaware of any other material events after the reporting date that would affect these financial statements.

8.7 Changes in accounting policy

8.7.1 Right-of-use assets

Museums Victoria has made a change in accounting policy to change the measurement basis from the revaluation model to the cost model for the subsequent measurement of right-of-use assets arising from market leases, in accordance with the updated requirements under FRD 104.

Previously, Museums Victoria had measured all right-of-use assets arising from market leases using the revaluation model under AASB 13. Following the change in accounting policy, Museums Victoria will measure all right-of-use assets using the cost model. Right-of-use assets measured using the cost model are held at cost less accumulated depreciation and impairment and any adjustments for remeasurement of lease liability. Periodic revaluations are not required; however, the cost model requires annual impairment assessments in accordance with AASB 136.

Upon adoption of the cost model, Museums Victoria has applied a modified retrospective approach. The approach takes the right-of-use asset's carrying amounts recorded under the revaluation model as at 30 June 2025 as the right-of-use asset's opening balances on application of the cost model.

Accordingly, the comparative information presented is not restated and is reported at the previously determined fair value.

Impacts on financial statements

On transition to the cost model, there was no impact on Museums Victoria's financial statements. No impairment was identified by Museums Victoria for the right-of-use asset held as at 30 June 2026.

Disclosure Index

The Museums Victoria annual report is prepared in accordance with all relevant Victorian legislation and pronouncements. This index has been prepared to facilitate identification of the Museums Board of Victoria's compliance with statutory disclosure requirements.

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Note:
(a) References to FRDs have been removed from the Disclosure Index if the specific FRDs do not contain requirements that are in the nature of disclosure.

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Note:
References to FRDs have been removed from the Disclosure Index if the specific FRDs do not contain requirements that are in the nature of disclosure.

Acknowledgements

Museums Victoria gratefully acknowledges the generous support, collaboration and partnership of the many individuals, organisations and communities who contributed to our work during 2025–26. Their commitment enables us to deliver impactful programs, exhibitions and experiences for all Victorians.

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LEGO

Museo Nazionale Romano

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AIG

Ecosa

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Inspiring Victoria

Orygen Youth Health

Pronto Concrete

Taubmans

Viking

Program, Event and Cultural Partners

CO.AS.IT

Consulate General of Italy, Melbourne

The Italian Cultural Institute of Melbourne

Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry Australia (Vic & Tas)

Headspace

Kids' Own Publishing

Robogals

Education and Research Partners

Atlas of Living Australia

Australian Academy of Science

Australian Business and Community Network

Australian Research Council

Bush Blitz

CSIRO

Deakin University

German Lost Art Foundation

Monash University

Parks Australia

RMIT University

The University of Melbourne

Victorian Catholic Education Authority

Zoological Parks and Gardens Board (trading as Zoos Victoria)

Glossary

Australian Research Council (ARC): A national funding body for research and innovation in Australia, supporting projects across various disciplines.

Biodiversity: The variety of all life on Earth.

Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO): The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, Australia's national science agency.

Culture Makers Program: An educational initiative supported by the Scanlon Foundation, focusing on cultural reclamation and inclusion.

Deaccessioning: The process of removing an object or piece from a museum's collection.

Indigenous Repatriation Program: The Indigenous Repatriation Program – Museum Grants supports the return of Australian First Nations peoples' ancestral remains (ancestors) and secret sacred objects (objects) held in the collections of eight major Australian museums to their Traditional Custodians. The eight eligible major museums are: Australian Museum, National Museum of Australia, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Museums Victoria, Queensland Museum, South Australian Museum, Tasmanian Museum and Gallery and Western Australian Museum.

ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance): Referenced in sustainability planning. Refers to a set of standards used to measure an organisation's societal and environmental impact.

FSC certified: Product certification by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), an international non-profit organisation dedicated to promoting responsible forest management.

IMagine: A free, community day at the Immigration Museum inviting communities to contribute to the museum's future masterplan.

International Council of Museums (ICOM): The International Council of Museums is a global organisation of museums and museum professionals committed to the promotion and protection of cultural heritage.

Learning Lab: An immersive digital space at Melbourne Museum for educational programs connecting museum collections with digital technologies.

Melbourne Planetarium: The Melbourne Planetarium at Scienceworks features a 16m domed ceiling, reclining seats and a full-dome video projection system with surround sound, offering astronomical shows and events.

***Museums Act 1983*:** Legislation that establishes the governance framework for Museums Victoria.

Museums Board of Victoria (the Board): A statutory body established under the *Museums Act 1983*, responsible for the governance and management of Museums Victoria.

NAIDOC Week: National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week is an annual celebration of the history, culture, and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Nocturnal: Museum After Dark: A series of evening events at Melbourne Museum featuring talks, tours, food, drinks and music for adults.

***PRISM*:** Museums Victoria's open-access humanities journal produced by the Research Institute.

Research Institute: The research arm of Museums Victoria, leading innovative research and maintaining the State Collection.

State Collection: The State Collection of Victoria encompasses more than 15 million items and is an invaluable record of Victoria's environmental and cultural history.

STEM: Acronym for Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths, focusing on education and literacy in these subjects.

Taxonomy: The science of classifying organisms.

Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council (VAHC): The Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council is an independent statutory body that represents the Aboriginal community in Victoria on cultural heritage matters.

Victorian Public Sector employment principles and standards: Principles ensuring fair and merit-based employment practices, fostering career opportunities and providing avenues for resolving workplace issues. The standards guide the development of employment processes.

Victorian Public Sector Values: Values outlined in the *Public Administration Act 2004*, including responsiveness, integrity, impartiality, accountability, respect, leadership and human rights.

Yulendj Advisory Group: A collective of Elders and community representatives from across Victoria. Yulendj collaborate with Museums Victoria to curate exhibitions and programs that represent Aboriginal culture and history.


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