

corporate plan

2022 | 2023

**national
museum
australia**

The logo graphic for National Museum Australia, consisting of a white stylized shape that resembles a lightning bolt or a speech mark pointing downwards.

introduction

The Council of the National Museum of Australia (the accountable authority) is pleased to present the 2022–23 Corporate Plan. The plan covers the reporting periods 2022–23 to 2025–26, as required under paragraph 35 (1) (b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth).

The Corporate Plan is the primary planning document for the Museum and outlines the activities the Museum will undertake over the course of the current financial year and forward estimates period to achieve its purposes. Over the 4-year period covered by this plan, the Museum will continue taking its stories around the nation and overseas, extending its reach through a combination of digital products, touring exhibitions, and offsite activities and partnerships.

This year marks the final year of the Strategic Plan 2018–2022. A new Strategic Plan, to be finalised later in 2022, will articulate the Museum’s vision for the following 4-year period, enabling the Museum to consolidate its successes and to continue to improve in all aspects of its operations.

We look forward to presenting performance results for the year in the annual performance statements contained in the 2022–23 Annual Report.



The Hon Warwick L Smith AO LLB

Chair of Council

August 2022

our purpose

The National Museum of Australia develops and maintains the National Historical Collection for the benefit of the nation and brings to life the rich and diverse stories of Australia. Central to its role as a national institution is the focus on meaningful engagement with all Australians in the telling of their stories, and a particular commitment to the history and cultures of the First Australians. We achieve this by caring for and strengthening the collection, and by sharing the stories of Australia's people and places, and its social and natural environment, with national and international audiences.

Our functions are set out in the Museum's enabling legislation, the *National Museum of Australia Act 1980*.

strategic commitments

invest

We will invest our energy, resources and experience into shaping our presence in the life of the nation.

challenge

We will challenge ourselves and our audiences to see the world through different lenses.

connect

We will strengthen connections with our audiences, partners and supporters.

explore

We will explore our place in the world.

5 key streams

collections for the 21st century

program directions

digital futures

growing our business

brand recognition

our operating environment

The National Museum of Australia continues to embrace its role of connecting Australians to their shared histories and bringing to life the rich and diverse stories of the nation through its galleries, exhibitions, programs and digital media. Looking forward, the Museum will need to be flexible and resilient to achieve its mission and deliver programs and services in a financially sustainable way, adapting to changing visitor needs and planning for emerging risks and opportunities.

onsite visitation

Like other national collecting institutions, since 2020 the Museum has seen a downturn in onsite visitation, events and corporate and community functions. The Museum has developed its forward schedule of major exhibitions and programs to attract new and returning audiences and has seen a welcome increase in its onsite visitation in early 2022. The expectation is that onsite visitation may continue to fluctuate over the next few years as interstate and international tourism recovers.

financial sustainability and revenue

The Museum received additional sustainability funding of \$9.25 million in the 2022–23 federal Budget, which will temporarily ease the Museum's funding shortfall in the 2022–23 financial year. However, the Museum faces ongoing challenges in achieving financial sustainability as a result of structural budget issues. As onsite visitation is a key component of the Museum's ability to generate revenue, uncertainty around visitation patterns will continue to impact the Museum's own-source revenue stream. In order to support its work, the Museum will continue to seek additional funding from government and explore new opportunities to maximise revenue from sources such as commercial activities, licensing fees, and philanthropic contributions, sponsorship and grants.

touring and digital program

In recent years, the Museum has significantly expanded its touring and digital programs, and has identified opportunities to further increase audience engagement in the coming period. With a strong record of flexible and adaptable content delivery, the Museum will continue to enable audiences to connect with its collections, wherever they are.

workforce

As a small- to medium-sized APS employer with budgetary constraints, the Museum's ability to offer competitive remuneration to attract and retain staff is declining. This is particularly the case for skill sets that are in high demand, including those in the technology, finance, data and cyber security spaces. The Museum attempts to position itself as an employer of choice by offering a range of non-cash benefits and opportunities to its staff, such as flexible working arrangements and creating a positive workplace culture.

priorities and performance

The National Museum of Australia has a vital role in helping to connect Australians and their communities. In fulfilling this mission and assisting national recovery, over the next 4 years the Museum will strive to:

priority 1

Ensure Australians have a greater understanding of our shared history by collecting and sharing the unique and remarkable stories of the past and present

priority 2

Excel at telling the Australian story through innovative digital media, dynamic storytelling and world-class exhibitions

priority 3

Maximise opportunities for public engagement that respond to changing audience behaviours and needs across the country and overseas

priority 4

Focus documentation, research, preservation and digitisation programs on key areas of the National Historical Collection

priority 5

Utilise available resources to operate as efficiently as possible within the context of the Museum's legislative functions.

Where relevant, performance targets outlined in the 2021–22 Corporate Plan have been adjusted to allow for changes in the Museum's activities and available resources.

priority 1

ensure Australians have a greater understanding of our shared history by collecting and sharing stories of the past and present

outcomes:

- Make available online key objects and collections from the National Historical Collection
- Collect, document and share the stories of contemporary Australia.

key performance indicators:

Performance Criteria	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26
COLLECTION AVAILABLE ONLINE Against baseline of 63% in 2021–22	72% of the collection available online	74% of the collection available online	76% of the collection available online	78% of the collection available online

Source: EMu Collections Management system; digital analytics; delivery.

Methodology: NMA internal analysis.

ENABLE AUSTRALIANS TO SHARE THEIR STORIES OF BUSHFIRES AND COVID-19	Display stories collected via the <i>Momentous: Sharing bushfire and pandemic stories</i> website			
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Source: Digital analytics.

Methodology: NMA internal analysis.

priority 2

excel at telling the Australian story through innovative digital media, dynamic storytelling and world-class exhibitions

outcomes:

- Share Australia's and the world's stories with national audiences
- Maximise opportunities for digital engagement and embrace innovative approaches to telling the Australian story.

key performance indicators:

Performance Criteria	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26
SHARE STORIES OF THE WORLD AND AUSTRALIA'S PLACE WITHIN IT AT OUR ACTON SITE	Minimum of 3 special exhibitions	Minimum of 3 special exhibitions	Minimum of 3 special exhibitions	Minimum of 3 special exhibitions
Source and Methodology: Exhibition on display to the public at the Museum's Acton site.				
PERMANENT GALLERIES REDEVELOPMENT	Development of an overarching Permanent Galleries Plan			
Source and Methodology: Development of a Permanent Galleries Plan.				
PERMANENT GALLERY REPRESENTING THE ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY OF AUSTRALIA	Project completion and evaluation			
Source and Methodology: Project closure report and evaluation report completed.				
EDUCATION RESOURCES AND PROGRAMS	235,000 page views of Australia's Defining Moments Digital Classroom Deliver the <i>History Makers School Challenge</i>	245,000 page views of Australia's Defining Moments Digital Classroom (4% increase)	260,000 page views of Australia's Defining Moments Digital Classroom (6% increase)	275,000 page views of Australia's Defining Moments Digital Classroom (6% increase)
Source: Digital analytics; delivery. Methodology: NMA internal analysis.				

priority 3

maximise opportunities for public engagement that respond to changing audience behaviours and needs

outcomes:

- Increase visitor engagements with Museum experiences and collections
- Maximise opportunities to reach new and diverse audiences across the country and overseas.

key performance indicators:

Performance Criteria	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26
TOTAL VISITOR ENGAGEMENTS	4,251,900	3,829,700	3,829,700	3,829,700
Permanent exhibitions	250,000			
Special exhibitions	115,000			
Travelling exhibitions	245,000			
Education and public programs	5,700			
Events and functions	5,000			
Digital experiences	3,031,200			
Social media	600,000			

Source: NMA and travelling venue visitation data; digital analytics.

Methodology: NMA internal analysis.

Note: These figures take into consideration expected COVID-19 impacts. Travelling exhibitions subject to availability of government grant funding. Other activity subject to the availability of government funding.

SONGLINES: TRACKING THE SEVEN SISTERS TOURING EXHIBITION AND WALKING THROUGH A SONGLINE EXPERIENCE	Tour exhibition to 2 international venues >50,000 visits recorded across all venues	Tour exhibition to 2 international venues >50,000 visits recorded across all venues		
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Source: Delivery; exhibition visits.

Methodology: Visitation data provided by venues based on appropriate methodology for the venue; NMA internal analysis.

Note: Travelling exhibitions subject to availability of government funding.

Performance Criteria	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
GROW THE FRIENDS MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM Against a baseline of 3,013 members in 2021-22	>3,750 members (25% increase)	>4,500 members (20% increase)	>5,000 members (11% increase)	>5,400 members (8% increase)
Source: NMA membership database. Methodology: Number of members as at 30 June each year.				
TIM AND GINA FAIRFAX DISCOVERY CENTRE	Project completion and evaluation			
Source and Methodology: Project closure report and evaluation report completed.				

priority 4

focus documentation, research, preservation and digitisation programs on key areas of the National Historical Collection (NHC)

outcomes:

- Accession and digitise key objects and collections in the NHC
- Ensure the NHC is stored in appropriate conditions and continue to implement improvements to collection storage conditions and capacity
- Conduct research and provide expertise related to our purpose.

key performance indicators:

Performance Criteria	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26
TREVOR KENNEDY COLLECTION	600 objects digitised (80% of collection)	600 objects digitised (90% of collection)	100% of the collection digitised	

Source: EMu Collections Management system.

Methodology: NMA internal analysis.

NATIONAL HISTORICAL COLLECTION HELD IN STORAGE CONDITIONS THAT MEET AICCM STANDARDS	Increase % of collection stored in conditions that meet AICCM standards to >56%*	70% of the collection stored in conditions that meet AICCM standards*		
Baseline of 58% in 2020–21 and 56% in 2021–22 of collection held in conditions that meet standards				

Source and Methodology: Australian Institute for Conservation of Cultural Material (AICCM) standards, NMA internal analysis.

***Note:** Subject to the availability of government funding and approval of requested short-term storage arrangements.

PARTICIPATION IN AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL (ARC) PROJECTS	Participate in 3 ongoing ARC projects			
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Source and Methodology: NMA listed as organisation on ARC grant.

Performance Criteria	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26
REPATRIATION	Support provided for activity that contributes to the repatriation of ancestral remains and cultural materials	Support provided for activity that contributes to the repatriation of ancestral remains and cultural materials	Support provided for activity that contributes to the repatriation of ancestral remains and cultural materials	Support provided for activity that contributes to the repatriation of ancestral remains and cultural materials
	Contribute to the worldwide practice of repatriation			

Source and Methodology: Museum support provided for repatriation activity; Museum contributions to research, consultation, communication and best practice for the return of ancestral and cultural remains.

priority 5

utilise available resources to operate as efficiently as possible

outcomes:

- Increase operational efficiency through embracing technological change
- Maximise opportunities for own-source revenue
- Explore new ways of doing business.

key performance indicators:

Performance Criteria	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26
GENERATE REVENUE THROUGH DONATIONS, PHILANTHROPY AND CORPORATE SUPPORT	5% growth on 5-year average	5% growth on 5-year average	5% growth on 5-year average	5% growth on 5-year average
Source: NMA financial statements.				
Methodology: All funds raised in donations, sponsorship, and in-kind support. Does not include grants or object donations.				
GENERATE REVENUE THROUGH COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY	>50% of 5-year average	Equal to 5-year average	Growth on 5-year average	Growth on 5-year average
Source: NMA financial statements.				
Methodology: Sales of goods and services rendered, with the exception of sponsorships and donations. Does not include grants or object donations.				
‘STRETCH’ RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN	‘Stretch’ RAP launched	Report on measures from final ‘Stretch’ RAP	Report on measures from final ‘Stretch’ RAP	Report on measures from final ‘Stretch’ RAP
Source and Methodology: Reconciliation Australia, reconciliation.org.au/reconciliation-action-plans . KPIs to be developed for reporting from 2023–24.				
SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN	Undertake Year 1 activities including define and establish baseline measures in visitor and staff engagement, energy and water, materials and waste reduction, and philanthropy and partnerships	Undertake Year 2 activities	Undertake Year 3 activities	Undertake Year 4 activities
Source and Methodology: NMA Sustainability Action Plan; NMA internal analysis.				

capability

workforce planning

As part of the Government's *Delivering for Australians* reform agenda, the Australian Public Service has developed *Delivering for Tomorrow: APS Workforce Strategy 2025*. The strategy provides an APS-wide view on how to equip the APS workforce to tackle immediate and emerging challenges, highlighting 3 key areas of focus:

- Attract, build and retain skills, expertise and talent
- Embrace data, technology and flexible and responsive workforce models
- Strengthen integrity and purposeful leadership.

The Museum is progressing the development of a workforce plan that will review the priority capabilities required to deliver its key outcomes within this context.

With a better understanding of the existing talent and current and future capability gaps and requirements, the Museum will be better placed to respond to the needs of its workforce and to deploy its workforce to effectively deliver its programs and meet its strategic priorities. Work will also be undertaken to define the Museum's corporate culture and employee value proposition, compensating for inequitable pay scales and making the Museum an employer of choice.

The Museum continues to create a flexible and inclusive work culture, while building opportunities for career development and ensuring that the core APS capabilities of leadership, integrity, knowledge of APS craft, data literacy and analysis are maintained.

ICT capability

The Museum is continuing to implement changes to its ICT delivery model to better support hybrid working arrangements, and to improve security and operability within the existing infrastructure for staff working onsite and remotely.

The Museum has established an ICT Steering Committee to shape ICT strategy over the medium- to long-term and to guide capability and investment. ICT operational models have been reviewed to ensure they are fit for purpose and sustainable in an increasingly complex IT environment.

In the past few years, the cyber security community has reported a rapid escalation in the number and range of cyber threats, requiring ongoing investment in resources, defence tools, and user education to mitigate exposure. The Museum continues to improve and strengthen its key security controls (*Essential Eight Maturity Model*) and regularly reviews the Australian Cyber Security Centre's *Strategies to Mitigate Cyber Security Incidents* to identify further controls that can be implemented, within the Museum's resource capacity.

risk oversight and management

In addition to the broader challenges affecting the Museum and cultural sector, the organisation identifies and manages risks at strategic, operational and activity levels.

The Museum has a mature risk management framework consistent with the International Standard on Risk Management, ISO 31000:2018, comprising:

- a risk management policy, that outlines the agency's overall approach and direction in relation to risk management
- a risk appetite statement that specifies the amount of risk the agency is willing to seek or accept in the pursuit of its purposes
- a risk assessment methodology and training resources that improve staff capacity to undertake and benefit from risk assessments
- a risk committee drawn from key areas of the Museum that contributes to policy development
- strategic and operational risk registers.

Risk plans are developed at business unit and project level, focusing on both program-wide and project-specific risks. Strategic and operational risks are regularly reported to the Museum's Executive. Updates on critical strategic and operational risks are reported to the Audit, Finance and Risk Committee and Council at each quarterly meeting.

The main areas of risk and specific risks relating to the forward program of activities identified in the risk registers include:

financial risk

This risk relates to financial policies, funding sustainability and the rate of economic recovery in order for the Museum to fully discharge its legislative obligations.

Ongoing financial sustainability risk impacts key legislative responsibilities and strategic priorities, including but not limited to care of the National Historical Collection, program delivery across a range of platforms, resilience to cyber threats, and the ability to attract and retain skilled staff.

The Museum received additional funding in both the 2021–22 and 2022–23 federal budgets, which has mitigated the short-term financial risk profile. However, with these measures ceasing at the end of the 2022–23 financial year, longer-term financial sustainability remains a significant risk. Additionally, own-source revenue is anticipated to remain below pre-COVID levels until 2024–25, reducing available financial resources.

The Museum continues to review the delivery of functions, activities, programs and events in line with available financial resources.

reputational risk

The Museum will continue to expand its programs and activities in 2022–23. This includes the launch of the Great Southern Land environmental history gallery and the Tim and Gina Fairfax Discovery Centre for children and families. These new spaces will address the reputational risks associated with the events of the past 2 years that resulted in site closures and a reduction in onsite programs. The Museum continues to expand its online presence and increase its digital content.

The Museum's longer-term financial sustainability, if not addressed, may also have significant reputational impact if it affects the delivery of high-quality programs and activities. Reputational risks will also increase if the Museum is unable to house the National Historical Collection in a suitable storage facility.

cyber threats

Increasing cyber security threats from malicious actors focused on compromising networks present risks to the Museum of business disruption, reputational damage, privacy breaches, data compromise and loss. These may be insider threats, ransom-related attacks, or have financial motivation. The Museum continually reviews its maturity against best-practice guidelines provided by the Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC), the *Essential Eight Maturity Model*. The Museum continues to invest in key areas to address vulnerabilities and mitigate against cyber security threats.

loss of or damage to the National Historical Collection

The Museum continues to petition government regarding the critical state of its collection storage facilities. These were first identified as inadequate in a report by the Australian National Audit Office in 2005. Since then, the Museum has worked to improve storage conditions and minimise risk to the collection, within available funding.

In mid-2021, following the discovery of irreparable damage to some collection items due to poor storage conditions, the Museum undertook the temporary emergency measure of relocating its most at-risk collections to a short-term, fit-for-purpose commercial storage facility.

The Museum welcomes the government's recent funding for the preparation of a detailed business case to address the long-term storage needs of the National Collecting Institutions. It also appreciates the additional funding of \$2.5 million to undertake minor storage improvement works in 2022–23. However, without urgent attention and further resourcing by government, there is a heightened risk of damage to the collection.

health and safety

The health and safety of visitors and staff remains the Museum's primary focus. The Museum will continue to monitor and respond to health and safety advice, ensuring its operational procedures are in line with government recommendations and best practice.

staff capability and capacity

The Museum is a small- to medium-sized APS employer requiring wide-ranging staff capabilities within a constrained budget. As such, its ability to offer competitive remuneration in comparison to the APS average continues to decline. This affects the quality and quantity of candidates for positions, increases the time taken to fill vacancies, and impacts on the Museum's ability to retain staff in the medium to long-term. This is particularly the case for workers with skill sets that are in high demand, such as those in corporate service areas, information technology, cyber security, finance and human resources.

Further work will be undertaken at the strategic and operational levels to identify gaps in current and future staff capability, ensuring they are managed in line with strategic priorities, budget, and government policy. The Museum is refining its employee value proposition to assist with attracting suitable candidates and developing a range of options or pathways that support a buy or build approach to our talent pipeline. The Museum positions itself as an employer of choice by offering flexible working arrangements and creating a positive workplace culture.

At the operational level Museum is also managing threats to its business continuity caused by key person risks due to acute absences or staff turnover.

cooperation

The Museum delivers its mission, in part, through its strong relationships and successful collaborations. By coming together for a common purpose and working actively with its partners, the Museum can maximise value and enhance benefits to the public. Cooperative ventures can also develop staff capabilities and extend institutional capacity to increase activity levels during times of resource constraint. Overall, these cooperative programs and activities serve to enhance the broader cultural life of the nation.

The next 4-year period will be underpinned by long-term relationships with organisations and people who share the Museum's vision and purpose. These include:

cultural organisations

The Museum has signed multi-year Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with several state-based museums and galleries, such as the Western Australian Museum and South Australian Museum. Our engagement with international museums is strong, with the *Songlines* exhibition touring to European venues over the 2022–23 period. The Museum is also working with several international museums to display major exhibitions over the coming years.

The Museum's domestic and international touring exhibition program has been devised in conjunction with Indigenous communities, arts organisations and other museums. By pooling expertise and resourcing, new exhibitions with a national and international reach have been developed that are often beyond the resourcing capacity of individual organisations.

Commonwealth-sector collaboration

The Museum collaborates with other Commonwealth entities to assist in meeting shared objectives. Strong relationships exist among the National Collecting Institutions and vary from formal working groups and committees based on professional expertise to informal peer engagement. Outside of the Arts portfolio, the Museum has entered into partnerships with the Australian Signals Directorate for an exhibition to mark its 75th anniversary; the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade for a collecting program focusing on Australia's diplomatic history; and the National Australia Day Council for the 2023 Australian of the Year touring exhibition. The Museum also delivers payroll, ICT, finance and records services to small corporate and non-corporate Commonwealth agencies via its Cultural and Corporate Shared Services Centre (CCSSC).

Over the 4-year period of this plan, to 2026, the Museum is seeking to develop a closer relationship with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies to support the development of the Ngurra Cultural Precinct on Commonwealth Place in the National Triangle.

The Museum will also work with the National Capital Authority to better connect Acton Peninsula to the city centre and the Australian National University, and improve visitor car parking.

research collaboration

Research and scholarship are central to the Museum's activities. Through its exhibitions, programs and publications, the Museum provides leadership and contributes to scholarship and discussion of Australia's past, present and future. This relies on collaboration with internal and external experts, and on funding and collaboration from research bodies and academia.

The Museum collaborates with key thought leaders on its publications, including the Museum magazine, exhibition catalogues and books. As part of its commitment to research historical collections relating to Australian history, the Museum has entered into collaborations with the Australian National University and the Australian Research Council (ARC). The Museum participates in several ARC projects with universities, Indigenous communities and other cultural institutions.

philanthropy and corporate partners

The role of philanthropy and corporate partners is important in supporting the Museum to deliver major gallery developments, programs and services. In recent years, the Museum has undertaken a number of successful campaigns to raise donations, including the Encounters Fellowships, the People's Walk and the 20th Birthday campaigns. It has received significant contributions from philanthropists, including a major gift of \$1.5 million from Gandel Philanthropy for Australia's Defining Moments Digital Classroom and a major gift from Mr Tim Fairfax AC and Mrs Gina Fairfax in support of the Tim and Gina Fairfax Discovery Centre. Philanthropic support has also resulted in the creation of 4 named curatorial positions, helping the Museum to improve staff capability and foster in-depth scholarship on themes related to the Museum's core business.

Corporate partnerships, both cash and in-kind, continue to grow significantly. A major partnership with Breville has supported the development of an exhibition that will tour the UK, Europe and the USA. In-kind media partnerships have resulted in the Museum's marketing budget for major exhibitions being doubled, supporting increased visitation and revenue. Support through grants has assisted in the delivery of key public programs and the publication of exhibition catalogues. The Museum also has sponsorship arrangements with media and commercial partners.

Contributions from the Museum's sponsors, donors and members have enabled the organisation to supplement its work at a time of fiscal constraint, and the Museum will continue to seek additional funding from its supporters and partners in coming years.