



QVMAG FUTURES PLAN



QVMAG

**FUTURES PLAN**

a paradigm shift

*“We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.”*

Albert Einstein

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# QVMAG FUTURES PLAN

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Governments, industry and the private sector worldwide have long understood the significant and transformational impact that cultural and creative activation and investment has within communities, regions and nations.

Culture is expressed in many ways – through our stories, our expanding knowledge of our world, the way we live, speak, conduct public life, relate to others, celebrate, remember the past, entertain ourselves and imagine the future.

Our creative expression gives voice to us as individuals, challenges perceptions and helps us see the world through the eyes of others, and importantly, helps the world see us, our diversity, uniqueness and the richness of our identity.

There is a social dividend in investing in the cultural and creative sectors with the return in strengthening our underlying values of inclusiveness, openness, and democratic practice. There is another benefit from investing in the creative sector to build a rich cultural life: **the economic dividend**.

A cultural and creative region is a productive region. Cultural tourism is one of the largest and fastest-growing global tourism markets. Culture and creative industries are increasingly being used to promote destinations and enhance their competitiveness and attractiveness.

Launceston—as a culturally diverse and active region—is no exception.

In fact, Launceston’s appreciation and participation in cultural and creative events, organisations and activities is well recognised with the Launceston region celebrated as a **City of Gastronomy** under UNSECO’s Creative Cities Network and heralded as **Australia’s leading travel destination** in the 2022 *Aussie Town of the Year Awards* by Wotif.com.

In order to achieve our community’s vision as laid out in our **Greater Launceston Plan**: *‘Sustainable prosperity for greater Launceston will be achieved by consolidating and building nationally and internationally recognised strategic advantages for the region through a focus on creativity and innovation, maintaining exceptional environmental and liveability qualities and ensuring a diverse, connected and inclusive region’* it is widely accepted that harnessing and investing in the cultural identity of our City will facilitate the necessary foundations for creative activity, international attention, growth and economic prosperity, all centred around the individual offering of Launceston’s cultural point of difference.

Launceston, whilst being significantly unique in its geographic location and environmental diversity, lacks the necessary tangible (built) elements to realise and capture its rich cultural diversity. Without an investment in culture, Launceston will fail to capitalise on all the existing attributes that would see it mature into a city of creation, innovation and as an internationally unique destination.

Truly a great place to live and be proud of.



Skilled professionals are drawn to ‘liveable’ destinations by opportunities for creative work and a good quality of life. These places become centres of innovation in part because of the talent that is attracted, and can assist in avoiding industrial stagnation through being able to creatively meet the challenges of global change. The attraction of innovative industries and skilled professionals is highly pertinent to Launceston and broader Australia given the economic deceleration of natural resource trade, and the need for economic stimulation through culture and knowledge-based industries.

Positioned within this lexicon is the **Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery (QVMAG)**, recognised as Australia’s largest regional museum and gallery, servicing northern Tasmania, Tasmania, Australia and international markets, throughout the Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums (GLAM) sector.

QVMAG is demonstrably the leading cultural destination in northern Tasmania and is an inextricable, but often underestimated, part of the region’s innovation effort. As a storehouse of cultural memory, innovative educator, provision of unique sites of multi-disciplinary research and a powerhouse of design and innovation, QVMAG’s impact extends far beyond the arts and information services portfolios within which it is sited.

The core strength of QVMAG lies in the vast and deep collections which traverse all subject areas and media. These collections represent the past knowledge of Launceston and the surrounding region, the natural world within which we live, and contemporary arts practice, intersecting with the local community, Tasmania, Australia and the world, providing both critical historic reference points and springboards to new ideas.

QVMAG intersects with the wider public socio-cultural and innovation agendas and as such:

- i. **Inspires and educates the community**  
Through the curation and interpretation of collections, our galleries and museum build and disseminate knowledge while at the same time fostering the confidence, critical thinking, creativity and problem solving abilities which provide the basic prerequisites for new ways of thinking.
- ii. **Generates multi-disciplinary research**  
QVMAG’s cultural collections provide a critical resource for researchers and also generate in-house research projects and collaborations with other research agencies and academies, across the sciences and humanities, between disciplines and with regional, national and international partners. QVMAG is recognised as part of the Federal Government’s **National Research Infrastructure (NRI)** and plays a key role in leading and supporting science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) based research and education.
- iii. **Builds creative communities**  
QVMAG’s galleries, archives, museum and library forms an integral part of the region’s creative economy and creative communities, providing inspirational sources, nurturing the development and application of innovative ideas, acting as sites for cutting-edge developments and contributing to the energy and inspiration which attracts creative industries, cultural entrepreneurs and innovators to the Launceston region.

The concept of, and impetus to develop, a QVMAG Futures Plan is prompted, and indeed necessitated, by several challenges and opportunities facing the City of Launceston and the institution.

QVMAG is owned and operated by the City of Launceston, yet the scope and scale of its operations across two distinctive cultural institutions (an ‘A Class’ art gallery and a world-renowned museum), in addition to its sizeable collections, currently valued at more than \$203m, position it far beyond the realm of a ‘regional institution’ and instead equals the cultural capacity of other state and territory institutions around Australia.

In Tasmania, the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG) and QVMAG stand alone as the largest and most significant public cultural institutions (government-owned) which cannot reasonably be considered or compared with the other museums and galleries that operate within the state, other than the Museum of Old and New Art (MONA).

QVMAG is at a point where decisions are needed in respect to its future operations and strategic direction as the institution is significantly underfunded when compared to similar museums and galleries operating across Australia, yet remains the key cultural offering for northern Tasmania, servicing industry, sector and communities beyond the boundaries of the City of Launceston funding catchment.

As a cultural entity it is simply too large to be majority funded by a single local government council within the current local government arrangements – arrangements which are unaligned with the local government reform and sustainability efforts having been undertaken in other states.

Similarly, as part of the region’s innovation effort and the city’s key cultural offering, QVMAG needs to undertake a strategic realignment to ensure it leverages and realises its unique potential and the key role it plays in contributing to the region’s cultural prestige, STEAM based development, community capacity building and Launceston’s attractiveness in the national context.

QVMAG must pay attention to its role in activating the ‘soft’ arts and cultural infrastructure: services and activities that encourage expressions of cultural distinctiveness and encourage networking, advocacy and creativity.

Such activation by QVMAG as the region’s major cultural institution will increase social capital in the local community through:

- + Enhancing a change in residents’ sense of place of their city;
- + Defining local identity;
- + Integrating Aboriginal heritage into our collective identity.

Our review has identified a number of key challenges, risks and opportunities facing QVMAG that need to be met with imagination, bold action, scaled commitment, investment and long-term vision.

In response, this Futures Plan addresses these challenges and presents a number of considered and innovative Key Directions that will inform and define the future strategic, performance and infrastructure developments which are required to support and enhance QVMAG as a sustainable, dynamic and accessible cultural and economic driver for Launceston, the northern region and for the State.

# AT A GLANCE

## SUMMARY OF KEY DIRECTIONS

ONE

### A FIT-FOR-PURPOSE GOVERNANCE MODEL

#### OUTCOMES

- Transition QVMAG to a Company Limited by Guarantee
- Complete the QVMAG Organisational Strategic Development Program
- Establish an Interim Transitional Board

TWO

### FUNDING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR QVMAG

#### OUTCOMES

- Increased State Government Annual Contribution
- Establish and Implement the QVMAG Futures Fund
  - Increase QVMAG Own-Source Revenue
- Develop QVMAG Advancement Strategy
- Develop QVMAG Commercial Strategy

THREE

### ACTIVATE A DYNAMIC AND DIVERSE QVMAG

#### OUTCOMES

- Implement the QVMAG Organisational Strategic Development Program
  - Increase QVMAG Visitation to Exceed Forecasted Baseline
- Implement a Diverse, Dynamic and Consistent Programmatic Offer at Royal Park
- Implement a Diverse, Dynamic and Consistent Programmatic Offer at Inveresk
- Action Findings from Consultation Survey and Audience Segmentation Review
  - Implement QVMAG Brand and MarComms Strategy

FOUR

### AN ACCESSIBLE QVMAG OF, BY AND FOR ALL CULTURE

#### OUTCOMES

- Implement the QVMAG Organisational Strategic Development Program
  - Develop a Diverse and Consistent QVMAG Outreach Program
    - Implement an Audience Segmentation Analysis
- Implement QVMAG Brand and MarComms Strategy
- Develop a holistic Accessibility Strategy and Framework
- Develop an institutional-wide Digital Framework and Strategy

FIVE

### AN INVESTED, SUPPORTED AND ENABLED QVMAG

#### OUTCOMES

- Complete Royal Park Expansion project by 2027
- Complete Inveresk Community/Cultural/Creative/Education Precinct by 2027
- Establish the Centre for Aboriginal Science and Education by 2027
- Establish the QVMAG Collections Discovery Centre by 2027







# A PARADIGM SHIFT

## WHY THIS MATTERS

Creative and cultural industries influence social development and economic growth.

Launceston, like many cities, recognises the impact that a strong cultural base has on the region's economy, particularly in terms of tourism and regional identity. The creative and cultural industries are a significant platform on which Launceston can position and brand itself, amalgamating cultural identity, social development, and economic growth.

Launceston competes not just nationally but internationally for talent, attention and revenue. Maximising the potential of creative production requires harnessing the opportunities that are generated in the interaction between arts, creativity, culture and the marketplace.

Encouraging the creative industries is one of the most powerful means of enhancing the city's identity and distinctiveness, while simultaneously creating employment and generating social capital.

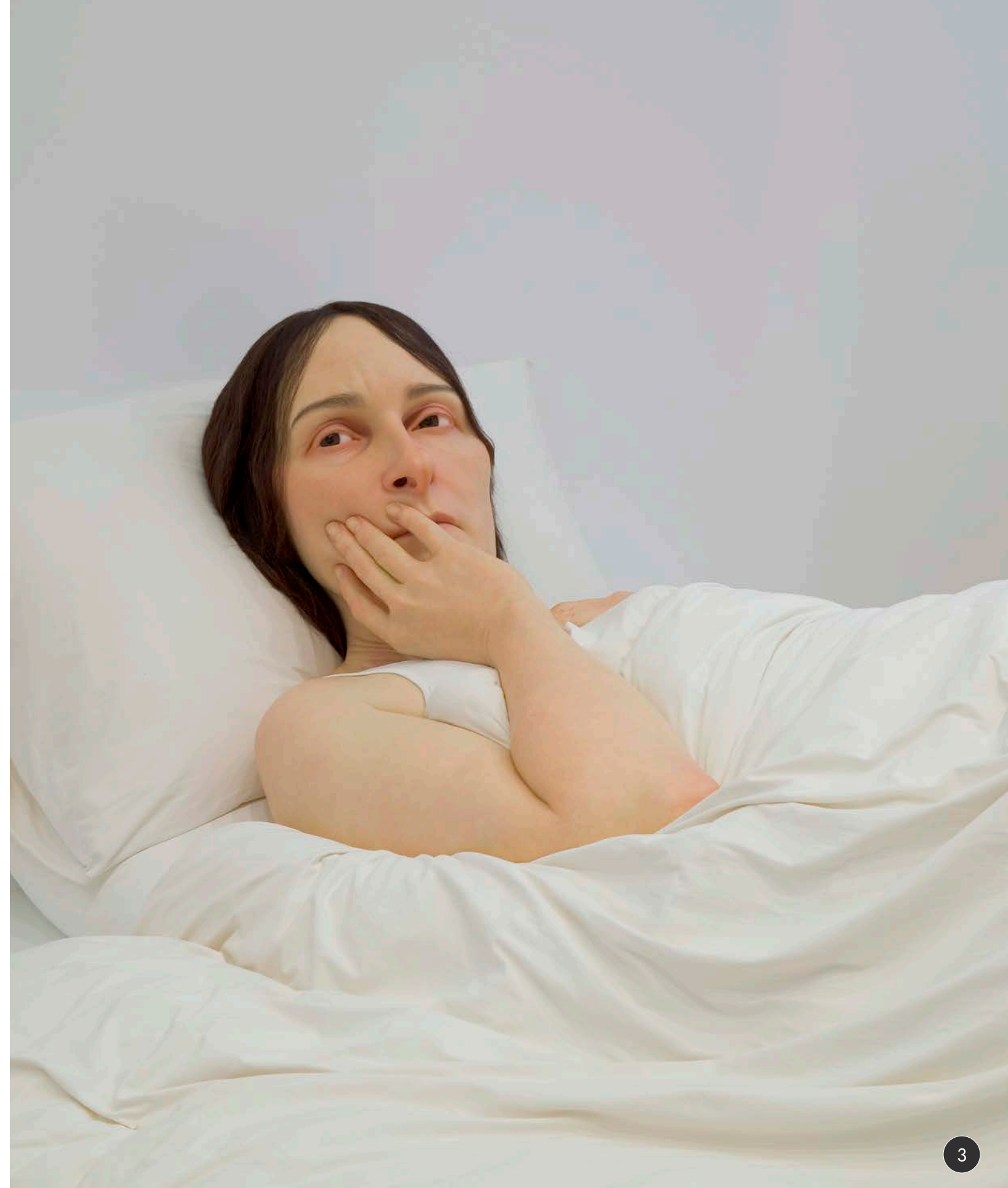
**In a world where every place is beginning to feel and look the same, cultural products and activities distinguish one place from the next establishing tangible differences that create competitive advantage.**

The future development of QVMAG would provide a strategic and supported platform upon which Launceston could harness and support the creative sector whilst building on its strengths as a destination city by better utilising the creative industries to attract people to visit, live and work here, providing a positive social and economic return for the region.

Galleries, libraries, theatres and museums are seen widely as part of the 'creative' part of the economy alongside creative industries such as architecture, video, film and photography, radio and television, design, music and advertising. These cultural institutions share an overlapping workforce with these areas and, in many different ways, underpin their creative output.

Activated cultural and creative delivery also provides an ideal branding opportunity, with similar successful developments achieving a wide national and international reputation and projecting a strongly positive image for their region – think: Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA), Bendigo Art Gallery, Federation Square, MONA et al.

In successful examples, these two elements of community and content are highly complementary, linked by an idea that focuses and aligns the whole enterprise. Community cultural delivery benefits from access to unique content; this content is contextualised and made more accessible by being linked to people and place.



This integrated approach provides a high quality attraction for a wider audience and uses strategic relationships to maximise the use of existing capabilities and investment by government and other project partners.

Importantly this strategy does not constrain options for spatial distribution of facilities. For both infrastructure and programming, an ‘artshub’ model provides many cities and regions with an efficient delivery mechanism that includes visible core cultural facilities for coordinating cultural delivery and programs, co-located with other cultural/creative functions. Presently, the generational benefits for the Launceston region through the activation of QVMAG and the development of an aggregated cultural/creative precinct between Royal Park and Inveresk remain unrealised.

When compared with our Tasmanian regional counterparts, Launceston’s cultural offerings attract more visitors than any other regional city in northern Tasmania, yet the region remains overlooked in key cultural infrastructure initiatives that could further elevate and secure Launceston as an international and national cultural destination of substance.

One which complements a holistic state-wide approach rather than a singular southern centric focus, given that both Hobart and Launceston are major gateways for domestic and international visitors into the State.

Investing in fit-for-purpose and iconic cultural infrastructure should be a key driving impetus of this region, and the State and local governments, ensuring that Launceston capitalises on the lucrative global cultural tourism market, nurtures and advocates the enabling of creative industry and transforms the city to a destination that promotes diversified investment.

Whilst it is recognised that QVMAG has a significant role in improving its quantitative engagement capacity, it should be noted that annual visitation does not reflect the true value of the institution within the broader socio-cultural agenda, nor should this measure be solely attributed to whether or not the institution receives financial support and investment from government.

QVMAG, as a public collecting institution, plays a far-reaching qualitative role in many significant areas within the innovation and education portfolios. These qualitative returns on investment often do not reveal themselves immediately or on an accepted annual reporting cycle, but rather nurture and foster innovation and development which empowers generational growth and social development.

Educationalists have long recognised that cultural institutions provide critical and complementary learning environments to schools and universities and a forum for life-long learning.

Cultural institutions offer unique learning experiences; by utilising ‘real’ objects from their collections they allow their audiences to experience great hands-on learning experiences, information for all five senses, exciting spaces, design, multimedia and visual representations and an open-ended environment far removed from formal educational contexts.

Cultural institutions encourage students of any age to engage and enjoy; acquire new skills; try new experiences and explore their creativity. The results, according to a range of research here and overseas, is to increase self-confidence and self-esteem; change attitudes; promote higher order cognitive learning; and assist young people to make connections and utilise existing knowledge to strike out in new directions.

The fact that gallery, library, museum and theatre interactions set off cultural and creative ‘chain reactions’ has been recognised by the Australian Government, which has in turn highlighted the need to strengthen the connections between schools and the arts and cultural sector to enrich learning outcomes.

Launceston’s cultural institutions also foster research in the humanities and social sciences, in particular in Aboriginal cultural studies and awareness, in learning and the dissemination of knowledge, and in historical and social science studies which focus on identity and change.

Our cultural institutions have a unique multidisciplinary capacity to highlight such issues of social concern as environment, health, education, sustainability and the exploitation of digital and cultural infrastructure, as well as broader questions of identity and tolerance and to assist in designing solutions.

An activated and appropriately supported QVMAG would make a critical contribution to the Launceston region’s vibrant lifestyle, providing for residents high quality cultural, educational and entertainment experiences, as well as access to information for personal and working purposes.

Importantly, this revitalisation would also encourage more regional, national and international tourist visitors to spend time and money in Launceston’s CBD. It would also attract and retain new businesses and skilled people as residents, who would perceive Launceston as a vibrant place to live, work and recreate.

An expanded **Art Gallery at Royal Park** in Launceston’s historic heart, an **activated porous precinct at Inveresk** and an accessible **Collection Discovery Centre** with visible collection storage would enhance and continue the urban renewal strategy of the city centre whilst assisting in achieving city-wide accommodation and future growth strategies.





This aggregated cultural/creative offering would establish significant public cultural and tourist institutions within close walking distance, enabling the promotion of a Launceston Cultural Walking Trail Map in a route along the magnificent Tamar and North Esk Rivers – offering things to see.

Creative professionals or ‘the skilled middle class’ is exactly the demographic that Launceston needs to attract and retain if it is serious in establishing growth and economic development.

A holistic renewal strategy is the key to defining and transforming Launceston as a whole. The benefits of such urban planning has been clearly identified and achieved in other cities worldwide and international research has demonstrated the role of cultural organisations in regenerating older cities (especially de-industrialised centres) and in attracting the creative community to cities and centres.

Cultural organisations are major contributors to the energy and inspiration which re-builds community confidence, and attracts creative industries, cultural entrepreneurs and innovators to certain cities and centres above others.

Broadly, the work of Australia’s major cultural institutions extends far beyond what is traditionally regarded as ‘the arts’, into the environment, education, history, science, industry and innovation within which QVMAG plays a significant role.

QVMAG’s creative output is multi-disciplinary and crosses traditional portfolios. This provides unique advantages in considering the development of an expanded cultural/creative investment – as the role of the public institution underpins the dynamism of a holistic expanded cultural/creative precinct through interdependent relationships and shared identity.

In addition, it is recognised that the creative industries are an enabler in the wider economy.

They provide leadership in thinking, ideas and design capabilities, and add value across all spheres of economic activity – from innovation, research and development to investment.

Therefore, it is clear that a **paradigm shift** is what is required for QVMAG.

A shift which harnesses the unique attributes and qualities of a cultural institution that has no equal in regional Australia, and similarly is recognised and supported by all tiers of Government towards achieving a sustainable, activated and strategic future.







# THE STATE WE'RE IN OUR CHALLENGES

Owned and operated by the City of Launceston, QVMAG is the single largest cultural institution situated in regional Australia and services communities across northern Tasmania, Tasmania generally, Australia and abroad.

Although recognised as a regional institution, which forms part of an established cultural regional network, the scope and value of its collections, currently valued in excess of \$203m, position it comparably to State and Territory owned collecting museums from across Australia, such as the:

- + TMAG \$408m
- + South Australian Museum \$294m
- + Art Gallery of Western Australia \$326m

Presently, QVMAG occupies two historic sites in Launceston which are connected by the North Esk River and within walking distance of one another. These sites include the original purpose-built museum building at Royal Park and the former railway station and rail yards at Inveresk.

Pre-COVID-19, the institution generally received annual visitation ranging between 125,000-140,000 visitors, who contributed total annual spending in the region estimated at \$44m [figure one].

Annually, QVMAG also provides a significant educational contribution to the region with 30% of education bookings coming from beyond the Greater Launceston area.

The City of Launceston is responsible for all operational aspects of QVMAG including budgets, financial performance and the employment of staff.

This currently equates to a cost of around \$7.65m per year. The State Government provides an endowment annually of around \$1.5m, which equates to 20% of the operational funding [figure two].

QVMAG is a significant cultural asset in many respects, but is also unique in that it is the largest regional museum and art gallery in Australia operating in the smallest State in Australia alongside a substantial State Government-owned museum and art gallery – the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.

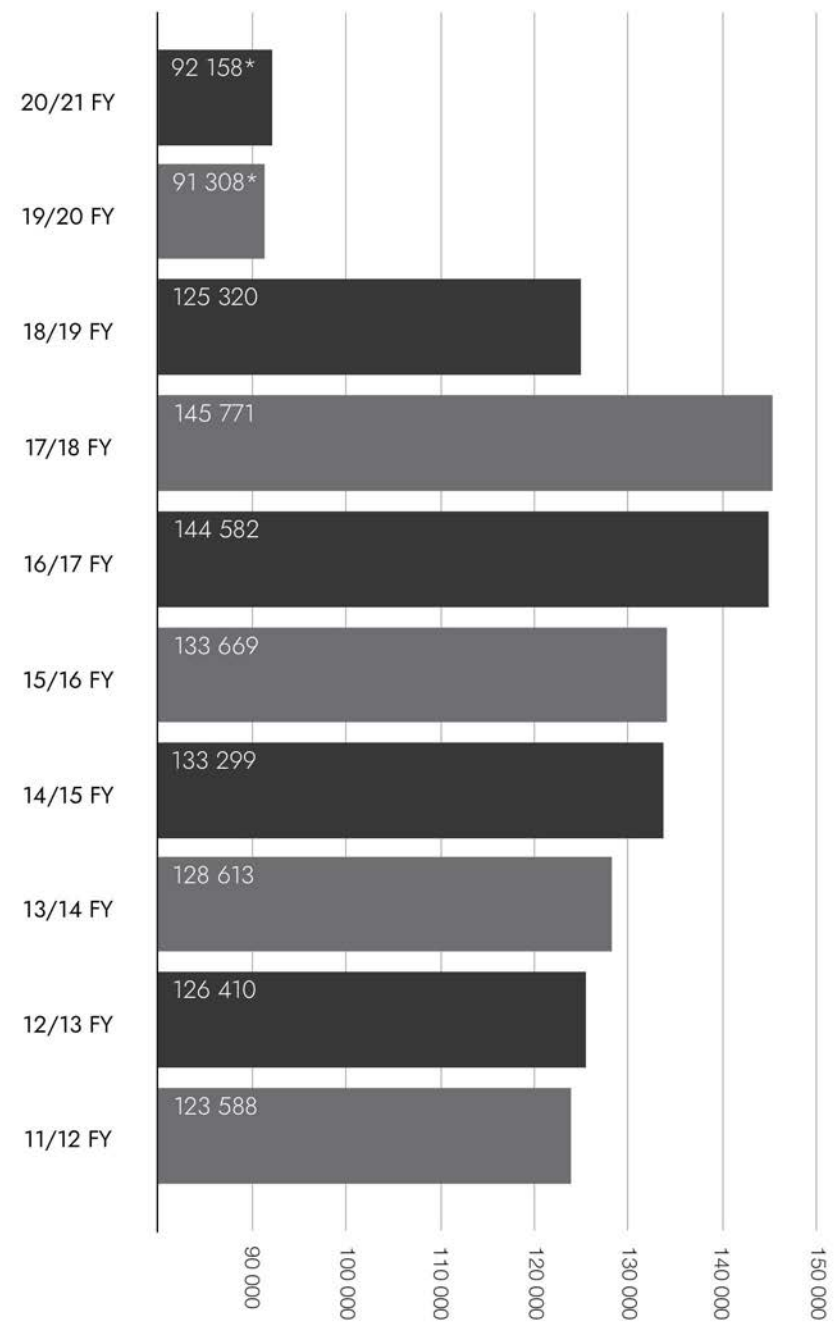
The governance of QVMAG is also unique in the fact that it is one of the only large museum and art galleries in the country that is led by a local government council rather than a skills-based board.

With an annual budget of around \$115m, it is untenable for the City of Launceston to continue owning and substantially funding such a large regional museum and gallery in its own right.

This reality is exacerbated by the need to fund future upgrades to QVMAG, in order to position it as a dynamic and relevant institution with a vital role to play in delivering positive outcomes for the people of northern Tasmania and beyond.



figure one  
QVMAG Ten-Year Visitation Comparison  
\*denotes COVID-19 Impacted





When compared with other similar sized entities from across Australia, it is clear that QVMAG is underfunded and is underperforming in a number of key performance areas, with visitation and, as a result, own-source revenue being the most significant.

Simply put, QVMAG is not currently generating sufficient visitors for the investment being made by Launceston ratepayers, and this is not likely to change without investment and redevelopment.

QVMAG has been the subject of numerous reviews (and reform) over its recent history and these are listed below:

- + *Future Directions Plan for the QVMAG* MMC Link 2013
- + *QVMAG Review* Council Committee 2015
- + *Form & Function Review of the CoL* KPMG 2015
- + *QVMAG* Searchlight Group 2017
- + *Organisational Alignment Project* City of Launceston 2018
- + *QVMAG Feasibility Study* Hirst Projects 2018

Notably, the MMC Link *Future Directions Plan* concluded:

*“... There is no doubt the QVMAG is an extraordinarily rich resource to find in a regional centre. It is the largest Australian museum and art gallery outside of a capital city, and clearly the premier cultural institute of Northern Tasmania.*

*The QVMAG collection has a 2010 valuation exceeding \$231 million (now \$203.6 million) - a collection that any local government would be proud to manage, but also one that is well beyond what any local Tasmanian government can reasonably be expected to indefinitely maintain without significant support.*

*Annual visitation to the QVMAG is currently in the order of 130,000 visitors, which is roughly equivalent to the population of greater Launceston...”*

The study found that:

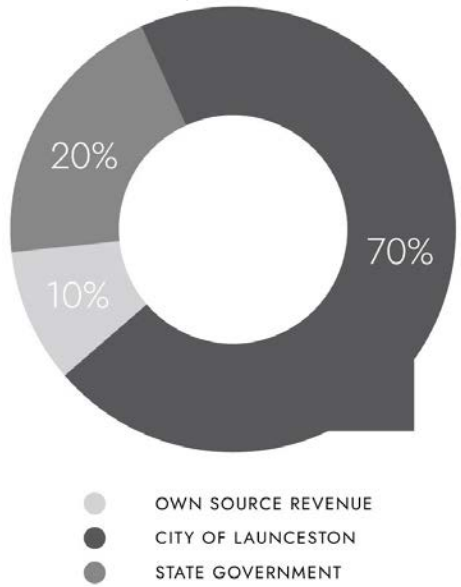
*“... as a generalist museum and art gallery, QVMAG is more consistent with a State facility than a strategic contemporary regional attraction. The State-CoL history of the QVMAG has contributed to its broad agenda, resulting in some incompatibility between the social expectations of the QVMAG, and the capacity of the CoL to indefinitely finance these”.*

The study also found that when contrasted to similar institutions nationally, QVMAG is financially and operationally the most efficient for an entity of its size, and that the avenues to improve its financial status are either:

- i. significantly increase revenue, or
- ii. reduce site/collection responsibilities

A number of challenges and opportunities were identified through the study, including: the need for the institution to broaden its interstate and overseas visitor base; the benefits of building its professional networks regionally and beyond; the concerns relating to accessibility to the art gallery site; and the advantages of embracing technology to increase brand awareness and to enhance the visitor experience.

figure two  
QVMAG Funding by Source



n 2013 and 2017 respectively, the KPMG and Searchlight reviews both recommended that structurally QVMAG should not be a Directorate of the Council, but needed a separate Board to provide a contemporary governance approach.

This direction was reinforced by the 2015 Council Review Committee, which recommended that ‘options for the establishment of an independent skills-based Board of Governance be investigated and the best option implemented’.

In reaching this recommendation, the Committee formed the view that:

*“... the Museum Governance and Advisory Board should be replaced by a devolved and independent skills-based Board with appropriate levels of responsibility and accountability. The Committee noted that there could be significant advantages in considering a joint governance arrangement covering institutions in Tasmania that improve overall efficiency and offer more equitable State Government funding opportunities.*

*The Committee believes it is desirable to explore the benefits of alignment of the interests of some or all Tasmanian public museums and galleries in governance, administration, policy development, digital strategy development and implementation, research and education programs, strengths in specialty areas, and the like”.*





The Searchlight review recommended the creation of a new Cultural Directorate, with QVMAG becoming a part of this Directorate.

This was achieved in 2019 through the implementation of the Organisational Alignment Project (OAP), which created the Creative Arts and Cultural Network.

However, the reality is that the creation of this Network has not, and will not, address the governance needs of QVMAG.

The OAP concluded that:

*“... people work at QVMAG because they are passionate about what they do. However, they need support and direction to be successful. Old ways need to give way to contemporary practice and for museums and art galleries to be successful, they need to be run as effective businesses...”*

The 2018 QVMAG Feasibility Study, which is discussed in greater detail in this plan, was tasked to:

- + Evaluate and demonstrate the economic, social and environmental benefit of QVMAG;
- + Demonstrate whether there is an argument for maintaining QVMAG on two sites, or on a single site on Wellington Street, Royal Park;
- + Evaluate and demonstrate how it can become the centrepiece of an integrated, holistic cultural strategy;

+ Demonstrate the digital opportunities available in the cultural and arts space and the positive prospects for QVMAG;

+ Determine the most appropriate model for QVMAG in terms of contemporary cultural and arts governance.

Each of the reviews which have been completed over the past nine years offer a range of perspectives, findings and recommendations in respect to the desired future for QVMAG, and they have been fully considered in the development of this plan.

The one thing that stands out is that six reviews and studies have been completed on QVMAG over the period, giving a clear indication that something is not quite right.

The reviews have consistently highlighted challenges with governance, funding, accessibility, infrastructure and visitation, which have been considered and addressed by this Plan.

It also needs to be considered that a number of these challenges have existed within the operations of QVMAG for over 130 years and it is clear that bold, innovative and committed actions must be undertaken by all stakeholders to resolve these challenges for the benefit of QVMAG, the City, the region and the State.



The City of Launceston provides a wide range of services that are essential to the Launceston community’s quality of life and as a result is responsible for the acquisition, operation, maintenance, renewal and disposal of an extensive range of physical assets with a total replacement value of \$2.03b.

If the region is to be sustainable and innovative and able to compete on the national stage for residents, investors and visitors then it is critical that there is a focal point for this activity.

However, it is clear that Launceston is at a financial disadvantage relative to other regional centres as a result of being the major service centre for northern Tasmania and the leading role it plays in the region.

Launceston provides the critical social infrastructure (schools, hospitals, sport, recreation and entertainment) that enhance the regional lifestyle. This includes regional assets such as: QVMAG, Princess Theatre, Launceston Leisure and Aquatic Centre, Cataract Gorge, Launceston CBD, and the like.

While people may choose to live or work in another municipal area, Launceston’s urban infrastructure supports their ability to live in the region and provides access to both facilities of a national standard and a wide range of lifestyle choices.

This creates a situation whereby the City of Launceston is providing a substantial number of assets to service the northern region of approximately 140,000 people, yet these assets are funded predominantly by the City of Launceston rate base of 68,007 people, or around 31,000 rateable properties.

Clearly Launceston is currently providing and maintaining regional level infrastructure, which is utilised by the many residents from surrounding local government areas (the spillover effect) with these surrounding local government entities not required to support the provision of these services.

In fact, the Council contends that the costs borne by City of Launceston ratepayers and avoided by the residents of other municipal areas are in excess of \$4.2m annually.

The Recreational and Cultural Services portfolio (including the Launceston Leisure and Aquatic Centre, UTAS Stadium and QVMAG) is the City of Launceston’s largest operating cost centre. The Council’s expenditure in this area is significantly higher than the Tasmanian council average.



figure three  
Launceston Municipality Adjacencies

figure four  
QVMAG Four-Year Operational Funding Comparison

	20/21 (\$'000)	%	19/20 (\$'000)	%	18/19 (\$'000)	%	17/18 (\$'000)	%
CoL Contribution	\$5,388	70.4	\$5,584	61.6	\$4,750	66.9	\$4,553	67.7
State Government	\$1,521	19.9	\$1,484	16.4	\$1,451	20.4	\$1,416	21.1
Fees and Charges	\$357	4.7	\$453	5	\$572	8.1	\$393	5.8
Bequests / Donations	\$148	1.9	\$226	2.5	\$207	2.9	\$269	4
Other Operational Grants	\$62	0.8	\$1,073	11.8	\$28	0.4	\$30	0.4
Other Income	\$173	2.3	\$219	2.4	\$43	0.6	\$15	0.2
Interest	\$7	0.1	\$33	0.4	\$49	0.7	46	0.7
TOTALS	\$7,656		\$9,072		\$7,100		\$6,722	

A similar challenge has previously been identified for the Council’s other large regional asset: UTAS Stadium. However, the planned creation of Stadiums Tasmania to own and manage the stadium from late 2022 has recognised that large regional level assets require a specialised ownership and governance model.

The existing governance and financial arrangements for QVMAG have remained unchanged for a significant period of time. Currently under Section 332 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, the State Government is required to provide an endowment to Council for the operation of QVMAG on an annual basis.

This funding is to contribute to:

- i. the salaries of persons employed by the Launceston City Council in relation to the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery;
- ii. the maintenance, management and other charges in respect of the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery; and
- iii. obtaining specimens of natural history, goods, chattels, paintings and works of art for the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery.

The City of Launceston negotiated the current Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the State Government in respect to the endowment rate nearly 20 years ago. The MoU included provision for a review to be completed in each five (5) year period. However, these reviews have never taken place.

When the MOU was agreed in 1999, the State Government contribution represented 40.2% of QVMAG’s operational funding. However, it has not maintained this level over the last 23 years and now represents around only 20% of operational funding.

It has been necessary for the Council’s contribution to increase to cover the shortfall which has been created by the State Government’s shortcomings in maintaining its funding level as a percentage of operational costs.

A comparative review of QVMAG’s operational budgets over the last four year period [figure four] illustrate the City of Launceston’s ownership challenge and the resulting need to identify and implement a contemporaneous funding model for QVMAG which provides financial certainty to the institution whilst concurrently establishing a sustainable funding model for Council.

What is certain is that the current arrangements cannot be sustained and through this Plan two options have been identified and presented which provide a considered and equitable solution to this challenge.







# CULTURAL STRATEGY

## AN ALIGNED APPROACH

The value of museums and galleries to their cities and regions are well established and it is therefore unsurprising that the inaugural **City of Launceston Cultural Strategy 2020-2030** recognises the value and opportunities which exist by having Australia's largest regional museum and art gallery located within Launceston.

The vision of the Cultural Strategy is to achieve two clear and simple goals:

- i. Launceston to be a dynamic place where people live meaningful and culturally vital lives; filled with stimulating activities, highlighted by aesthetically rich experiences and fuelled by curiosity; and
- ii. Launceston to be a welcoming place which builds a better future by celebrating the rich cultural diversity of its people and recognising the stories of its past..."

The strategy identifies that as the largest cultural institution in the region, QVMAG has a central role to play in the delivery of this vision.

By focusing on its unique collections, stories, and research, QVMAG intends to position itself as a unique cultural destination for northern Tasmania and when considered together with other cultural offerings throughout Tasmania, the State proposition is a comprehensive, compelling and powerful one.

The strategy also identified that QVMAG has many collections of national and international research significance, and further partnering with University of Tasmania (UTAS) will enable it to maximise their use.

In order to make this step change, QVMAG's current priorities are:

- + Auditing its collections and standardising collection data in readiness for digitisation, in order to reach the widest possible audiences;
- + Audience segmentation and concept redevelopment work to ensure that the stories told are powerful, relevant, and resonate with a range of audiences, in different ways;
- + A full conceptual and physical revisioning of QVMAG, to ensure that its spaces are part of a logical visitor flow and overall narrative, align with UTAS's spaces and traffic flows, and are fit for purpose. Whilst the use of heritage-listed buildings at both its Royal Park and Inveresk campuses adds to QVMAG's story and enables ongoing public engagement with these important pieces of cultural infrastructure, these buildings do not always provide ideal conditions for the operations of a modern museum or gallery; and





- + To make best use of its assets and opportunities, QVMAG will need to adopt best-practice principles in its governance and operations. As a part of the organisational restructure of the City of Launceston in 2019, it was acknowledged that its position as a Council-operated facility potentially restricts the flexibility and dynamic operations required of a cultural institution of its size and significance, and is therefore in need of review.

Importantly for the future of QVMAG, the strategy identifies cultural tourism as an opportunity that exists for Launceston and northern Tasmania. This is an opportunity which cannot continue to be ignored.

According to the strategy, traditional cultural destinations such as museums and iconic structures have always attracted visitors, but there is now a shift as demand for more bespoke cultural offerings increases. This requires a rethinking of cultural and heritage tourism where the visitor wants to immerse themselves in the local culture and have a one-on-one experience. Launceston is perfectly primed to embrace this new wave of cultural tourism.

Of equal importance for QVMAG is the fact that the Cultural Strategy identifies that there is a genuine need to realise the potential of our cultural places and assets.

The specific initiatives which are nominated in the strategy are as follows:

- + The development of an interactive early childhood centre for a STEAM-based learning partnership between QVMAG and UTAS;
- + Greater utilisation of the opportunities presented by co-location with UTAS;
- + Building fit-for-purpose facilities and experiences that encourage return visitation and a heightened sense of ownership by the Launceston community;
- + QVMAG as a national and international centre for research and education making the most of its unique and extensive collection; and
- + Exploration of further income generation opportunities at QVMAG.

The first focus area in the Cultural Strategy is about respecting and valuing Aboriginal culture. QVMAG has a unique opportunity to show leadership in this area, through a commitment to truth-telling and healing, and ensuring that the museum and gallery are safe spaces where our communities can share their stories and experiences.

*The First Tasmanians: our story* exhibition at Royal Park is a powerful example of co-creation between QVMAG and the Tasmanian Aboriginal community, however, the story needs to be extended and woven through the QVMAG experience as a whole.

Also crucial is the importance of visual identity and how QVMAG addresses Aboriginal and First Nations identities, ancestors and places through placemaking, wayfinding, architecture, language and artistic commissions.

This necessitates a rethinking of how we give voice to narratives of Aboriginal culture; and how we give expression and create specific spaces for cultural activities across all campuses of QVMAG.

There is an unquestionable need for deeper engagement with our Aboriginal community and similarly there is an unquestionable right of our Aboriginal community to their intellectual property.

QVMAG recognises and acknowledges Aboriginal Australians as the oldest continuous living culture in the world and similarly recognises the extensive material culture held within the QVMAG Collection that reflect Country, cultural traditions, ancestral and contemporary knowledge, science, technology and innovation of elders past, present and emerging.

To protect, preserve, grow, share and learn from this rich, enduring and unique tradition, QVMAG in partnership with the QVMAG Aboriginal Reference Group, and forming part of the **Royal Park Expansion** project, will undertake the establishment of a **Centre of Aboriginal Science and Education**, which is defined and discussed further in **Key Direction Five: Priority Project Two**.

In 2018, the Council engaged Hirst Projects to complete a Feasibility Study for the future of QVMAG which, amongst other outcomes, sought to evaluate and demonstrate how it can become the centrepiece of an integrated and holistic Cultural Strategy for Launceston.

The Feasibility Study found that:

- + The development of the two QVMAG sites combined with new programs and events has the potential to be a major attractor of tourist visitors. There would also be a significant increase in local visitors and users of the new facilities;
- + The QVMAG sites are differently scaled and located, with one on the CBD edge, the other part of a former industrial precinct. But both sites have strong axial relationships that influence their built form;
- + Valued at more than \$203.6m, the QVMAG has a very large and significant collection in its care. It is its major asset;
- + The collection is important to investigate and tell the story of the natural and cultural history, not only of Launceston and the region, but that of Tasmania. It is for today's residents and visitors and for those in the generations to come. It is critical that the asset is both used and preserved;
- + QVMAG currently has limited visitation by tourists to Launceston.





In respect to the Feasibility Study’s focus on the potential to consolidate the museum and the gallery on a single site at Royal Park, it concluded that such a move would not be economically practical.

The study found that there are substantial difficulties in moving from the Inveresk site, such as:

- + The site is itself an historic site and interpretation of that site can only occur at that location;
- + There are major spaces at the site – for example the blacksmith’s shop and the transformer display – that cannot be moved as they are part of the original use;
- + There are exhibits that interpret the original use that it would not make sense to move;
- + There are QVMAG functions that cannot move to the Royal Park because of the nature and scale of the work undertaken (e.g. the large objects workshop);
- + There are collections of objects that are large and would not fit in the Royal Park building or within a combination of the Art Gallery and the former TasTAFE building were it to be purchased by the Council; and
- + By contrast, a redevelopment of QVMAG on its two current sites has the potential to be a major attractor for visitors and a catalyst for the development of new knowledge and enterprise in the north of the State.

There would also be a significant increase in local visitors and users of the new facilities, while a proposed innovation hub at Inveresk would have major research and business benefits. Furthermore, the relocation of UTAS to the Inveresk precinct affords an unparalleled opportunity for qualitative partnerships with QVMAG.

Hirst Projects recommended that:

*“... QVMAG be re-imagined as two distinct destinations, making use of the quality and character of each site, the potential for partnerships and the opportunity to grow the existing and attract new and emerging markets. This option also takes account of the market demand and trends in the sector as identified in the investigation. A redevelopment of this order would: position QVMAG to become a major attractor for tourist visitors looking for different/quality experiences; offer the potential to capture increased market share – overnight and day visitors; and increase the local market by targeting new segments”.*

In response to the various reviews, proposals and insights put forward over the past six years, this **Futures Plan** has considered and addressed these challenges and presents a number of innovative **Key Directions** that will inform and define the future strategic, performance and infrastructure developments which are required to support and enhance QVMAG as a sustainable, dynamic and accessible cultural and economic driver for Launceston, the northern region and for the State.







# KEY DIRECTIONS

## A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Due to the unique attributes, scope and scale of QVMAG this Plan has benchmarked QVMAG alongside five comparable cultural institutions that operate across Australia, and which reflect – through their combined core functions, activities and size – the breadth of QVMAG’s business operations.

- + **Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery**
  - Museum/Art Gallery/Research
  - Large collecting institution
  - Capital centre
- + **Heide Museum of Modern Art**
  - Art Gallery
  - Small collecting institution
  - Metropolitan centre
- + **Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory**
  - Museum/Art Gallery/Research
  - Large collecting institution
  - Capital centre
- + **Art Gallery of Western Australia**
  - Art Gallery
  - Large collecting institution
  - Capital centre
- + **South Australian Museum**
  - Museum/Research
  - Large collecting institution
  - Capital centre

As a whole, the cultural sector experienced significant declines in engagement, operations and funding during the pandemic, with some organisations ceasing operations for an extended period.

With this understanding it is accepted that all museums and galleries have been impacted by the pandemic to varying degrees, depending upon the city and the State in which they are located. The comparison of more recent data would not reflect accurate benchmarking.

Therefore, outcomes and achievements reflecting the 2018/2019 financial year have been utilised for this benchmarking exercise as it was this reporting period which was not impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The defining criteria benchmarked consists:

- + Governance
- + Workforce
- + Financial
- + Engagement
- + Collection

When comparing the legislative, governance and operational models and financial performance of five museums/galleries, of a similar scope, scale and/or role to QVMAG, it is clear that QVMAG is the only entity from the benchmarked organisations which is not established as a trust/authority under the guidance of a Board.

It is equally clear that the value of the QVMAG collection is commensurate with the collection values of the other State and Territory galleries and operationally, it stands out that QVMAG is underperforming relative to the other organisations in two key related areas: annual visitation and own-source revenue.

figure five  
Institutional Benchmarking: Governance and Structure

	QVMAG	TMAG	SAM	Heide	MAGNT	AGWA
Entity Classification	Local Government	Statutory Authority	Statutory Authority	NFP Company Limited by Guarantee	Statutory Authority	Body Corporate
Owner / Shareholder	City of Launceston	Tasmanian Government	South Australian Government	Victorian Government	Northern Territory Government	Western Australian Government
Legislation	NA	TMAG Act 2017	SAM Act 1976	Corporation Act 2001	MAGNT Act 2014	Art Gallery Act 1959
Directors / Trustees	NA	7	8	4	6-10	8
Board Remuneration	NA	\$82,000	\$24,000	not stated	not stated	Chair \$185 Members \$123 per meeting
Management	General Manager	Director	Director	Executive Director	Director	Director & CEO
Staff FTE	46.4	70	90	41	54.3	43

figure six  
Institutional Benchmarking: Operational Funding

	QVMAG	TMAG	SAM	Heide	MAGNT	AGWA
Operating Revenue	\$7.1m	\$13.1m	\$19m	\$5.01m	\$10.4m	\$14.3m
Own Source Revenue	\$899,404	\$2.7m	\$6.93m	\$3.4m	\$1m	\$6.2m
Own Source Revenue % of Total Revenue	12.6%	20.6%	36.4%	68.1%	9.6%	43.3%
State/Territory Funding	\$1.45m	\$10.1m	\$12m	\$1.6m	\$8.6m	\$8m
State/Territory % of Funding	20.4%	77.1%	63.1%	31.9%	82.6%	55.9%
Local Government Funding	\$4.75m	-	-	\$26,000	-	-
Operating Expenses	\$7.1m	\$12.6m	\$18.7m	\$5.07m	\$10.3m	\$11.13m
Operating Profit / (Deficit)	\$0	\$0.5m	\$90,000	(\$53,000)	\$0.1m	\$4m
Staff Costs	\$4.01m	\$6.97m	\$8.59m	\$2.33m	\$5.47m	\$4.95m
Staff Costs % of Total Costs	56.5%	55.3%	45.9%	45.9%	53.1%	47.8%
Average cost per Staff Member	\$86,422	\$99,571	\$95,444	\$56,829	\$100,736	\$115,116

In 2019, QVMAG attracted 125,320 visitors which, divided by operating expenses, equates to a cost of \$56.65 per visitor. The average cost per visitor across all of the entities analysed is \$28.90, which should be a benchmark for QVMAG.

In order to achieve this benchmark, based on the current level of expenditure, QVMAG would need to attract 245,675 visitors annually. It should be noted at this point that QVMAG has never undertaken any detailed audience segmentation, and therefore lacks an in-depth understanding of its current and potential audiences and their needs.

QVMAG is one of only two entities which did not achieve over \$1m in own-source revenue and in actual fact the \$899,000 which was received represented only 12.6% of total revenue.

Aside from the Museum and Art Gallery Northern Territory (MAGNT), the entities are all achieving between 20-68% of revenue coming from own-source revenue with an average of 30.8%.

This would suggest that QVMAG should be targeting 30.8% in own-source revenue, which would equate to (at least) \$2.18m. The other notable issue is that at 20.4% of total funding, the State Government contribution to QVMAG is significantly less than all other entities are receiving.

On average the State Governments fund approximately 48.01% of the total costs for the entities, which for QVMAG would equate to around \$3.4m to \$4.4m.

Equally, the analysis shows that no other local councils are contributing the level of funding which is currently being provided by the City of Launceston for QVMAG.

This also highlights the unique situation which exists in Tasmania, whereby two large government-funded museums and galleries are operating and competing for funds within the State.

Based on the operating costs per \$1,000 of collection held, it is clear that the operational costs of QVMAG are comparably lean, being the lowest of the benchmarked entities. Accordingly, the issue is not that QVMAG costs are too great, it is simply that it is not attracting enough people for the investment being made.

The annual budget for QVMAG is relatively large at \$7.1m: however it is far less than the State entities, which range from between \$10.4m - \$19.0m. It is noted that the cost of employees represents approximately 56.5% of total expenditure for QVMAG, which is slightly higher than the other entities, but very similar to TMAG.

However, the average cost per staff member indicates that QVMAG staff costs are actually at the lower end of the industry standard, which in turn indicates that QVMAG’s operational needs are underfunded when compared with the other State museums/ galleries examined.

Noting that the majority of funding for museums and art galleries in Australia comes from Government, cultural institutions have an ability to generate own-source revenue in a range of ways, including:

- + User fees for public programs, venue hire, ticket revenue, parking fees and reproductions;
- + Sale of goods and disposal of other assets;
- + Rental fees;
- + Sponsorship;
- + Donations;
- + Bequests;
- + Interest; and
- + Other sources such as dividends, additional grants and contributions.

Across those institutions benchmarked it is evident that they are generating between 20-68% of their total revenue through own-source means, with an overall average of 30.8%.

This would suggest that QVMAG should be targeting the generation of around 30% in own-source revenue which, based on current operational revenue and costs, would equate to at least \$2.1m per annum.

In 2018/2019 FY, QVMAG generated \$899,000 in own-source revenue, representing only 12.6% of its total revenue and falling well short of the benchmarked average.

An obvious action would be to introduce an entry charge to QVMAG as the institution does not apply an entry charge for general admittance into the museum or gallery, but does apply a charge for admittance to the Planetarium and to some touring temporary exhibitions. A charge for general entry was trialled in the mid 2000s, however it was abandoned in 2005 and it immediately resulted in a 24.7% increase in visitation.

QVMAG relies on predominantly local visitors, and history demonstrates that the application of a general entry charge will only serve to reduce the number of locals who choose to visit. Accordingly, it is not recommended that a general entry charge be re-introduced.

Rather, through a considered and holistic approach, which heeds the lessons learned from examples such as Sydney’s Carriageworks, QVMAG will be supported by solid foundations through which to significantly grow own-source revenue.

These are outlined in the Key Directions of this Plan, whereby the strategic focus of the institution will shift towards increasing visitation, accessibility, amenity, governance and the implementation of sustainable and resilient enterprise.

figure seven  
Institutional Benchmarking: Visitation and Collection

	QVMAG	TMAG	SAM	Heide	MAGNT	AGWA
Annual Visitation	125,320	451,653	759,316	119,907	332,742	284,000
Operational Cost / Visitor	\$56.65	\$27.89	\$24.62	\$42.28	\$30.95	\$36.26
Collection Value	\$231m	\$408.8m	\$294.6m	\$69.1m	-	\$312.4m
Collection Size	1.5m	-	4.5m	3,500	-	18,000
Operating Cost per \$1,000 of Collection Held	\$30.73	\$32.04	\$64.49	\$72.50	-	\$45.77
Total Public Programs	311	-	109	636	872	-
Programs Visitation	9,174	67,601	184,199	11,811	19,601	-







# GOVERNANCE

## A FIT-FOR-PURPOSE MODEL

From 2013 to 2018 a total of six reviews have been conducted in relation to the organisational, strategic and operational capabilities and outputs of QVMAG. Much has been discussed within these reviews, across a broad cross section of the institution. However, two significant key themes—governance arrangement and business practice—emerge as consistent causal factors which need to be addressed to enable QVMAG to operate in alignment with the values of a cultural institution, and similarly conduct its operations in line with contemporaneous museum management seen in similar high-achieving institutions within the sector.

Whilst it is acknowledged that most public cultural institutions within the Australian context are aligned in some degree to funding partners, correlating to their associated level of government (local government/regional institutions, State government/State institutions, and Federal Government/national institutions), of the benchmarked institutions QVMAG stands out as the only entity which is not established as a trust/authority under the guidance of a Board, highlighting clearly that QVMAG's governance arrangements are atypical for a large cultural institution operating within the Australian cultural sector.

Operating as part of the City of Launceston, sited within the Creative Arts and Cultural Services Network of the organisation, QVMAG administers its core functions in a delicate duality of competing interests between the requirements of the local government sector and the national and international standards of the cultural sector.

This duality presents unique challenges to QVMAG under the current governance arrangements, often presenting the institution with opposing strategic and operational approaches, alongside limiting the institution's capability and eligibility to source and secure many forms of supplementary financial streams afforded to other cultural institutions.

Led by the City of Launceston Councillors and Chief Executive Officer, whilst with the very best intentions in respect to the strategic future of the institution and the critical role it can play within the region, they are not specialists in the contemporary best practice operations of a museum and gallery.

Consequently, QVMAG is not leveraging opportunities specific to non-profit organisations nor receiving the specific strategic direction that most other comparable entities harness through their skills-based boards and independent governance.

Forming part of a holistic approach to enabling QVMAG to perform its role as a leading public institution sited within the cultural sector this Plan has identified and recommends that the institution transitions to a Company Limited by Guarantee.

It is viewed that the provision of contemporaneous and fit-for-purpose governance arrangements is a necessity for the institution and the details of each model are outlined in the following sections.





ANALYSIS

As part of the development of this Plan, the Council has completed a review of the existing ownership structure of QVMAG and investigated suitable options for ownership and management along with the potential requirements and implications of establishing an alternative governance model.

The research conducted suggests the more appropriate alternative governance and ownership models for the museum, including ownership, are either:

a) Statutory Authority, or b) Company Limited by Guarantee.

This is by no means an exhaustive comparison and it is the recommendation that detailed legal advice is sought irrespective of which governance arrangement is pursued as part of the transition.

However, both options presented are synonymous with the governance arrangements of most cultural institutions throughout Australia and in their own way meet the fundamental requirements under the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997* relative to the qualifying characteristics which are required to achieve deductible gift recipient status endorsement as a Public Library, Museum and Gallery.

Under the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997* these characteristics are defined as:

*The following are separate DGR categories:*

- + a public library;
- + a public museum;
- + a public art gallery;
- + an institution consisting of a public library, public museum and public art gallery or of any two of these.

*Although they are different DGR categories, they have common characteristics. Each category has all of the following features:*

- + It is either
  - a charity registered with Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC), or operated by a registered charity;
  - an Australian government agency (or operated by an Australian government agency).
- + It has public ownership agency;
- + Its collection is made available to the public;
- + It is constituted as a library, museum or art gallery, other people recognise it as such, and it conducts itself in the ways that are consistent with such a character;
- + It is an Institution.

**Library, museum or art gallery**

*The terms 'library', 'museum' and 'art gallery' have their ordinary meanings. They have been described as follows:*

- + A library is a place set apart to contain books and other literary material for reading, study or reference;
- + A museum is a building or place for the keeping, exhibition and study of objects of scientific, artistic or historical interest;
- + An art gallery is a building devoted to the exhibition of works of art; a collection of art for exhibition;
- + The constituent or governing documents of a public library, museum or art gallery must be consistent with its character. Also, an organisation's activities, acquisitions policy, staffing, advertising and membership will be relevant;
- + The ways an organisation collects, preserves, maintains and makes its collection available must be consistent with how a library, museum or art gallery operates.

**Institution**

*A public library, museum or art gallery will be either a:*

- + separate legal entity, such as a corporation, unincorporated association or trust;
- + part of a legal entity where that part has a separate institutional character.

*For a part of an organisation to be a public library, museum or art gallery, it will be necessary that all of the following apply:*

- + The affairs of the library, museum or art gallery are separate from the general affairs of the organisation;
- + The public can readily distinguish the library, museum or art gallery from the rest of the organisation;
- + The collection is readily identifiable to the public as the collection of a library, museum or art gallery;
- + The accounts of the library, museum or art gallery are separate from those of the rest of the organisation;
- + Any gifts made to the library, museum or art gallery will be used only for library, museum or art gallery purposes.





By comparison, a similar review of the governance arrangements for TMAG was undertaken and in 2017 the Tasmanian Government introduced the *Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery Act 2017* to provide a modern governance system for the institution.

This action of Government aimed at ensuring that the accountability and responsibility for the management and operation of TMAG be clearly established.

**The Act:**

- + Provides for the establishment of a Board of Trustees as a statutory authority that, as an instrumentality of the Crown, will be responsible for the strategic management of TMAG. The Board is to be accountable to the relevant Minister;
- + Requires the Board to be skills-based, comprising of at least five but no more than seven members that are appointed by the Minister;
- + Establishes a number of objectives for the TMAG and provides an overarching framework that the Board is required to have constant regard for in performing its duties;
- + Enables the Minister to determine the strategic direction through a Ministerial Statement of Expectations and the Board acts in accordance with that statement. The Minister is able to provide limited directions to the Board;
- + Provides the Trustees with the function of stewardship of all of the artefacts, objects, specimens and records and other material that comprise the collection under the control and management of the Board;
- + Allows limited scope for the Minister to intervene in the stewardship functions of the Board; and
- + Establishes a set of corporate planning and reporting requirements to ensure that the objectives of TMAG and the strategic direction of the Minister are given effect to, and delivered by, the Board.



In proposing the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery Bill 2017, the then Premier and Arts Minister, the Hon. Will Hodgman, stated:

*“... As tourism and cultural industries are becoming increasingly important drivers of our economy, TMAG needs a modern governance system to ensure that it continues as one of our premier historical, cultural and scientific institutions.*

*The Government is investing in this sector and implementing best-practice models for funding, governance and legislative arrangements to ensure the industry thrives long into the future.*

*This Bill will address the findings of the Tasmanian Auditor-General’s assessment of TMAG’s compliance with the National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries made in March 2015.*

*This Bill has been developed to establish the institutional structures and strategic planning arrangements for the management and operation of TMAG, and ensure that TMAG’s strategic outcomes are achieved through the prudent use of public resources.*

*It will also provide the basis by which those entrusted with strategic management of the museum and art gallery are charged to deliver those outcomes.*

*The governance of TMAG is primarily and most importantly about the conservation and care of the art, scientific and cultural material under the stewardship of the Board of Trustees.*

*The formal relationship between the Council and the TMAG Board will change with the new governance structure.*

*This Bill provides for the establishment of a Board of Trustees of the Tasmania Museum and Art Gallery as a skills-based Board, in line with modern governance practice.*

*That material, defined as the TMAG collection, is held in trust by the Board for and on behalf of the Crown. To ensure the responsibility and accountability of TMAG’s purpose is clear, it is the intent that the Board of Trustees is to be responsible for the strategic management of TMAG and the implementation of their legislative functions and the exercise of their powers...”.*

As a similarly large unique cultural asset, QVMAG cannot continue to operate in its current manner, equally in terms of fiscal sustainability and within the current operational model.

The institution needs to transition its governance arrangements away from a structural part of Council towards being an independent entity, led by a skills-based Board to provide a more contemporary governance approach.

There are many supporting reasons for forming this view, with the main ones being:

- + Shares out financial risk, so that local government is not the only risk taker;
- + Generates financial reserves to periodically source capital for product reinvigoration;
- + Sources funds from the private sector to support ongoing operational requirements;
- + Creates a highly functional facility which supports Launceston communities;
- + Generates higher levels of staff motivation and performance that typically comes from independent organisations with strong brand values;
- + Attracts valuable collections / art donations from those not prepared to donate to local government;
- + The size and complexity of QVMAG necessitates a more complex, skills-based governance framework which can deliver specialist strategic decisions;
- + QVMAG needs to be more entrepreneurial and flexible to operate in the contemporary marketplace;
- + It currently faces expenses funding constraints because it must compete for funding against the broader needs of the City,
- + City of Launceston retains ownership of QVMAG buildings and the collection.

OPTION ONE  
STATUTORY AUTHORITY

Under this proposal QVMAG would transition to a Statutory Authority of the City of Launceston, established under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993, with the Museum Governance Advisory Board being dissolved and more formal arrangements established to enable the Aboriginal Reference Group, Friends of QVMAG and the Arts Foundation to engage with the revised governance structure.

As a Statutory Authority, QVMAG would meet primary criteria two of the DGR guidelines by being a public cultural entity that is recognised as part of an Australian government agency.

The character and operational activities of the institution would be in accordance with the affairs synonymous with a public cultural institution and separate from Council business operations, therefore meeting the remaining defining characteristics prescribed under the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

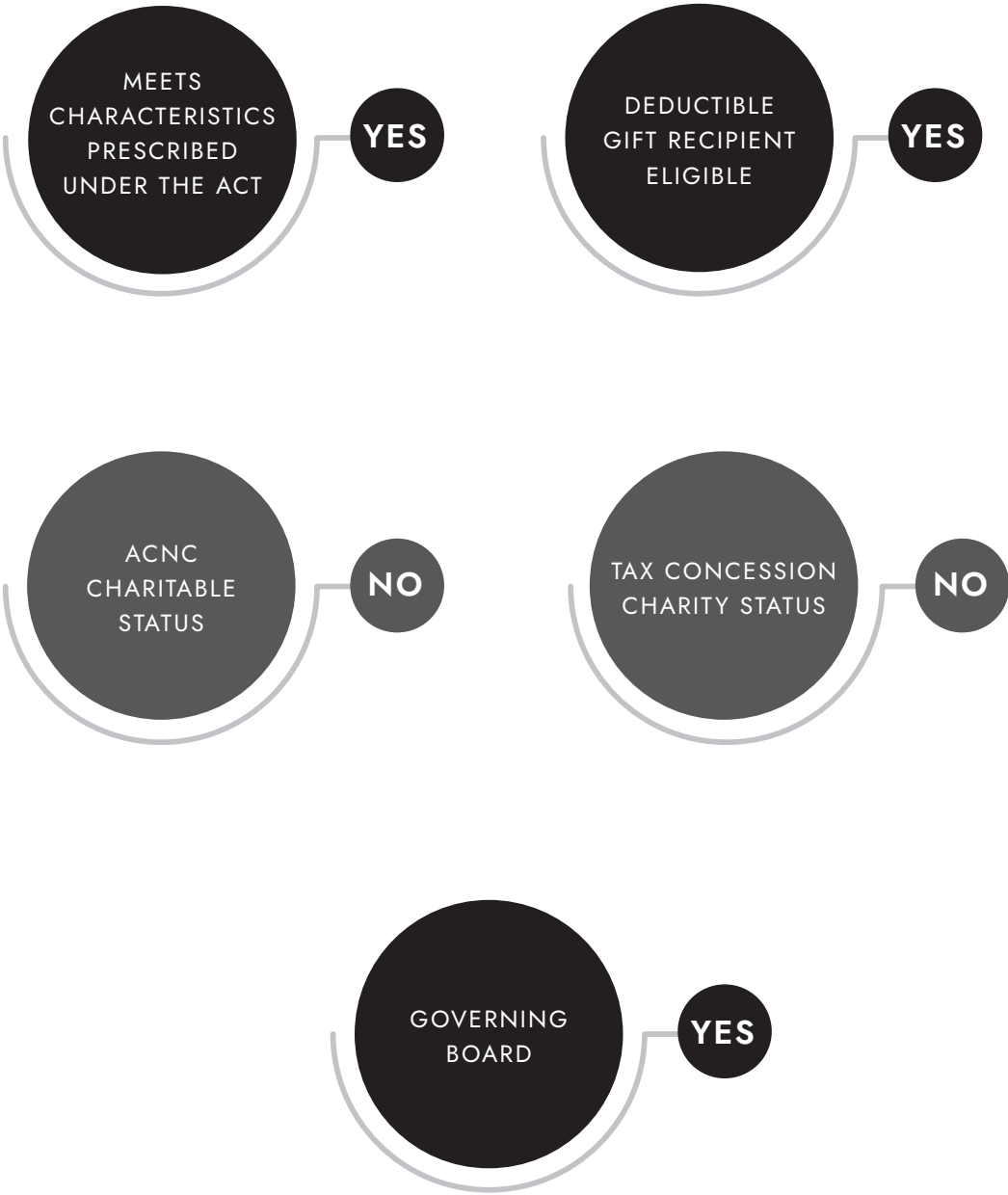
QVMAG would implement and appoint a skills-based Board that oversees the operational activities of the institution, with the Council retaining ownership of the QVMAG buildings and collection.

Whilst the adoption of the Statutory Authority model would provide the institution with the key enabling mechanisms by which to conduct its operations freely in line with the characteristics of a public cultural institution, overseen by a skills-based Board, and separate to the structure and operations of Council, it does preclude the institution from leveraging funding and giving opportunities specific to the not-for-profit (NFP) sector through tax concession charity status.

Under this model QVMAG would not be eligible to receive the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission’s (ACNC) Charitable Status endorsement and therefore unable to obtain organisational funding that require this as a precondition. Further, as a Statutory Authority the City of Launceston’s Chief Executive Officer, irrespective of a skills-based Board being in place, retains and assumes the authority to appoint and dismiss the Director of the institution.

Realigning QVMAG’s governance arrangements towards this model is considered one of the effective ways through which to empower the institution to conduct its operations in accordance with industry and is considered critical in supporting significant investment and shared risk.

AT A GLANCE  
STATUTORY AUTHORITY







The Council can create a single authority by absolute majority under Section 30 of the Act, to: carry out any scheme, work or undertaking; and provide facilities or services; and perform any function or exercise any power of a council under this or any other Act.

A set of rules need to be developed for the single authority to provide for the following:

- + the membership of the authority;
- + the proceedings of the authority;
- + financial contributions to the authority by the relevant single authority council;
- + the specific functions and specific powers of the authority;
- + the setting of goals and objectives of the authority;
- + the rules of conduct of the business of the authority;
- + the manner in which assets of the authority are to be distributed in the event of it being wound up;
- + the manner in which any dividend is to be paid;
- + the withdrawal of a participating council from membership of the joint authority
- + the proportions in which the participating councils are to be responsible for the liabilities of a joint authority in the event of its insolvency;
- + the keeping and use of the common seal;
- + the attestation of execution of documents; and
- + any other prescribed matter.

The rules may provide for the following:

- + a board of management to perform specified functions and exercise specified powers of the single authority or joint authority;
- + the appointment by that board of a chief executive officer to be responsible for the administration and operation of the authority;
- + the appointment by the chief executive officer of persons to assist the board in performing its functions and exercising its powers;
- + the delegation of functions and powers of the board to the chief executive officer;
- + the delegation of functions and powers of the chief executive officer to a person appointed;
- + the transfer of employees and the rights and entitlements of employees transferred:
  - from a council to a single authority;
  - or from a single authority or joint authority to a council;
- + the transfer of assets and liabilities;
- + the fixing and imposition of fees and charges relating to any goods or services provided by the authority;
- + If a board of management is provided for, the rules of a single authority are to provide for consultation between the membership of the authority and the board of management in respect of the strategic direction to be taken by the authority.



# OPTION TWO

## COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

Under this proposal QVMAG would transition to a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG), registered with the Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC), and subsequently registered and endorsed by the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission as a recognised charity, with the Museum Governance Advisory Board being dissolved and more formal arrangements established to enable the Aboriginal Reference Group, Friends of QVMAG and the Arts Foundation to engage with the revised governance structure.

As a charitable CLG, QVMAG would meet primary criteria one of the DGR guidelines by being a public cultural entity that is recognised as a charity registered with Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC), or operated by a registered charity.

The character and operational activities of the institution would be in accordance with the affairs synonymous with a public cultural institution and separate from Council business operations and therefore meeting the remaining defining characteristics prescribed under the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

QVMAG would implement and appoint a skills-based board that oversees the operational activities of the institution, with the Council retaining ownership of the QVMAG buildings and collection.

Cultural organisations that meet the legal meaning of charity and the ACNC requirements for registration are eligible to register with the ACNC.

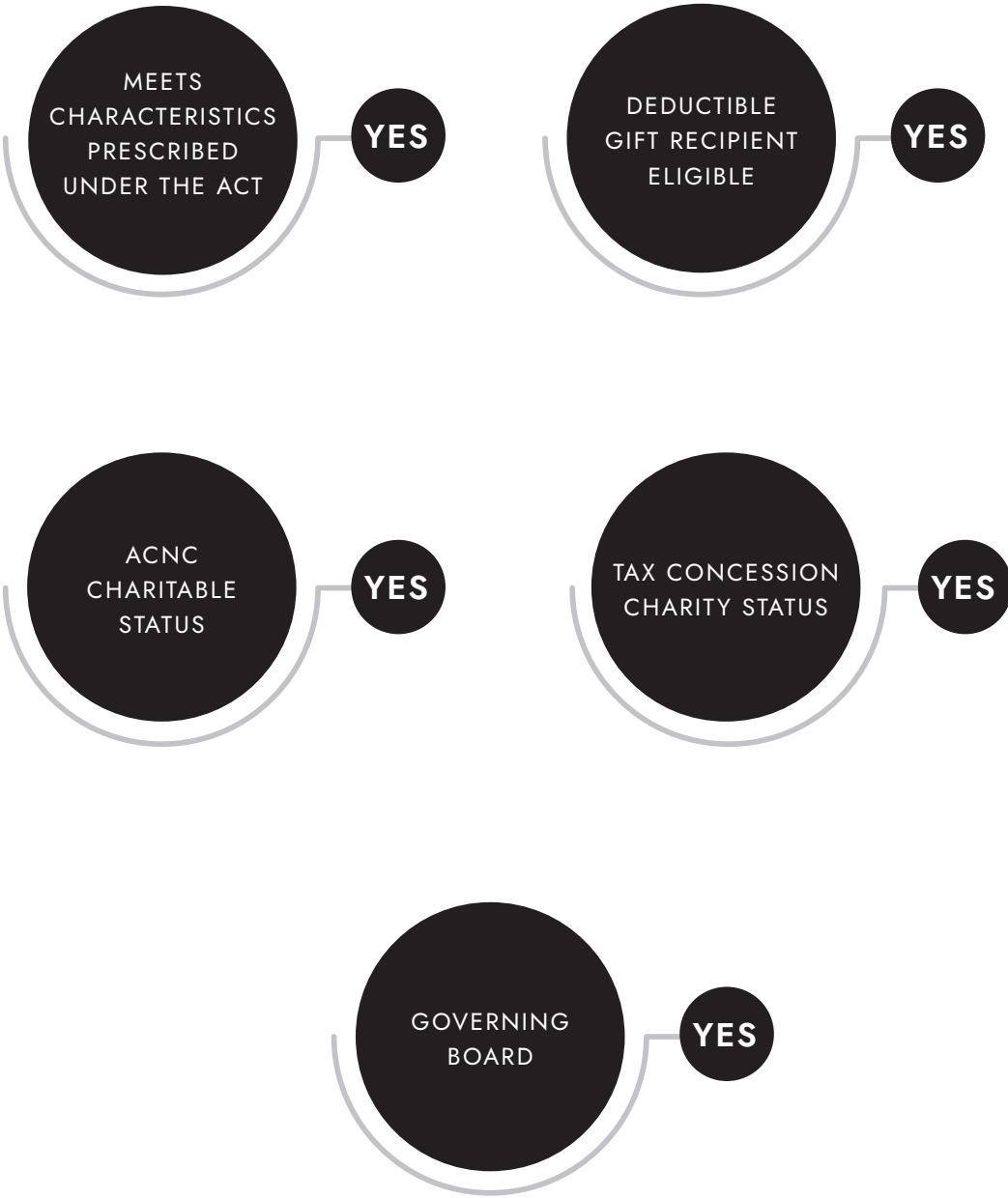
Registration is required before an organisation can receive charity tax concessions from the ATO, such as deductible gift recipient (DGR) status. There is also a range of Commonwealth concessions, exemptions or benefits that depend on a charity being registered with the ACNC.

The ACNC can only register charitable organisations. An organisation that is a ‘not-for-profit’ but is not a charity, is not required to register with the ACNC. However, as a result of changes to DGR laws in September 2021, from 14 December 2021 registration as a charity with the ACNC is a precondition for DGR endorsement for all non-government DGRs (except for ancillary funds or DGRs that are specifically listed by name in tax law).

While this precondition has already been around for the majority of general DGR categories, it has now extended the requirement to the remaining general DGR categories – including the Register of Cultural Organisations (ROCO) category. Australian organisations can be listed on ROCO if they meet the requirements, including that their principal purpose is to promote cultural activities in Australia such as visual arts, arts or languages of Indigenous persons, music, film, literature, crafts and design.

### AT A GLANCE

#### COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE



The ACNC describes a charity that is eligible to register with the ACNC as being a not-for-profit that:

- + has a charitable purpose that is for the benefit of the public;
- + has no disqualifying purposes (such as to promote unlawful activities);
- + is not a political party or government body individual, sole trader, or partnership;
- + meets other ACNC rules for registration.

The ACNC has the responsibility for deciding whether an organisation can be registered as a charity under the ACNC. Note that a cultural organisation that is a charity can have more than one recognised charitable purpose and can engage in more than one of the charitable activities that are identified by the ACNC.

A ‘charity’ has a special legal meaning that is set out in the *Charities Act 2013*. As identified earlier, a charity must be a not-for-profit organisation that has a charitable purpose that is for the benefit of the public.

The ‘purpose’ of an organisation is what is identified in the governing documents as the mission of the organisation; that is, the reason for which the organisation was established, or the goal to which the activities of the organisation are intended to work to achieve. A charity may have more than one purpose that is recognised as a charitable purpose.

The recognition of the charitable status of an organisation requires that all of the purposes of the organisation must be charitable, except purposes that can be described as ‘incidental or ancillary’ to achieving the charitable purposes. The governing documents of an organisation are the formal documents that describe the purpose(s) of the organisation, and the activities the organisation can carry out and the organisational processes and rules for managing the organisation. Examples include: constitutions, articles of association, trust deeds, charters and rule books.

The Charities Act sets out a statutory definition of charity that recognises 12 kinds of purpose that are charitable, including the purpose of:

- + advancing culture;
- + promoting reconciliation, mutual respect and tolerance between groups of individuals that are in Australia;
- + promoting or protecting human rights;
- + engaging in activities that are beneficial to the general public that may reasonably be regarded as analogous to, or within the spirit of, any of the purposes that the Charities Act recognises as being a charitable purpose.

Whether an organisation is not-for-profit is determined by what it does with the profit it makes (if any). A not-for-profit organisation cannot be run for any profit, gain or benefit of its members, the people who run it or their close relations.

For example, an art centre or gallery which distributes dividends to its members is outside what is accepted as being a not-for-profit organisation. On the other hand, an art centre or gallery which puts the money it makes back into the community for the purposes of fostering the creation of more art, is a not-for-profit organisation. This does not mean that not-for-profit organisations cannot make a profit; rather, any profit made must be used to further the organisation’s purposes. This also does not mean that not-for-profit organisations cannot employ people; they can certainly pay staff reasonable remuneration for their services.

Cultural organisations registered on the ACNC Register are subject to a number of additional new legal obligations.

These new legal obligations are discussed below. Some arts organisations have already been automatically registered on the ACNC Register. These include those registered with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) as organisations with:

- + deductible gift recipient (DGR) status; and/or
- + public benevolent institution (PBI) status.

Registration on the ACNC Register is necessary if an organisation wishes to obtain or maintain its DGR or PBI status.

Having DGR status permits an organisation’s supporters to obtain tax deductions on their gifts and donations to the organisation.

Being endorsed as a DGR is a separate process to being registered on the ACNC Register. Organisations with PBI status benefit from a number of tax exemptions. Again, being endorsed as a PBI is a separate process to being registered on the ACNC Register.

Obtaining registration as a DGR or PBI entity provides an organisation with the status recognised by the ATO related to the fund raising activities of the organisation.

The ATO has set out rules that a not-for-profit organisation must comply with in order for the ordinary and statutory income to be exempt from income tax. Taxation Ruling TR 2015/1 (25 February 2015) has the title ‘Income tax: special conditions for various entities whose ordinary and statutory income is exempt’ and sets out two special conditions that income tax exempt entities (such as charities or not-for-profit organisations) must satisfy in order to maintain their income tax exempt status.

Those special conditions are:

- + the entity must comply with all the substantive requirements in its governing rules (**governing rules condition**); and
- + the entity must apply its income and assets solely for the purpose for which the entity is established (**income and assets condition**).





The 'substantive' requirements in an entity's governing rules are the rules that state what the entity is required and permitted to do, and what those, who control the entity, are required and permitted to do in respect of the entity.

The governing rules are usually found in the constitution, although the governing rules that define the entity's rights and duties may be found in other documents of the organisation and may also be found in other sources, such as legislation and the common law.

The 'substantive' requirements can be contrasted to 'procedural' requirements, such as the rules for conduct of meetings and voting rules.

The income and assets condition is directed at compliance with the 'purpose' of the charity or not-for-profit organisation. The purpose of an organisation will usually be found in the constitution and is the charitable purpose or purposes that are discussed above.

However, there can be other factors to consider in order to determine what is the purpose of the organisation, including policies and plans, administration, finances, history and control, and any legislation governing the operation of the entity.

Adoption of the CLG model would provide the institution with the key enabling mechanisms by which to conduct its operations freely in line with the characteristics of a public cultural institution.

Overseen by a skills-based Board, and separate to the structure and operations of Council, it does require significant investment in both time and cost to fully implement the necessary legal frameworks and operational requirements pertaining to the Corporations Act.

Although, and importantly, the Company Limited by Guarantee model does allow the institution to meet Tax Concession Charity status in addition to DGR status which would enable the institution to seek significant funding opportunities to supplement capital and operational activities of the institution.

**For example:** for QVMAG to seek and bid for significant investment from the Ian Potter Foundation the institution is required to be both a DGR Item 1 **and** Tax Concession Charity status endorsed institution.

As TCC status is not eligible to Statutory Authorities, only the Company Limited by Guarantee model would allow the institution to qualify and therefore leverage funding through such Foundations.

Transitioning QVMAG's governance arrangements to a Company Limited by Guarantee **is the recommendation of this Plan.** The CLG model is considered the most effective way through which to empower the institution to conduct its operations in accordance with industry and is considered critical in supporting significant investment and shared risk.





ESTUARY Below the Surface

Civilisation exists by geological consent, subject to change without notice!

Legend Tasmania's First Peoples



## FUNDING

### A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

The concept of and impetus for cultural institutions to develop and nurture financial resilience as an enterprise model of governance is rarely a leading topic amongst the sector. Often key themes such as creative development, organisational and individual capacity building, and cultural practice dominate the prevailing discourse, as they would, given the complex role our institutions play in socio-cultural development, advancement of knowledge and inclusivity.

With the rise of COVID-19 and the resulting challenges faced by the arts and cultural sector it is perhaps critical now more than ever that institutions seek to establish and embed enterprise resilience into their core business models rather than a reliance on funding sources which, when compromised, either limits the institution to effectively undertake its core business, or at the very worst highlights an unsustainable operating model that manifests an existential threat to the institution.

In early 2020, the arts and cultural community throughout the country were shocked when it was publicly announced that Sydney's Carriageworks was placed into voluntary administration after suffering an irreparable loss of income due to the pandemic and the ensuing shutdown of non-essential services.

Carriageworks was recognised as arguably Australia's most successful and innovative multi-arts institution, receiving in excess of over 1 million visitors a year and an operating model which generated 75% own source revenue, leveraging the annual State government \$2.5m operational grant to achieve an annual operating budget in excess of \$10m through partnerships, events and commercial enterprise.

Whilst no one could have foreseen the rise of the pandemic and the impact resultant from forced closures and the decimation of the retail and arts and cultural sectors, significant lessons need to be heeded in respect to building a resilient funding base able to withstand such external impacts.

Reliance upon limited funding sources, derived solely from a single government grant and commercial partnerships, left Carriageworks open to insolvency when the majority of its funding base almost entirely evaporated overnight.

Encouragingly, Carriageworks' fate was reversed when, through the goodwill and generosity of community, philanthropists, government and the private sector, the institution received the financial support required to avoid insolvency, compensate creditors, and subsequently remodel the institution's operating model in favour of a more diversified approach.





Although operating within the broad theatre that is the cultural sector, it is recognised that Carriageworks is an entirely different cultural institution to that of QVMAG.

Carriageworks is a non-collecting, multi-arts institution focussed on the development and presentation of contemporary cultural practice.

Whilst QVMAG is a public collecting institution which spans across the entire breadth of the GLAM sector, including its role as part of the Federal Government’s *National Research Infrastructure*.

However, the funding proposition and questions of sustainability, resilience, diversification and establishing financial certainty play as much, if not more, of an important role in the future direction of QVMAG than that of Carriageworks, given its scope and scale alongside that of being one of only two significant public institutions within the State. Furthermore, QVMAG is not afforded the opportunity to be situated in a trendy inner-city suburb of Australia’s largest city and the role it plays within the community is far broader in terms of activation, accessibility and advocacy.

The funding arrangements for QVMAG and TMAG were first established over 128 years ago when museum interests in Launceston and Hobart were initially championed by the Royal Society of Tasmania, culminating in one public museum being established in each of the cities in the 1870s.

By 1884, the Hobart Museum had outgrown the resources of the Royal Society of Tasmania, and became the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, a State Government-funded entity. In response to similar requests for support in Launceston, the State Government agreed to “*erect a Museum and Art Gallery for that town*”, whereby maintenance of the building was to be undertaken by the Launceston City Council on behalf of the regions of northern Tasmania, and subject to money assigned by the State.

During the years that followed, discussions continued on the details of a bill to provide for the management of the museum in Launceston, during which time it was supported from year-to-year by funds from the State Government. The Premier wrote on July 24, 1890 that the bill would be comparable with that for the Hobart Museum, incorporating the Launceston Museum by “... *such of the provisions of the Act 49 Victoria, No 34, ‘the Museum and Botanical Incorporate Act’ as are deemed advisable, and endowing the same £250 per annum.*”

Anticipation of this arrangement being formalised was reflected through the early 1890s, during which time TMAG and the Victoria Museum and Art Gallery (which later became QVMAG) shared a curator. However, as time went on, the State Government insisted that the City of Launceston match State Government funding – a commitment which the City of Launceston was reluctant to agree to, noting that such a requirement was not made of Hobart City Council in relation to TMAG.

Nevertheless in 1894, recession necessitated the formalisation of a financial commitment. Records suggest it was the City of Launceston’s funding constraints that led to the elimination of funding specifications from the establishment Bill (59 Victoria No5, 1895) that is: there appears to have been uncertainty about the City of Launceston’s capacity to match the funding committed by the State Government.

Disparity relating to the funding arrangements for QVMAG between the State Government and the City of Launceston have been ongoing since those early days. Irrespective of intent, this history has led to QVMAG being a museum of State scale and significance being managed by a local council.

As the State’s largest two publicly owned regional museum/galleries, this Plan recognises the opportunity for the City of Launceston and the State Government to work together in identifying ways for QVMAG and TMAG to share resources and to provide cost savings for both organisations.

Additionally, it is the Council’s view that the State Government needs to increase the funding it provides for QVMAG to better reflect its role as a state level institution and to provide more equity between QVMAG and TMAG.

This is particularly the case when it is understood that the State Government has invested \$49.3m into TMAG over the past five years and only \$7.2m into QVMAG.

Some would take the initial position that TMAG is a State institution and QVMAG is a regional institution and that it is not the State’s role to fund local government cultural institutions.

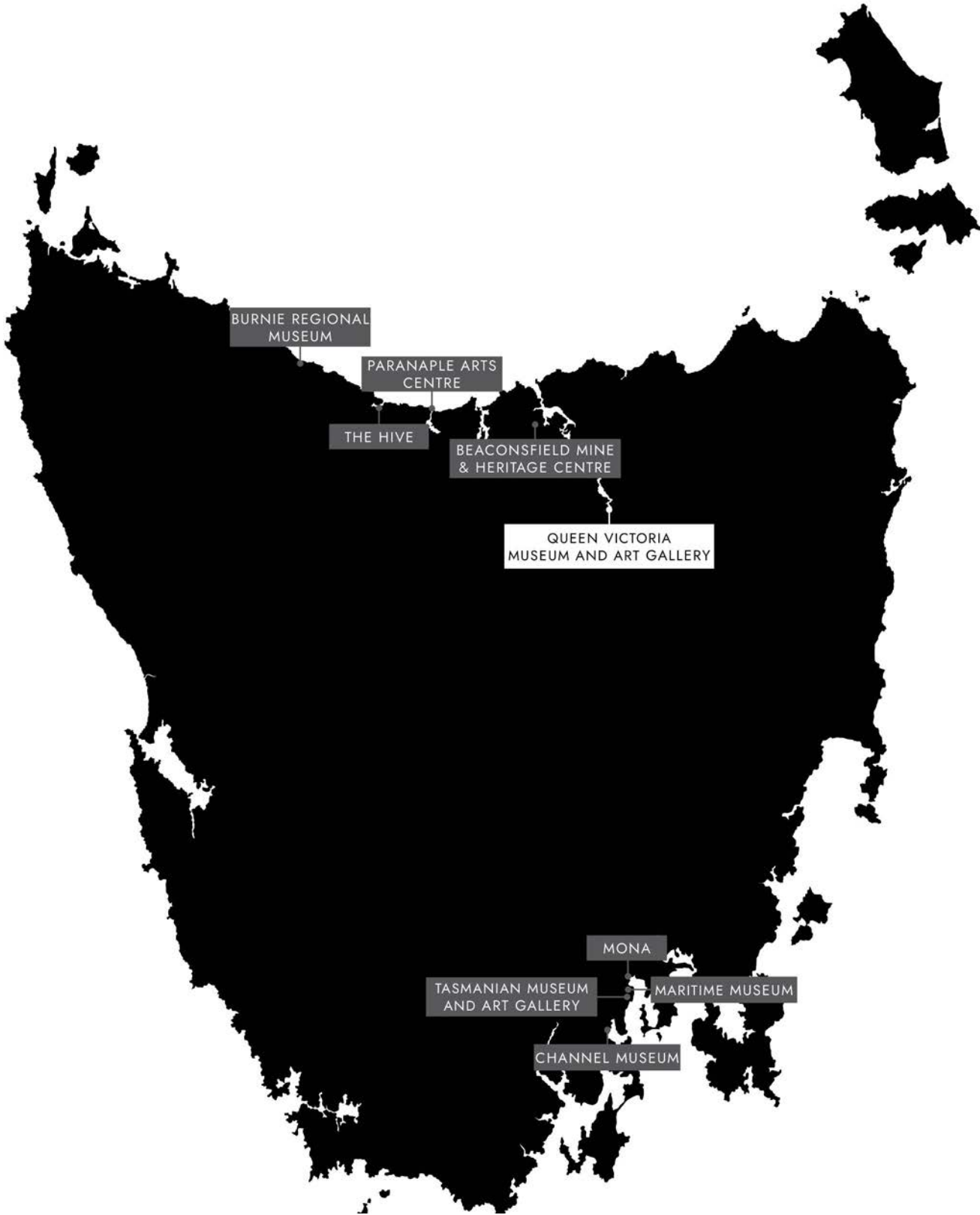
Notwithstanding the complex origins history of TMAG and QVMAG, to take this view is to misunderstand the unique cultural ecosystem found in Tasmania, which cannot be reasonably compared with that of mainland State counterparts.

It is a demonstrated fact that all other States in Australia contain a diverse and developed cultural sector which includes numerous public institutions across both State and local government environments. Tasmania however, remains the exception in this regard with very few cultural institutions of scale.

**The distinction between State-level and regional in a State that contains two primary metropolitan centres that provide such core services is not only a misnomer, nor would it be objective in seeking to seize and leverage the cultural assets that make Tasmania unique in the first place.**

Quite simply, TMAG and QVMAG stand alone as the largest and most significant Government-owned museum and art galleries within Tasmania.





With annual costs of around \$13.6m and \$7.6m respectively, these institutions cannot reasonably be considered or compared with the other museums and galleries that operate within the state, other than MONA. However, the costs, benefits and business model for MONA is a private concern, and little information is publicly available.

In terms of the smaller galleries which operate within the State, the Paranaple Arts Centre in Devonport is the closest to QVMAG and TMAG with an annual cost of around \$3.2m. However, this includes the Town Hall, Theatre and Devonport Visitor Information Centre in addition to the gallery.

In 2021/21 the Paranaple Arts Centre received 33,112 visitors. The only other sizable institution is the Beaconsfield Mine and Heritage Centre, which receives around 40,000 visitors annually and costs the West Tamar Council around \$922,000 per annum to operate.

The Burnie Regional Museum received around 22,000 visitors per year and had a cost of a little over \$300,000 per annum before the Burnie City Council made a decision for it to close in 2021. Other entities such as the Channel Heritage Centre, Maritime Museum of Tasmania, and Ulverstone Cultural Centre are smaller institutions servicing their local communities at relatively modest annual costs.

It has been previously mentioned in this Plan that the State Government is required to provide an endowment to Council for the operation of QVMAG on an annual basis under the Act. The current MoU with the State Government in respect to the endowment rate was negotiated more than 20 years ago and is now in need of review.

The Council is firmly of the view that it is not sustainable for the current funding arrangements to continue into the longer term. These funding arrangements are not a model which will enable the future success of QVMAG as they:

- + unfairly place the burden for majority funding of a State-level asset on the ratepayers of just one municipal area despite the fact that QVMAG is servicing the region and the State more broadly;
- + create a situation whereby QVMAG is underfunded compared to similar-sized entities across Australia because of the budget constraints of the Council;
- + are causing the Museum and Gallery to fail in attracting sufficient visitation; and
- + are not enabling QVMAG to generate own-source revenue to an industry standard level.

This Plan examines five potential options for the future funding of QVMAG which are each premised on the understanding that the status quo is not a long-term option.



## OPTION ONE

### MUNICIPALITY RATES INCREASE

In order to adequately fund QVMAG, the Council has the option to introduce a rate increase (or charge) to rate-payers which would be inclusive of the cost of operating the institution.

Using the 2020/2021 FY as a base, this would equate to a rate increase of around 9% or \$167.72 per rateable property within the City of Launceston municipality.

Considering that QVMAG is a State-level cultural entity which services communities of northern Tasmania, partners with industry and contributes to the Tasmanian cultural offer as a whole, it would be both inequitable and inappropriate for the City of Launceston ratepayers to increase their current contribution towards the operational cost of QVMAG. An additional \$167.72 per rateable property is a significant cost, which would be unaffordable for many residents, particularly in this COVID-19 and rising cost of living environment.

This argument is reinforced when it is considered that the City of Hobart ratepayers do not have to contribute to the recurrent funding of TMAG, even though it is located within their municipal area.

Similarly, many non-Launceston residents currently visit and enjoy QVMAG free of charge with no financial contribution being made by the broader northern region towards the operation of QVMAG.

In the case of facilities such as the Launceston Leisure and Aquatic Centre there is a charge for people to enter and utilise the facility and therefore non-Launceston residents are assisting to fund its operation.

However, it has been demonstrated that an entry charge is a significant disincentive to visitation and it not an option for QVMAG.

Not least of which is the consideration that the material cultural collections of QVMAG are in fact the material cultural collections of the communities of Tasmania and to ask that City of Launceston ratepayers meet both a cost in operations and an additional cost of entry is neither sustainable nor appropriate.

For this option to be considered as a viable cost/ratepayer funding model then significant local government reform would be needed to equitably represent the geographical municipality in which QVMAG services.

It is clear that as a major service centre for the north, Launceston is affected by the 'spillover' that the current municipal adjacencies effect.

However, given local government reform is the providence of the State, and taking into consideration the inequality that this option would represent if it were to be implemented today, it is **not the recommendation of this Plan** that this option be pursued.







## OPTION TWO

### SHARED COSTS - MUNICIPALITIES

There has been a funding inequality for the two major Government-owned museums and galleries within Tasmania dating back to the early 1890s, when TMAG became a State Government funded entity, and the Victoria Museum and Art Gallery (which later became QVMAG) became a City of Launceston funded entity.

At this time, the City of Launceston was reluctant to agree to fund the entity because a similar requirement was not made of Hobart City Council in relation to TMAG. Nevertheless in 1894, a funding commitment was formalised by the City of Launceston.

In accordance with these funding decisions made some 128 years ago, the State Government and the City of Launceston have continued to fund these two institutions on their own, without any financial assistance from the surrounding Councils, which continue to receive the cultural and economic benefits from their operation.

In particular, the northern Councils all receive the benefits of having Australia's largest regional museum and gallery operating in their vicinity.

Outside of broader local government reform, it would be reasonable to seek an operational contribution for QVMAG from these councils, which all benefit to varying degrees from the tourism and visitation created by the entity.

However, while local councils make financial contribution for established regional entities, such as the Northern Tasmania Development Corporation (NTDC), Visit Northern Tasmania and NRM North, they do not recognise or provide financial support for assets owned and operated by other Councils in the region.

There is a general sentiment in the local government sector that each Council needs to fund their own assets, irrespective of any regional role they may play and/or the benefits they receive.

Accordingly, it is considered unlikely that this option would be supported by the Councils and therefore **is not recommended to be pursued**.



# OPTION THREE

## CESSATION OF QVMAG ACTIVITIES

It has previously been demonstrated that QVMAG is a significant cultural asset in many respects, but is also unique in that it is the largest regional museum and art gallery in Australia, operating in the smallest State in Australia alongside a substantial State Government-owned museum and art gallery.

Most other States and Territories in Australia have one government-funded museum and one art gallery (often combined in one institution), with smaller regional institutions that are supported by local government. QVMAG stands apart in this regard—as indeed does Tasmania—and subsequently services well beyond the boundaries of its municipality [figure eight].

In addition to its role of maintaining, curating and exhibiting its large collection, QVMAG engages in a significant body of scientific investigation, research, education and publishing. Indeed, the level of scientific and scholarly contribution made by QVMAG is comparable or exceeds that of other State-level museums from around Australia.

An option for the Council would be to cease delivering scientific, investigation, education and research to focus its service offerings on maintaining, curating and exhibiting the Collection. Such a move could reduce the annual operational cost of QVMAG by \$1m. The cutting of services is always an option for reducing the operational cost of a museum, or any business for that matter, however, the question that needs to be answered is whether the actual cost of cutting is greater than the monetary savings gained?

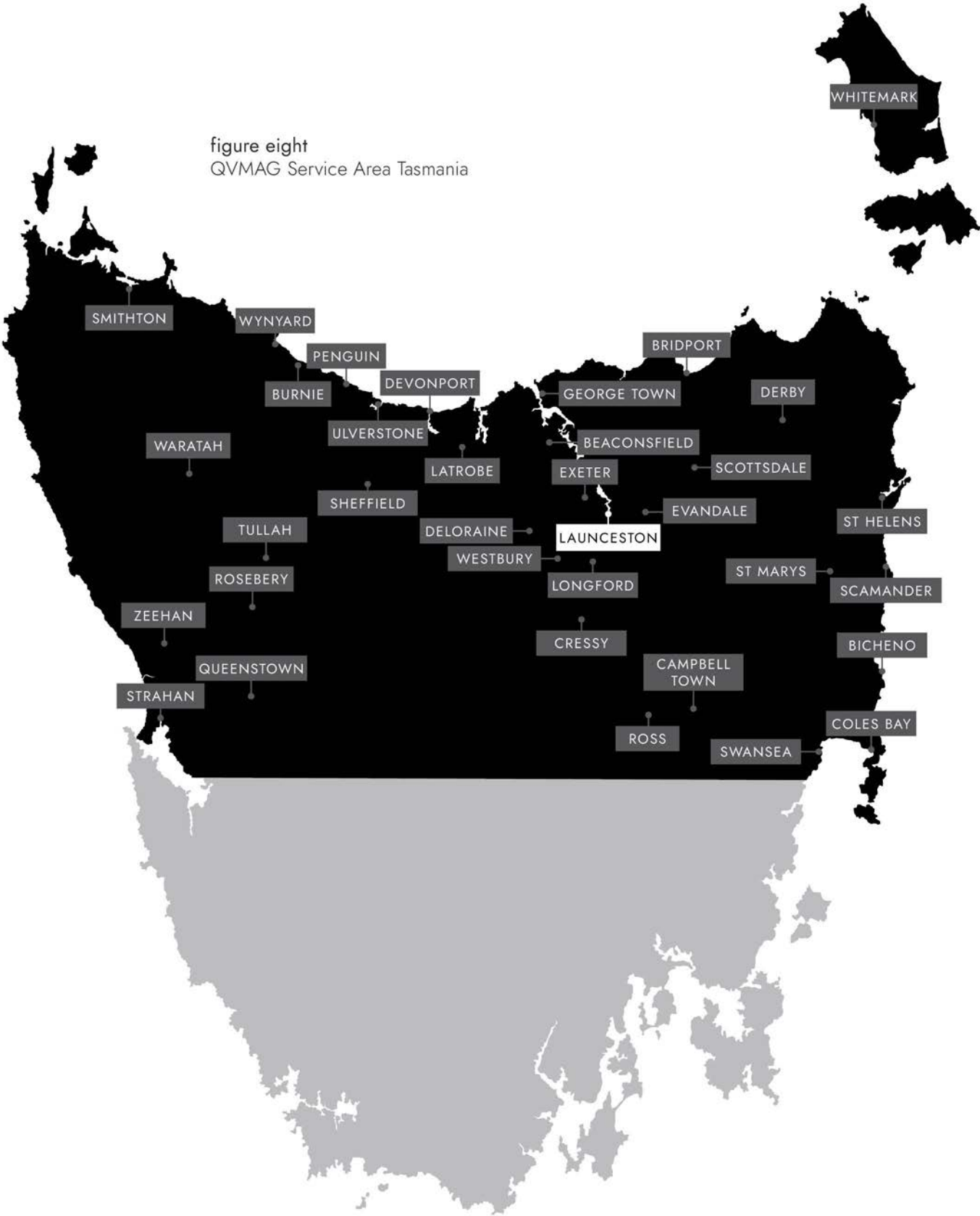
A summary of the actual costs for cutting the scientific, investigation, education and research services at QVMAG is as follows:

- + QVMAG would lose its standing within the sector and would lose employees as a result;
- + There would be strong condemnation of the move from the stakeholders of interest;
- + QVMAG has an international standard natural sciences collection. If the scientific, investigation, education and research services were to cease, QVMAG would still need to maintain this collection;
- + The ability of QVMAG to collaborate with UTAS would be compromised; and
- + The reduction in employees would see a decreased ability to rotate exhibitions of the Collection.

It is considered that northern Tasmania would lose a significant asset if the Council were to reduce the service offerings of QVMAG to focus only on maintaining, curating and exhibiting its Collection. The buildings will all still need to be maintained, however, they would be substantially underutilised.

**Accordingly, it is not recommended that this action be pursued.**

Rather, opportunities exist for QVMAG and TMAG to focus on exploring tangible means to utilise the unique situation which exists within the State to share staff and resources to provide both organisations with efficiencies and cost savings.





## OPTION FOUR

### INCREASE STATE CONTRIBUTION

It has been noted in the Plan that at around 20% of total funding, the State Government contribution to QVMAG is significantly less than all of the other similar entities which have been benchmarked [figure six].

Whereas on average across Australia the State Governments are funding approximately 48.01% of the total costs for similar entities, which for QVMAG, would equate to a State Government contribution of around \$3.7m.

The Plan has also demonstrated that no other local government council across Australia is contributing a similar level of funding to a cultural institution as the City of Launceston is currently providing for QVMAG.

When the State Government first entered an MoU with the City of Launceston to provide funding for QVMAG in 1999, the Government's contribution represented 40.2% of its operational costs. This also highlights the unique situation which exists in Tasmania, whereby two large Government-funded museums and galleries are operating and competing for funds within the State.

However, in the majority of cultural institutions examined, they are the dominant entity operating in their State, with the Tasmanian cultural ecosystem standing apart with a distinctly different State and regional cultural network. In contrast to QVMAG, TMAG in Hobart is majority funded by the State Government, with no recurrent funding provided by the local government in which it is sited.

Whilst such an arrangement is not uncommon throughout the broader lexicon of the cultural sector, Tasmania is, by all accounts, the smallest State in the country and the current breadth and limited scope and scale of the cultural network in the State is unique and consequently reflective of this circumstance. Therefore, drawing comparisons between mainland States and the corresponding funding arrangements between their local and state entities in networks that are broader and far more diverse has absolutely no relevance in the Tasmanian context, and to contend otherwise would be misguided.

Upon review, the State Government has contributed over \$49m in operational funding to TMAG in the past five years and only around \$7m to QVMAG [figure ten] with this disparity in financial support presenting significant operational and sustainability challenges on both the City of Launceston and the institution.

In redressing this circumstance, notwithstanding the shortfall in capital infrastructure investment, this option would increase the State Government's annual operational funding contribution to QVMAG by \$2.18m, from \$1.52m to \$ 3.70m, based on the 2020/2021 FY.

This option would represent a fairer funding approach as it would recognise the role that QVMAG plays in the broader region and would assist in addressing the current disadvantage being experienced by Launceston ratepayers. **Accordingly, this option is a recommendation of this Plan.**



figure nine  
QVMAG Major Operational Funding Comparison

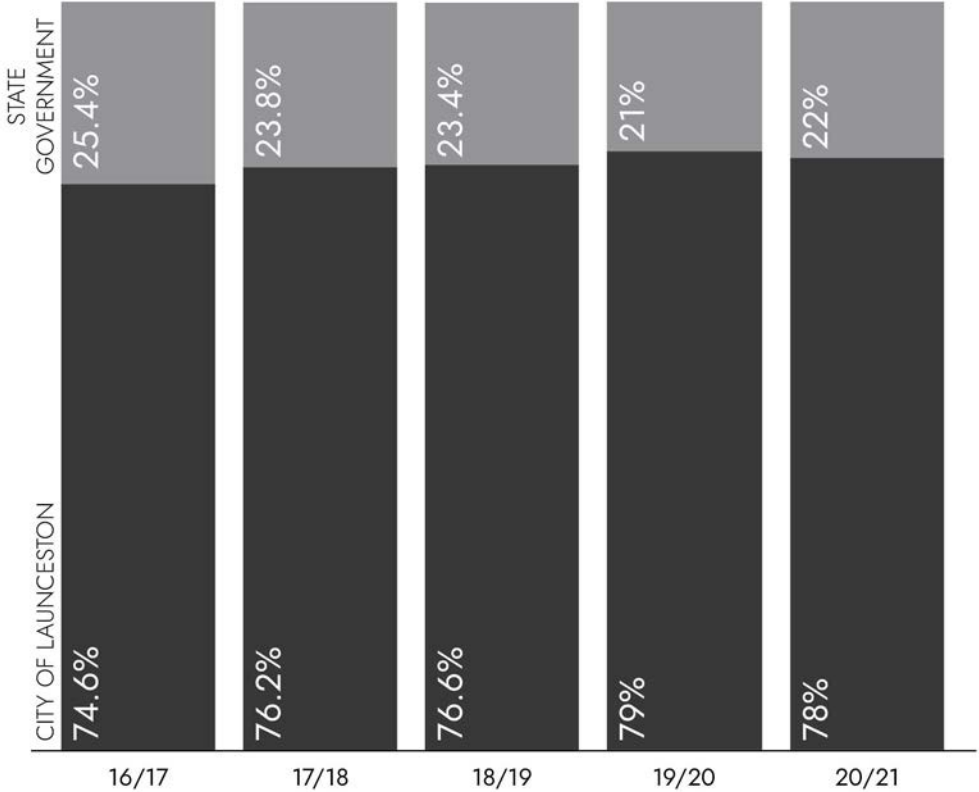
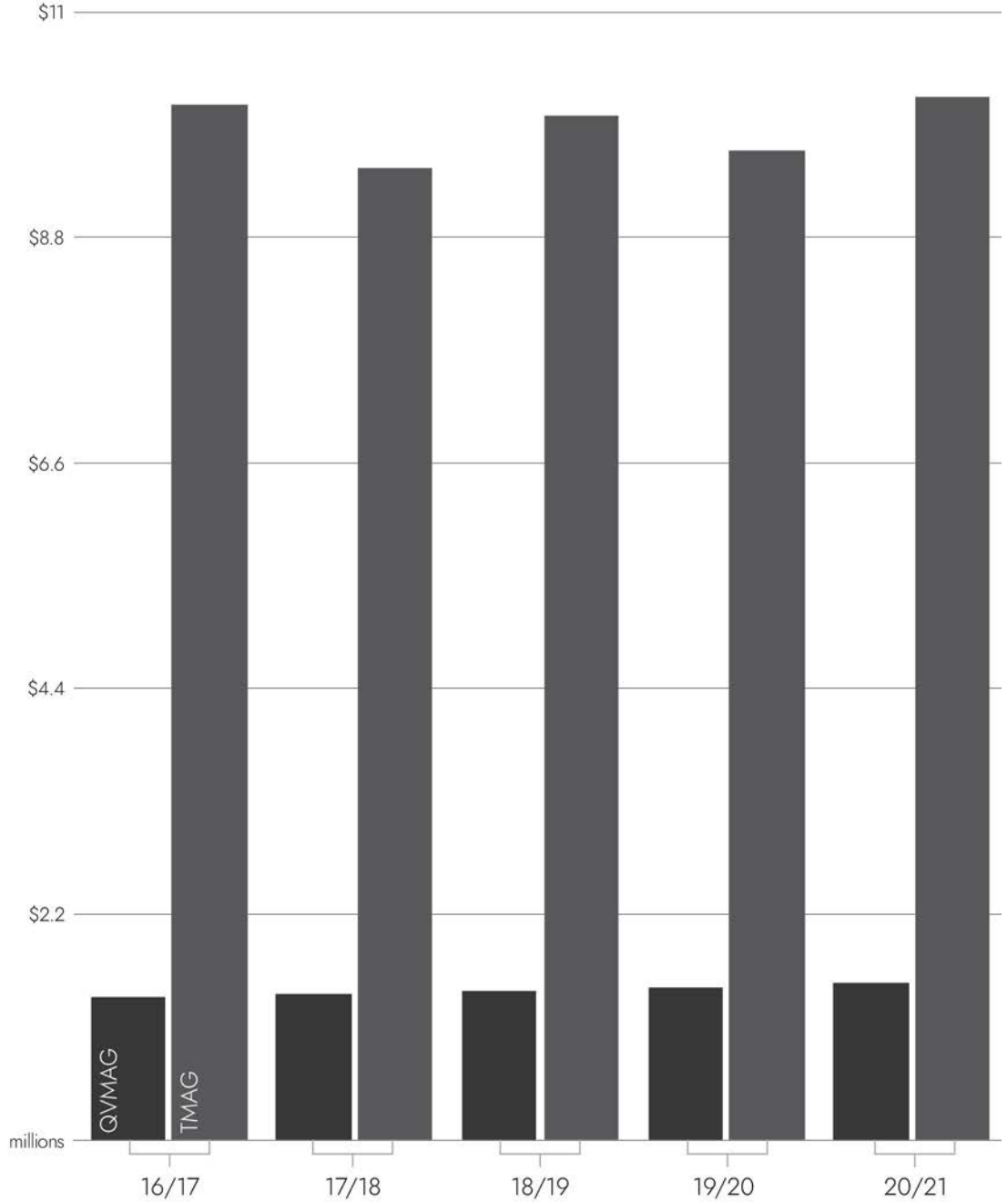


figure ten  
QVMAG/TMAG State Government Funding Comparison





## OPTION FIVE

### ESTABLISH QVMAG FUTURES FUND

As prefaced by the overview outlined in the introduction of this Key Direction, and in consideration of the Carriageworks case study and the exposition of the financial vulnerability of cultural institutions reliant upon limited funding sources, it is time to think much more seriously about how we fund our cultural institutions, especially given that the binary (Government) is impacted by greater demands on its limited fiscal resources amid rising costs and increased service delivery expectations.

Self-evidently, a successful society must have a robust and innovative economy—one that is able to adapt to changing domestic and global circumstances. Similarly, there is strong evidence of the role of cultural activity in education, health, social wellbeing and identity, and other areas, transforming lives and communities.

The study of the impact of cultural institutions and their facilitation of access to early childhood education, exposure to and engagement in creative and artistic pursuits, economic development and socio-cultural development is now overwhelming—it more effectively turns lives around than almost any other form of intervention and plays an equally important role to that of a robust economy.

Quite simply, the two are not mutually exclusive, but rather, are intrinsically aligned.

For too long in Tasmania the public policy response to culture has been to equate it with the arts. There were once good reasons for this, but the two domains are no longer synonymous.

This old-fashioned false equivalence does not work to the advantage of our cultural institutions, individual artists and the subsidised sector, or the commercial and instrumental parts of the sector.

Limiting cultural policy to an arts policy, when the arts are regarded as baubles, areas of patronage, which can be dispensed at whim, and not integrated into a bigger strategic approach to State-wide cultural economic development, means that the Tasmanian cultural sector is framed in the wrong way—one which means it is not treated as seriously or equitably as other areas that account for comparable amounts of socio-economic activity.

When considering these cultural policy limitations, in conjunction with other policy influences such as local government reform, it is clear how the current challenges outlined within this Plan have now escalated to a point whereby they must be addressed.





There is clearly a need for a strong and robust cultural policy in Tasmania, one which supports the non-profit sector and helps it become more sustainable, and:

- + one which provides our most able and innovative creative practitioners with the support that they need to produce great work;
- + one that provides pathways for new and emerging practitioners;
- + one that is sufficiently resourced to make strategic investments in a range of major, middle sized and small organisations; and
- + one that operates with the support of a government which recognises the unique qualities of the Tasmanian cultural landscape and how that landscape is unique within the national context.

Unlike many other areas of policy, this sector has the potential to also impact directly, and expediently, on community wellbeing and cohesion.

Government cannot do this, but with the right policy settings it can enable the commercial sector to flourish, and the cultural sector to produce even greater benefit for our communities.

Therefore, the funding proposal for QVMAG could be viewed as more than just a matter of increased fiscal provisioning and instead a broader reflection of a need to make the sector more sustainable, connected and resourceful.

In recognition of the need for the sector to adapt, innovate and enterprise, particularly in regard to financial sustainability and business continuity, this Plan has sought to review various operational models specific to cultural institutions globally, and as such identify pathways through which QVMAG and the City of Launceston can maintain, and sustain, the financial provisioning of QVMAG whilst limiting increases from both State and local government partners without concurrently compromising the service delivery requirements of the institution.

As previously discussed, it has been identified that comparatively speaking, QVMAG is underperforming in the generation of own-sourced revenue.

It is recognised that the institution can significantly improve in this area of activity and will undertake measures to do so through the development of advancement and commercial strategies as part of the Organisational Strategic Development Program (OSDP).

However, as highlighted, own-source revenue as a means by which to establish financial resilience and business continuity is not a funding model which supports certainty nor sustainability.

What is needed is a complete rethink on how we value and view our cultural institutions, and collectively as key stakeholders—public sector, private sector and community—can support and preserve them.

Whilst it is acknowledged that most public cultural institutions within the Australian context are aligned in some degree to funding partners correlating to their associated level of government (local government/ regional institutions, State government/ State institutions, and Federal Government/ national institutions), a review of the funding arrangements in the non-Australian context provides insights into the significance placed in these institutions within society as a whole.

In the north American context, majority of institutional funding is derived not from the governmental sector, but instead from the community and the private sector through giving and philanthropic development.

The accrued funds through targeted campaigns and fundraising appeals are attributed to institutional endowment funds, through which the institution draws from the interest earned from the Principal Fund to undertake its annual operations.

This funding model for the non-government non-profit sector, or which is increasingly being recognised as the profit-for-purpose sector, is well established and enshrined within many cultural sectors world-wide and is relatively overlooked in the broader public cultural institution sector in Australia.

As such this Plan has identified the opportunity to coalesce the governmental and endowment funding models and presents a decadal strategy [figure eleven] to establish perhaps Australia’s first truly self-sustainable public cultural institution, that when realised would result in the institution no longer requiring governmental funding, outside of the in-kind expenses provided by the City of Launceston.

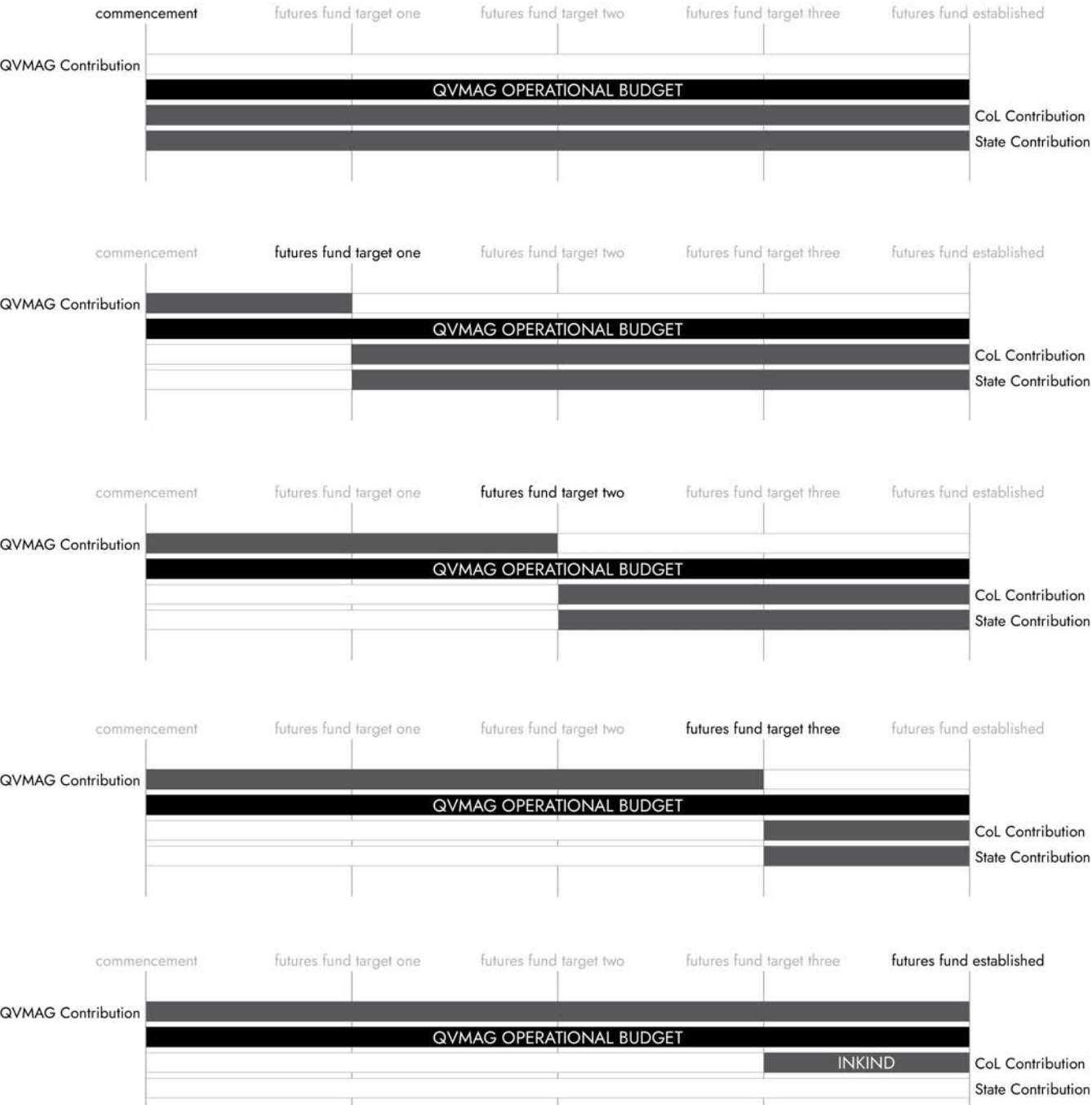
This initiative provides for the establishment of a **QVMAG Futures Fund**, which encourages community, private and governmental participation, and incrementally transitions the institution’s reliance from annual local and State government funding towards a self-funded operational model that is financially resilient and sustainable.

The modelling for the **Futures Fund** identifies a set number of Endowment Milestones, that when achieved, reduce the governmental annual funding allowance, and consequently increases QVMAG’s contribution respectively.

This measured approach ensures that the baseline operational requirements of the organisation are maintained during the **Fund’s** development period, whilst concurrently reinforcing a unified approach in the successful realisation of the **Fund**.



figure eleven  
QVMAG Futures Fund Modelling



In short, the establishment a **QVMAG Futures Fund** is a collective partnership that benefits all stakeholders and that through our shared efforts can this innovative funding model be realised.

- The establishment of the **QVMAG Futures Fund** presents benefits such as:
- + Empowering community ownership and goodwill in the institution;
  - + Interest earned whilst reaching each phase of the Milestone Targets could be distributed to the institution to complement current annual operation expenses and utilised as part of the programmatic activation strategies identified;
  - + The implementation of the **QVMAG Futures Fund** presents no risk. Presently there is no significant contribution from QVMAG in relation to annual operating expenses. Establishing the **Futures Fund** will benefit all stakeholders irrespective of whether or not the final Endowment Target is realised;
  - + As each Endowment Target is achieved both State and local government funding is reduced;
  - + Government is not committed to funding QVMAG in perpetuity. The **QVMAG Futures Fund** invites Government to realise the objective and consider the long-term benefits that this innovative initiative will achieve.

Tasmania has a long and proud tradition of innovation, adaptation, and resilience.

The establishment and realisation of the **QVMAG Futures Fund** is aligned with our inherent qualities of reinvention and transformation. Further, when tied to institutional self-empowerment, resulting from the proposed changes in the QVMAG governance arrangements, the fund provides an attractive mechanism through our key stakeholders can give directly to the institution rather than to a local government entity.

Such a distinction cannot be overstated – the successful realisation of the **QVMAG Futures Fund** is intrinsically linked to the establishment of QVMAG as an autonomous cultural institution.

In a sector defined by an over-reliance on public funding, and with a very real need to rethink how our cultural institutions are funded, the **QVMAG Futures Fund** presents an opportunity to aggregate the funding provision to the institution and concurrently reposition cultural policy in Tasmania.

The establishment and implementation of a **QVMAG Futures Fund** is a recommendation of this Plan.







# ACTIVATION

## A DYNAMIC & DIVERSE QVMAG

Comparatively, QVMAG's visitation— noted as a measure of engagement—is underperforming relative to the other organisations benchmarked [figure seven] and when surveyed over a ten-year period highlight that the institution is not leveraging the opportunities afforded to it nor undertaking a key leadership role and contributor in the development of community and creative capacity building and a champion of inclusiveness, openness, and democratic practice.

As cultural institutions contend with increasingly competitive experiential and education environments, their focus on programmatic diversity and the visitor experience has intensified.

As a distinctly regional institution it is essential that QVMAG enables genuine and frequent connections between community and the arts and sciences through immersive online and curated experiences.

Access to a vibrant and dynamic QVMAG which is reflective of the ambitions and aspirations of our stakeholders and the community, and responsive to the distinctive identity, cultural legacies and traditions of the region is pivotal.

Culture arises from the community, even when the community may not be fully aware of it. It encompasses our entire mode of life, our ethics, our institutions, our manners and our routines, not only interpreting our world but shaping it.

The most highly developed and imaginative aspects of our culture are the arts and sciences, which are fed back to the community by the most talented individuals.

As previously discussed, it is recognised that QVMAG's operational model is complex and one which requires a shared understanding of the organisational interdependencies prevalent between the various integrated functions that underpin the business enterprise [figure nineteen].

Highlighting and identifying these key functions of the business—recognising that collecting cultural institutions are indeed businesses whereby the primary impetus for shareholders (community) is engagement and custodianship, in contrast to revenue generation for investors, a 'profit-for-purpose' enterprise, if you will—has been a priority of the institution at the commencement of this year.

As a public collecting institution with a diverse portfolio spanning research, natural sciences, public history, visuals arts and design, cultural activation, community capacity building and education, QVMAG's scope is broad and extends far beyond that seen in other regional centres.





An analysis of Tasmanian Visitor Survey (TVS) data [figure fourteen] for the years prior to COVID-19 supports the need for QVMAG to realign its activation strategies and highlights several key features for consideration:

- + The holiday and visiting friends and relatives (VFR) segments (both overnight and day visitors) are both major potential markets for QVMAG, with visitor numbers to Tasmania increasing from 1.24m people in 2016 to 1.31m people in 2019, an increase of 2.5%. Of these visitors to Tasmania, 757,205 visited a museum or gallery in 2016, increasing to 774,639 people in 2019.
- + At present, QVMAG is only capturing a small part of these markets and this is illustrated by the TVS data.
- + The TVS includes questions and insights on visits to QVMAG and also to the Cataract Gorge.
- + A growth trend in international and interstate visitors to Launceston between 2014 and 2019.
- + Total visits to Launceston increased by 25.5% from 422,308 people in 2014 to 567,623 people in 2019.
- + In 2019, 38.7% of international and interstate visitors to Launceston visited the Cataract Gorge (219,733 people) and only 5.4% (31,191) visited QVMAG; and
- + That QVMAG has not been capturing this growing visitor market and has actually lost 2.7% of the international and interstate visitors between 2016 and 2019.

It is a similar story when considering the visitation statistics of the three largest museums/galleries within Tasmania, being TMAG, QVMAG and MONA [figure seventeen].

Between 2016 and 2019 (prior to COVID-19), the total visitation to these destinations had increased by 6.3% (35,685 people), with MONA retaining a 67% share of these visitors, TMAG 27.3%, while QVMAG share of this visitation decreased to 5.7% [figure sixteen].

Overnight visitors have an average stay of 3.3 nights and are a market that could be attracted to the gallery and museum.

However, the current level of attraction of QVMAG to this market is not strong and interest actually appears to be declining.

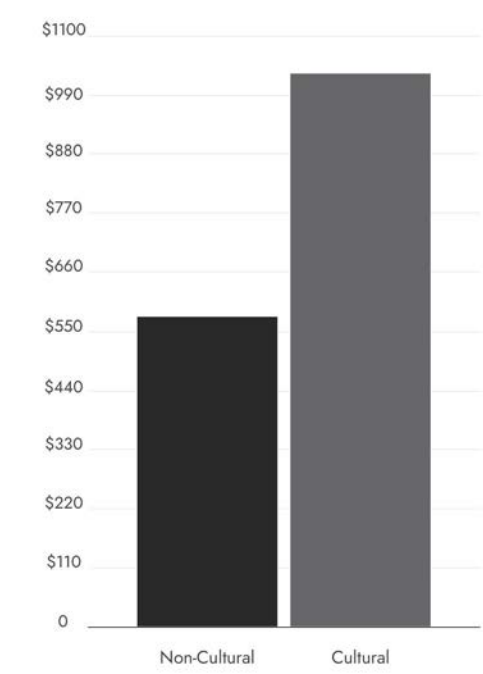
From a cost/benefit equation, QVMAG attracted a total of 125,320 visitors in 2019 representing an operational cost of \$56.65 per visitor, which in comparison is significantly higher than the average cost per visitor across the benchmarked institutions at \$28.90 per visitor.

In order to achieve a similar cost/visitation benchmark, based on the current level of expenditure, QVMAG would need to attract 245,675 visitors annually.

There is little doubt that there is sufficient market within Tasmania for QVMAG to attract the benchmark annual visitation of around 245,675 people.

However, having not attracted more than 145,771 people in a single reporting period over the past decade, it is clear that the current programmatic offer requires realignment towards a reconceptualised, high-quality, diverse and inclusive experience in order to encourage unique and repeat engagement, whilst maintaining and enhancing its local appeal and concurrently responding to, and leveraging, the nuanced operational models specific to museum and art gallery environments and patrons.

figure twelve  
Overnight Spend:  
Non-Cultural and Cultural Domestic Tourists



Nor do the current infrastructure arrangements support or enable a consistent, dynamic and diverse multi-disciplinary experience.

Notwithstanding COVID-19, the broad appeal of Tasmania as a cultural destination is evident in the comparative data.

What is also highlighted is that both QVMAG and TMAG have opportunities to complement the State's offer through increasing their contribution within this market share.

For QVMAG this forms part of the broader strategic programmatic realignment which will reposition the exhibition, public program and education offerings of the institution to reflect the recent results from the broad State-wide surveying undertaken.

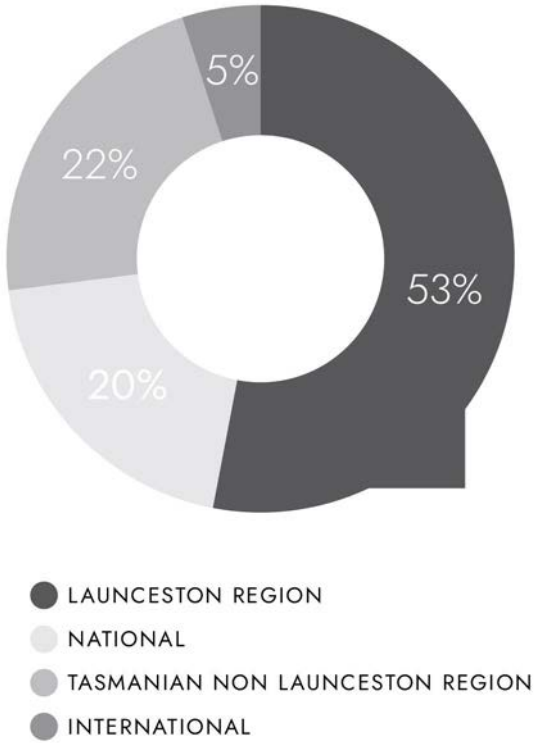
We recognise that over half a million international and interstate visitors that attend the major museums and galleries around the State each year and QVMAG is only attracting 5.7% or 31,191 of these people.

Similarly, of the half a million international and interstate visitors that come to Launceston each year, only 5.4% (or 31,191) visit QVMAG, while in contrast 38.7% (or 219,733) visit the Cataract Gorge [figure fourteen].



Clearly there is an opportunity to significantly increase international and interstate visitors to QVMAG through the identified infrastructure opportunities, the implementation of diverse and innovative programming, and effective marketing that repositions the unique appeal that each of the QVMAG campuses offer.

figure thirteen  
QVMAG Visitor Origins 18/19FY



When QVMAG is re-developed to provide a more compelling offer, thus contributing to Launceston being recognised as a cultural destination of substance, it will serve to attract a percentage of the lucrative domestic and international cultural tourist market that visit Tasmania, namely through encouraging MONA and TMAG visitors to the north of the State to experience QVMAG and Cataract Gorge.

Preliminary modelling has been undertaken jointly between Visit Northern Tasmania and the City of Launceston. This modelling is based on a conservative organic growth model capturing an expected increased portion of existing visitor market and the resulting contribution to the economy over 10 years.

With a significant new facility at Royal Park with a strong relationship to the Cataract Gorge and enhanced offerings and marketing as a result, the visitor growth is projected to easily increase by at least 20% from existing visitor numbers over 10 years and a 30% growth in local visitation.

This would equate to a total of approximately 110,000 additional visits per year by year 10, with an expected total annual contribution of \$140m to the economy per year compared with the existing annual contribution of \$44m [figure fifteen].







This is certainly achievable, with greater growth extremely likely considering this model only factored the Royal Park expansion and the programmatic realignment and not the added appeal of a world-class Collections Discovery Centre or the proposed cultural/creative/education precinct at Inveresk.

This visitor growth modelling is responsibly conservative to account for an expected downturn and rebuild in visitation as a result of COVID-19.

A new facility would not open until 2027 (at the earliest) and the increase in QVMAG visitation based on existing levels of visitors to Launceston which were—and are still expected to post COVID-19—continuing to trend upwards.

The modelling assumes that for intrastate, interstate and international visitors, an enhanced QVMAG offering will increase length of stay by 0.85 of a day and subsequently forecasts resulting increased spend in accordance with industry modelling standards.

It is also important to note that this forecast is extremely conservative and that it is recognised that through the delivery of all of the Key Directions and Priority Projects outlined in this Plan that annual visitation is realistically forecasted to average around 350,000 – 450,000 per annum.

This is further supported by benchmarking undertaken in mainland states. Although Queensland has not commissioned a thorough examination of the economic impact of arts and culture on the State’s GSP overall, rigorous assessment in collaboration with Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ) and the Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA) has been undertaken on an exhibition-by-exhibition basis for a number of years.

As an overview the following examples provide an insight into the economic impact of art exhibitions held at QAGOMA.

- + **The 7th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art**  
QAG and GOMA  
Total attendance: 565,248  
31% Interstate and overseas visitors  
Economic impact: \$26.88 million
- + **Andy Warhol**  
GOMA  
Total attendance: 232,389  
23% overseas & interstate visitors  
Economic impact: \$14.24 million
- + **Valentino, Retrospective: Past/Present/Future**  
GOMA  
Total attendance: 202,849  
28% overseas & interstate visitors  
Economic impact: \$18.4 million
- + **Quilts 1700-1945**  
QAG  
Total attendance: 42,111  
32% overseas & interstate visitors  
Economic impact: \$4.13 million



figure fourteen  
Launceston: International and Interstate Visitation  
\*denotes COVID-19 Impacted

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020*	2021*
Visits to QVMAG	37,166	34,235	33,604	31,191	10,333	14,901
Visits to Cataract Gorge	226,665	227,768	219,537	219,733	86,865	120,439
Visits to Launceston	539,250	566,145	560,464	567,623	216,899	285,679
% visiting QVMAG	6.9%	6%	5.9%	5.4%	4.7%	5.2%
% visiting Cataract Gorge	42%	40.2%	39.1%	38.7%	40%	42.1%

figure fifteen  
Visit Northern Tasmania Projected Visitation/Spend Analysis

	local visitation	intrastate visitation	interstate interna- tional visitation	total visitation / total economic
current visitors / annum	66,346	27,644	31,191	125,181
redeveloped QVMAG projected visitors / annum	86,250	35,937	113,524	235,711
current economic contribution / annum	-	\$16.7m	\$27.2m	\$44m
redeveloped QVMAG projected economic contribution years one-five	-	\$24.3m	\$39.6m	\$108m
redeveloped QVMAG projected economic contribution year ten	-	\$36.5m	\$59.6m	\$140.1m

figure sixteen  
Major Cultural International and Interstate Visitation  
\*denotes COVID Impacted

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020*	2021*
Visits to QVMAG	37,166	34,235	33,604	31,191	10,333	14,901
Visits to MONA	338,733	358,396	342,725	360,193	119,451	158,068
Visits to TMAG	126,490	146,515	141,743	146,690	47,904	61,654
State Total	502,389	539,146	518,072	538,074	177,688	234,623
% visiting QVMAG	7.2%	6.3%	6.5%	5.7%	5.8%	6.4%
% visiting MONA	67.4%	66.5%	66.1%	67%	67.2%	67.3%
% visiting TMAG	25.2%	27.2%	27.4%	27.3%	27%	26.3%



These exhibitions are but a small proportion of the projects held at QAGOMA on an ongoing basis with more shown in figure eighteen.

The figures provided by Tourism and Events Queensland are specific to the visitation of the nominated exhibitions only and do not account for the total visitation outcomes of QAGOMA for the annual reporting period, which is significantly higher.

It is also important to consider this is a small part of a larger offer as part of the **Southbank Cultural Precinct** which includes such institutions as the State Library of Queensland, Queensland Performing Arts Centre, Queensland College of Art (Griffith University) and the Queensland Museum (which alone receives more than 1m visitors each year), food and beverage offers and so forth.

Whilst physical visitation is not the only measure by which to assess the successful operation of a museum and art gallery, it is a measure which is a major determinant of the ability of a museum/gallery to generate income to offset its operational costs, and concurrently reflects whether the institution's offerings bear relevance to our stakeholders.

Therefore, it is a very important measure, or bellwether if you will.

Visitors are looking for different high-quality experiences. There is a growing interest in cultural experiences that include galleries, museums, performances and events. High quality food is also an attractor, with cafes, restaurants and bars. MONA is an exemplar, having tapped into all these elements and as a result, its visitation remains high.

Accordingly, QVMAG needs to offer a reconceptualised, high-quality experience to grow visitation, whilst maintaining and enhancing its local appeal—all of which will be activated as part of the **Organisational Strategic Development Program** [figure twenty].

Similarly, through the implementation of the Key Directions outlined in this Plan, the institution will undergo a modernisation of its infrastructure to ensure it meets international standards required to attract and retain unique cultural product, establish iconic place-based activation and global appeal, and provide innovative access to the institutions most significant resource, the QVMAG Collection.

Previous studies have found that the current size, scope, and unique distinctiveness of the Collection requires QVMAG to think beyond the local, and to also consider how it can attract wider regional, national and international audiences, and partnerships and cultural exchanges with peer institutions worldwide.

figure seventeen  
Visitation Comparison Major Cultural Institutions Tasmania

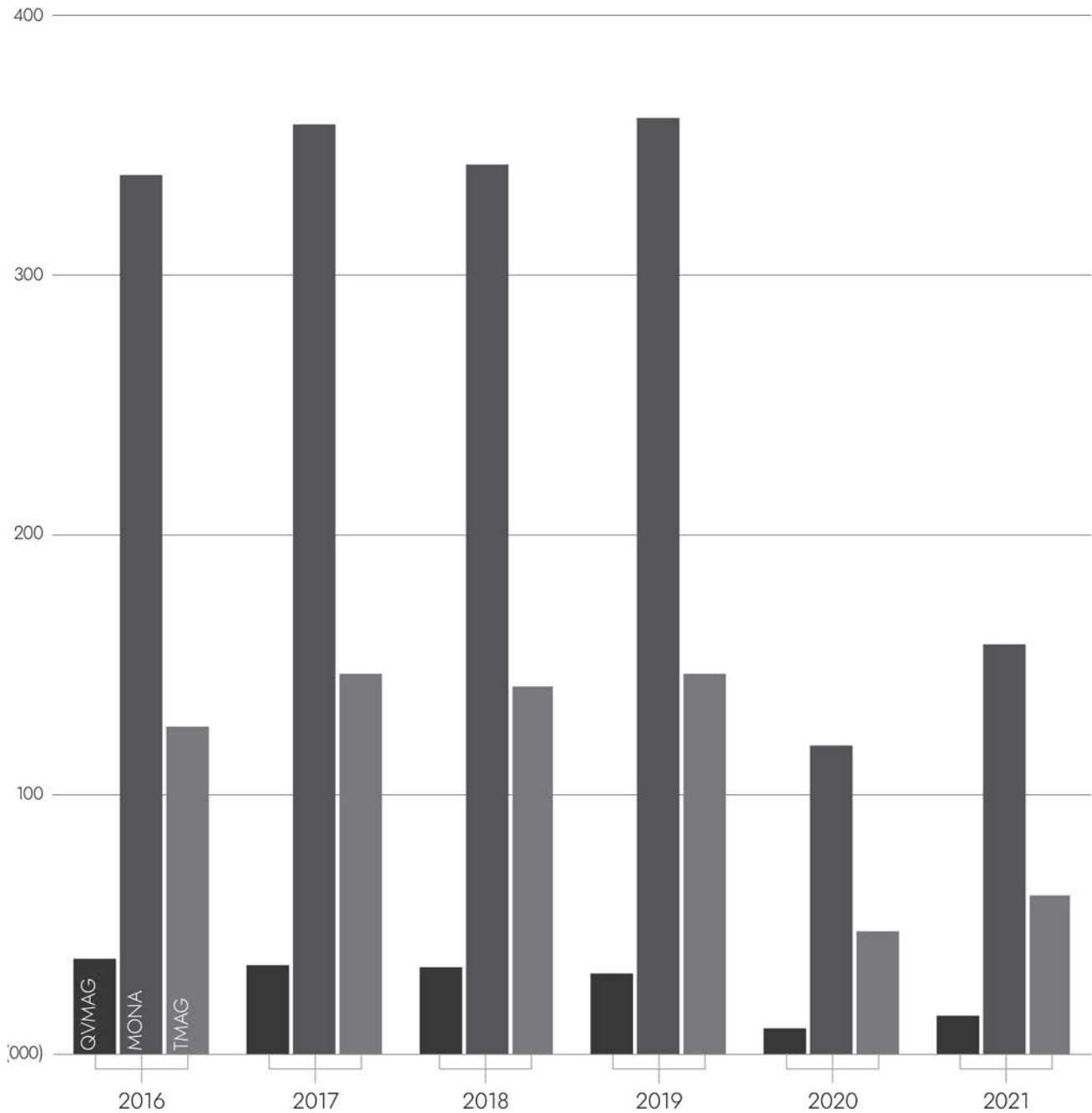
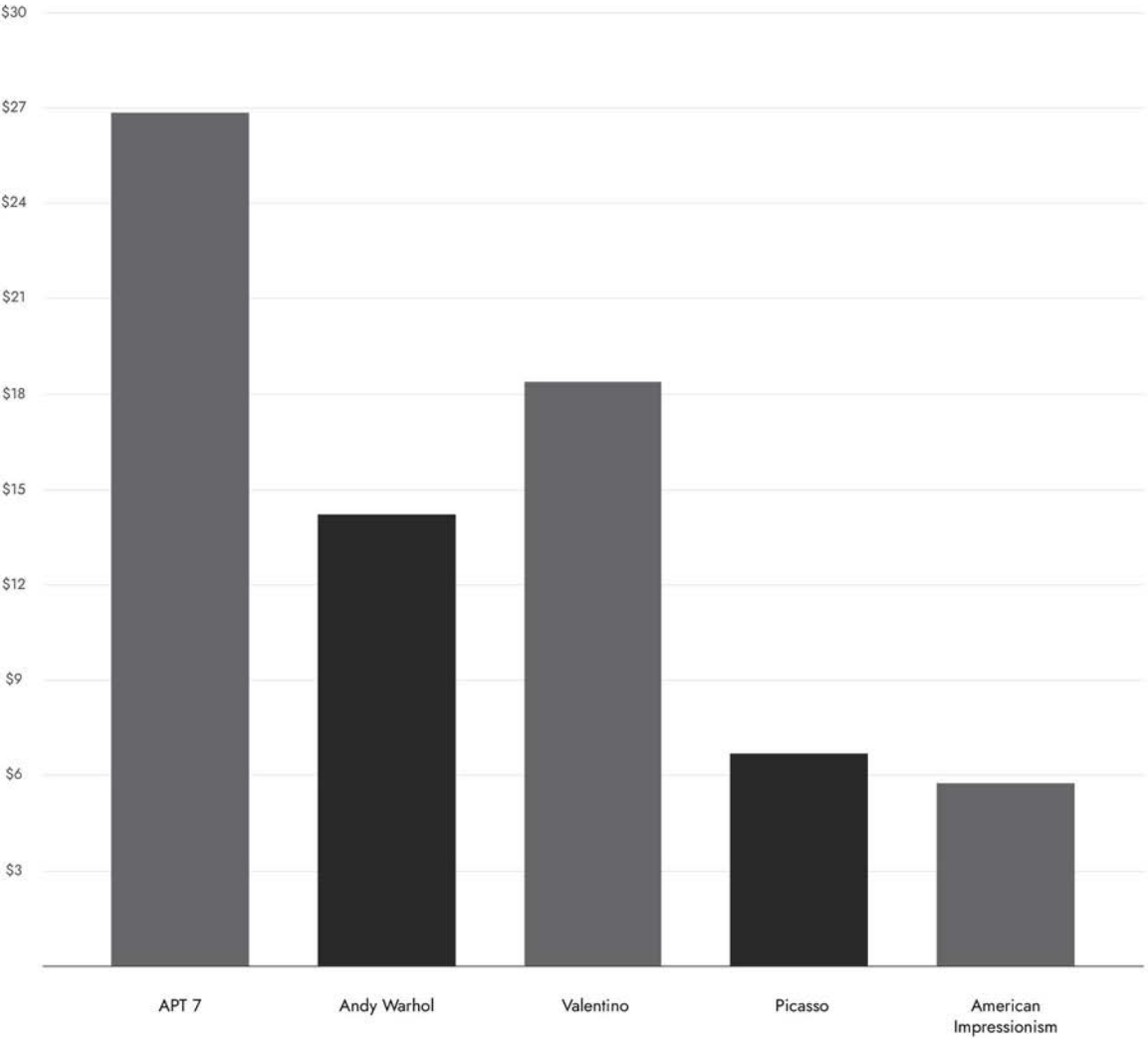




figure eighteen  
QAGOMA Exhibitions:  
Economic Impact in \$ millions



QVMAG has agency in this established cultural network, however, to date the institution has not capitalised on its strengths in the development of unique product, **Tasmanian product**, exported to a global market, which not only elevates the brand and reputational growth of the institution but also significantly enhances brand Tasmania and destination Launceston as a result.

All of which coalesces positive socio-cultural-economic growth for the State and region.

Therefore, in accordance with this Plan, QVMAG is investing time through the strategic development of the OSDP in shoring up its strengths, identifying its role—namely its status as Australia’s largest regional museum and the cultural hub of northern Tasmania—implementing a holistic and compelling programmatic offer, and ensuring that the tangible physical facilities are fit-for-purpose and support the role and activities of the institution.

Considered and diverse programming, including government investment in fit-for-purpose facilities, will enable such programming to occur.

Specifically, the contemporary expansion of the **Art Gallery at Royal Park** (which includes the nationally unique **Centre for Aboriginal Science and Education**), the development of an aggregated **community/cultural/creative/education precinct at Inveresk**, and the innovative **QVMAG Collections Discovery Centre**, will provide a truly immersive and accessible programmatic offer.

The return on investment and increased engagement outcomes from such a unique and comprehensive cultural activation and invigoration are profoundly significant and will benefit the broader economy of the region, now and for future generations.

What is also clear is the cultural precinct model of activation dramatically elevates the engagement proposition, including the long-term tangible benefits derived from co-habitation of multi-disciplinary cultural/creative practice.







# ACCESSIBILITY OF, BY AND FOR ALL CULTURE

So far throughout the Plan we have presented significant opportunities for economic, cultural and industry expansion that represent community and place at the forefront and seek to inject vibrancy, frequency and diversity as part of an activated northern Tasmanian region and with QVMAG at its heart.

When we explore the future state of QVMAG and consider what is the agency of the institution—is QVMAG truly accessible and what is the experiential offer that defines us?—it is clear that the institution has fallen short in recognising the unique opportunity afforded to it as being a key cultural and creative enabler and incubator of community, practice, collaboration and inclusivity.

QVMAG's inability to leverage its uniqueness, its reputation and its ability as a large cultural institution sited within regional Australia is reflected in our operational methodologies which have not, to date, harnessed the attributes synonymous of either the museum or the gallery experience.

It is clear QVMAG has not defined and accordingly aligned these sites of cultural practice – an observation reinforced and repeated throughout the broad community/sector consultation survey.

The institution's visitation outcomes over a ten-year period raise questions of programmatic relevance, inclusivity, and broad appeal, clearly highlighting how the inward focus of the institution does not align with the expectations of our stakeholders.

Of equal consideration and importance is the recognition that whilst the institution needs to increase its national and international visitation, concurrently QVMAG must seek to enhance its attraction for locals to visit and genuinely engage with the institution and increase the participation rates from the northern region and around the State.

The interdependencies between Activation and Accessibility are profound and underpin every aspect of the institution's core functions.

For our museum and gallery to be truly fulfilling its role in inspiring creativity, boosting cultural diversity and helping to regenerate the local economy, QVMAG must shift its strategic priorities in line with contemporary best practice and reverse the current institutional ideology of **'how the community can engage with QVMAG'** to an inclusive and holistic perspective of **'how can QVMAG engage with community'**.

QVMAG is currently heavily reliant on the local market as most of its visitors originate from Tasmania, and at the core of QVMAG's operations must be a consistent and engaging offer which activates, advocates and is accessible to our stakeholders, creative practitioners, educators, youth and CALD communities.

**An accessible cultural institution of, by and for, all culture.**





Inclusivity, participation, representation and equality, access to education, social equity, and physical access; the term accessibility has a far-reaching meaning, impact and purpose within communities.

Truly accessible experiences foster community participation, remove societal barriers, and support a sense of belonging to place. As the cultural hub for northern Tasmania, QVMAG plays a critical role within our communities and the experience of visitors; sharing the identities, culture, environmental and social development of our State.

The institution plays a pivotal role within society, enabling people to experiment, experience, identify and participate within the community in which they live.

To celebrate, encourage, enable and foster engagement within society, developing pride and ownership for the communities in which we live or those that visit, and the provision of inclusive and accessible experiences are core objectives of the institution.

Further, the representation of Tasmania through the QVMAG collection should no longer be bound to the geographical location of the museum at Inveresk or the art gallery at Royal Park; with our stories, culture and histories having the capacity to drive national and international engagement and positively represent the identity of Tasmania.

In recognising these challenges, the institution has undertaken to realign its operational methodologies through the Organisational Strategic Development Program (OSDP) [figure twenty one] to ensure that through identifying and establishing contemporaneous and fit-for-purpose business practices across the various areas of activity the institution is well positioned to meet the challenges and role it plays within the broader innovation agenda of the region.

Further, through the OSDP, QVMAG is developing a broad suite of enabling strategic frameworks which will support and foster the activation of the integrated functions that underpin service delivery. This commitment to innovation aligns and is intrinsically interdependent upon a holistic strategic shift which unifies the shared benefits and enablement concomitant with the identified changes in governance, funding, accessibility and infrastructure investment outlined in this Plan.

Much has been done since the commencement of 2022, with QVMAG implementing a comprehensive reform agenda which has seen—through an **Informed, Defined and Aligned** methodology [figure twenty one]—the development of an internal **Service Level Review** across each of the identified organisational interdependencies, a whole-of-collection **Collections Review**, whole-of-organisation **Deep Dives**, and more recently the distribution of a community, sector and industry wide **consultation survey**, and QVMAG brand analysis and **interim brand development**.

As we continue through the development of the OSDP it is recognised and acknowledged that there are distinct programmatic models specific to museums and art galleries which, whilst similar contextually, require nuance and focus that currently are not reflected in our operations and service delivery.

Succinctly, QVMAG currently manages and programs across its two sites—the museum at Inveresk and the art gallery at Royal Park—in a museological format only and therefore has over the past decade failed to activate the art gallery component of its operations in line with the operational consistency required of a cultural institution of such focus.

Subsequently, this has resulted in extremely poor engagement outcomes for the Royal Park site, that when extrapolated from the overall QVMAG annual performance analysis, demonstrates a clear need for a realigned, defined, and holistic programmatic strategy and framework which leverages and responds to the points of difference across the institution.

Similarly, on the whole the institution has failed to respond to the changing attitudes by Australians in their participation in arts and culture and the dramatic increase in domestic participation seen over the last decade across the sector.

Launceston and the northern Tasmanian region are no exception to this trend as shown by the various Tasmanian Visitor Surveys which demonstrate an increase in visitation to Tasmania’s cultural offerings.

However, despite this increase in participation, QVMAG has not adapted and responded to a culturally attuned and increasingly sophisticated community and domestic audience—necessitating a shift from traditional cultural institutional archetypes in favour of a dynamic, inclusive and outward focused strategic approach.

This shift in thinking requires the institution to shed its inherently inward focus in favour of a model which is truly porous, agile, and outwardly engaged through diversified programmatic initiatives which:

- + The activation of traditional spaces is coupled with a more proactive and innovative interaction with available civic spaces, creating city-wide and institutional place-based activation, and local, national and international reputational growth;
- + Develops specialised initiatives and capacity building opportunities that embed cultural education, appreciation and participation within the region’s youth, community and creative practitioners;
- + Delivers multi-disciplinary projects through established and empowered partnerships and capacity building opportunities with artists, cultural workers, organisations, private and corporate partners, and Governmental agencies;





- + Supports inclusive cultural leadership strategies that develop multi-organisational collaborative methodologies and networked resource maximisation, realising multi-disciplinary heritage and cultural projects of scale, Whole-of-City engagement, increases in visitation, and contributes to the region’s innovation agenda; and
- + Realises creative and cultural capacity building and infrastructure development of the heritage, arts and cultural sector within the region to leverage the under-capitalised social (qualitative) and recognised economic (quantitative) benefits, for not only the individual participants and sector professionals, but for the wider community through national and international recognition of Launceston as a cultural destination of substance.

These guiding frameworks and strategies are designed to enable QVMAG to create and execute omni-channel experiences to evolve and adapt in line with audience needs. It provides the necessary guidance to share the culture of Tasmania through cross market collaboration, experience innovation, global fields of research and international education markets.

Similarly, it positions the institution as responsive, agile and innovative and able to support industry and community co-creation and collaboration, representing the diversity of Tasmanian communities.

For QVMAG, accessibility spans education, program offerings, exhibitions, events and brand activations.

From curriculum-linked educational programs for years K-12, community learning opportunities through the delivery of public programs, supporting industry research and fostering vibrancy and inclusion in the form of events and exhibitions; QVMAG is a brand of, by and for all, and importance of enhanced accessible experiences across northern Tasmania spans further than the brand of QVMAG.

When successfully activated, cultural institutions enable strong economic and social return for a region – whether this be identified through an increase in local and visitation spending habits, community engagement, sense of City liveability, or community pride.

To understand the new, existing and emerging audiences of QVMAG, a clear focus on research and development is required to understand at a grass-roots level where we need to focus strategic efforts to adapt, evolve and innovate in our programmatic offering to support and encourage our local creative economy, and further foster cultural inclusion across northern Tasmania.



In 2022, QVMAG launched a community/sector consultation survey across Tasmania, marking the first time a community engagement survey has been conducted for the institution to explore brand awareness, travel habits, feedback on annual offerings, and content preferences of existing audiences. Open for comment over a period of six weeks, the survey facilitated a direct line of feedback from industry, sector, community and stakeholders direct to the organisation, with an extremely successful response rate of 696 respondents.

Summary analysis of the survey identified the following key trends;

- + A desire for **increased representation** of national and local artists, sciences, indigenous and national histories through exhibitions, programs and events;
- + **Enhanced visibility and interactivity** with, and strong desire to **see behind-the-scenes** of the QVMAG Collection;
- + Stronger representation and **support of emerging Tasmanian artists**;
- + **More experiences for adults** in the form of exhibition openings, artist talks, guest lectures, guided tours, after hours programs;
- + Enhanced **online programmatic offerings**;
- + Recognition that our **buildings are tired, old and in need of renewal**; and
- + That our **Brand is strong**, however our **exhibitions at our sites are misaligned**, often confusing Gallery and Museum projects.

As the primary cultural institution representing northern Tasmania, it is critical to ensure a true reflection of our diverse communities and audiences are represented through annual programming at QVMAG.

Cultural representation can be achieved in many forms, whether this be through the expression of public art, exhibitions, knowledge sharing, community programs or events; sharing stories and expression of ideas is a fundamental aspect of human life.

When harnessed correctly, cultural institutions afford a platform to shape communities and facilitate discussion on a local, national and international scale.

The QVMAG offering is far reaching; not bound to a specific location, audience or theme, with a brand identity able to flex within the community and desired markets to offer diverse, inclusive and vibrant experiences.

Our vision for the future of our institution is one of diversity, celebration, inclusion, immersion and education.

QVMAG will become a porous institution; actively seeking and developing opportunities for collaboration, co-creation, activation and inclusion for all community, a vision which is not confined within the walls of the institution and will enable QVMAG to develop and deliver an experience that generates economic injection, connection to place and is embedded within, and representative of, community.





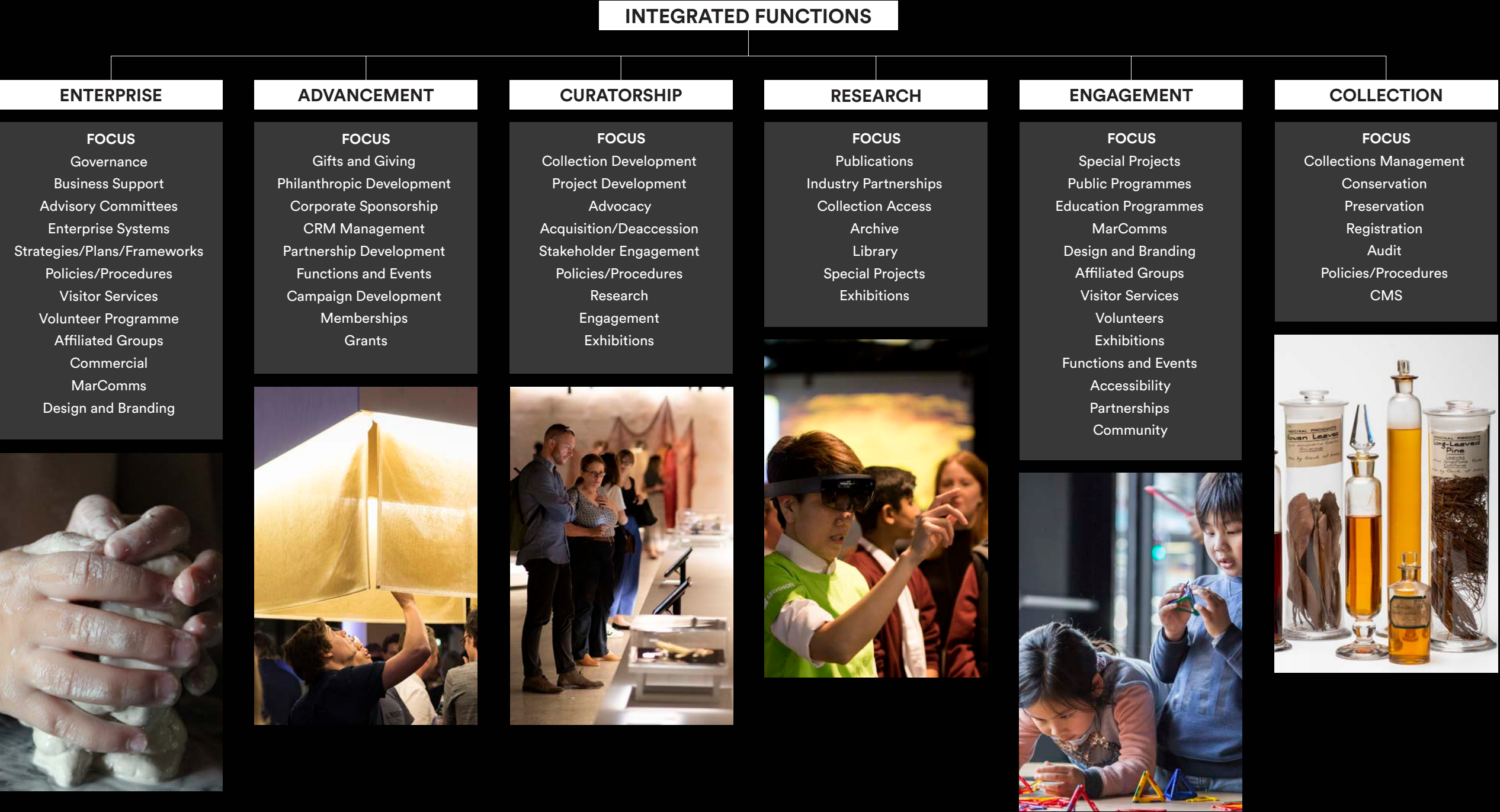
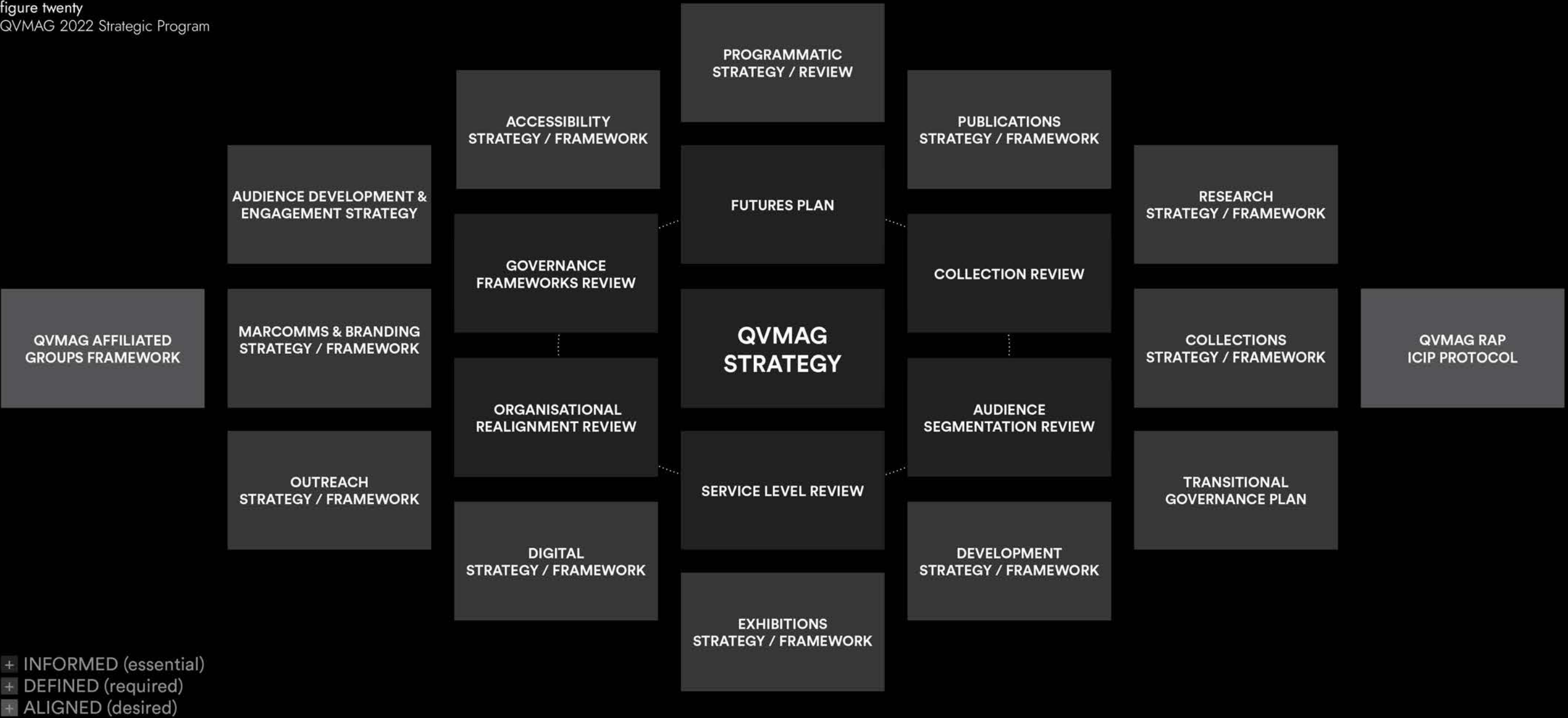


figure nineteen  
QVMAG Business Map



figure twenty  
QVMAG 2022 Strategic Program



# QVMAG

## Organisational Strategic Development Program

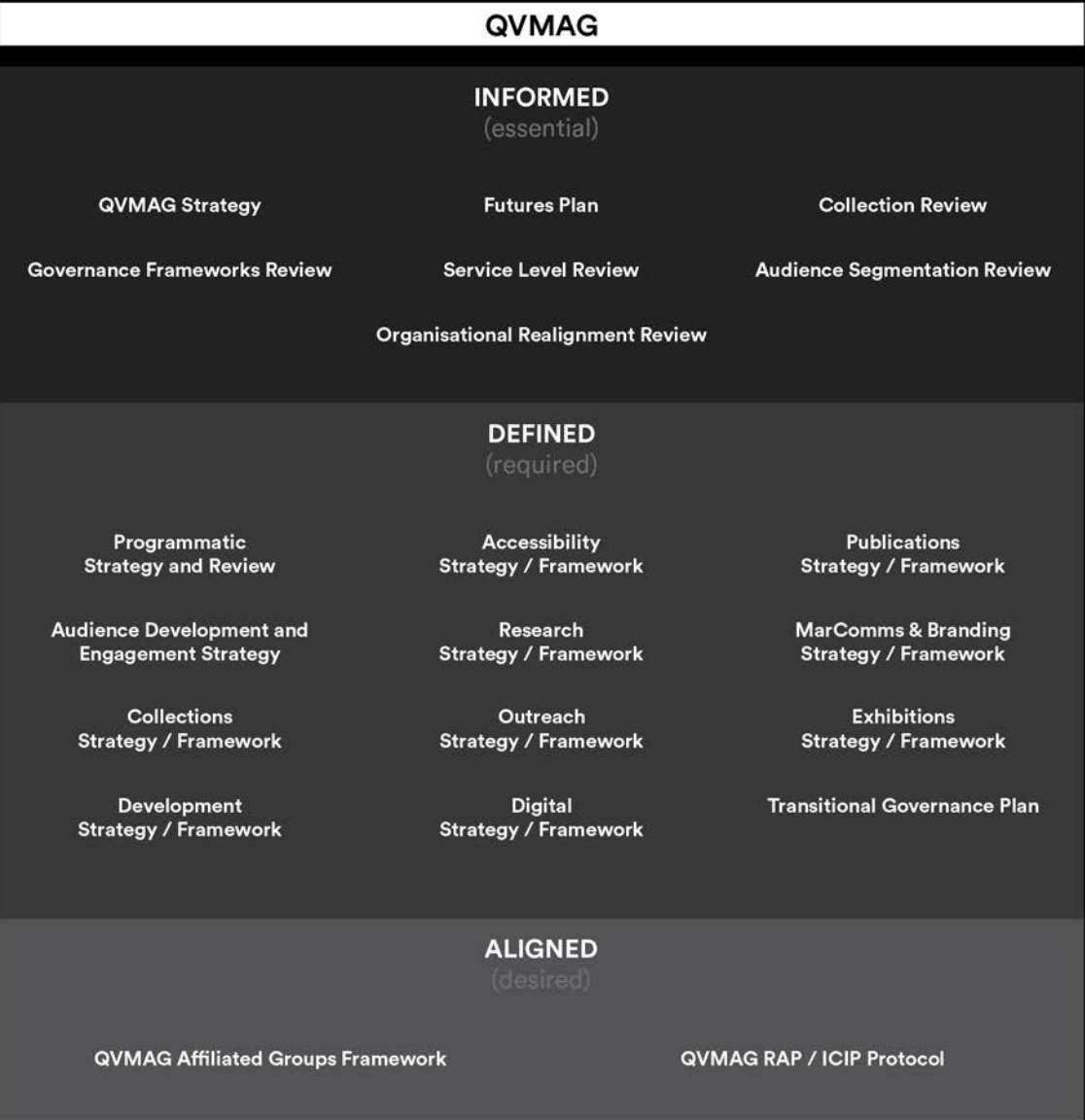


figure twenty one  
QVMAG OSDP Methodology







# INVESTMENT SUPPORTED AND ENABLED

Broadly; the work of Australia's major cultural institutions extends far beyond what is traditionally regarded as 'the arts', into the environment, education, history, science, industry and innovation. Their creative output is multi-disciplinary and crosses traditional portfolios. In addition, it is recognised that the creative industries are an enabler in the wider economy. They provide leadership in thinking, ideas and design capabilities, and add value across all spheres of economic activity—from innovation, research and development, to investment.

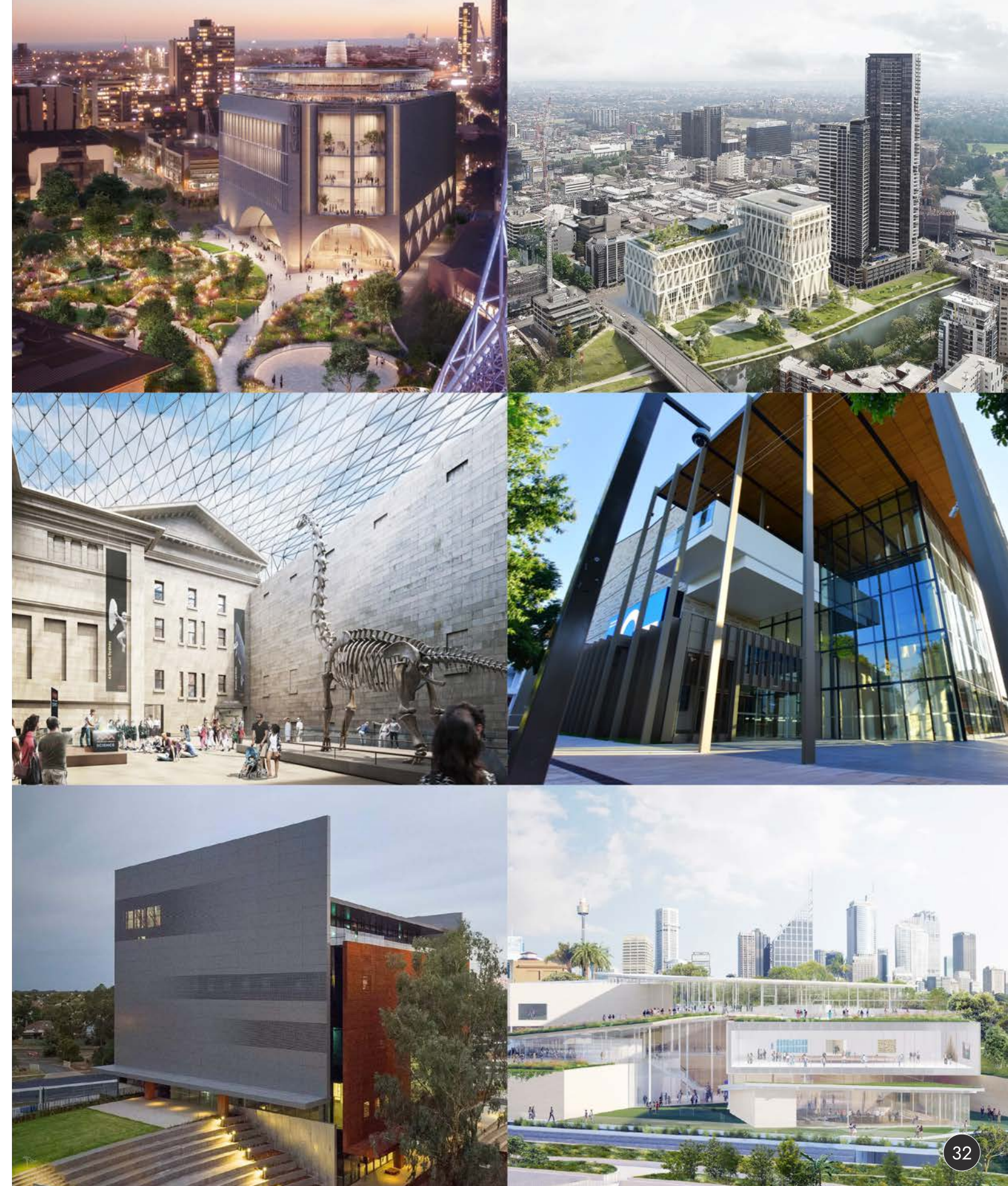
The economic impact and immediate job creation that major capital infrastructure projects imbue within communities is well understood and is particularly relevant during a 'living with COVID' economic and social recovery period. However, the long-term tangible benefits from cultural investment far surpass such short-term gains. Encouraging and enabling the creative industries is one of the most powerful means of enhancing a city's identity and distinctiveness, while simultaneously creating long-term employment, continued positive consumption externalities and generating social capital.

Additionally, the provision of fit-for-purpose cultural infrastructure generates a greater return on investment than other areas of government expenditure whilst harnessing the lucrative (and growing) domestic cultural tourism market, with research by the Australian Bureau of Statistics confirming that domestic cultural tourists spend nearly double per overnight stay than non-cultural tourists [figure twelve].

Presently throughout Australia many local and State governments are investing significantly in the cultural sector through the provision of fit-for-purpose cultural facilities to harness these socio-economic benefits—further positioning each locale as a destination of substance that is equally competitive as it is dynamic.

- + **NGV Contemporary**  
Victorian Government \$1.7b
- + **Sydney Modern**  
NSW Government \$344m
- + **Powerhouse Project**  
NSW Government \$1.5b
- + **Australian Museum Expansion**  
NSW Government \$57.5m
- + **Shepparton Art Museum**  
Greater Shepparton City Council \$50m
- + **Rockhampton Museum of Art**  
Rockhampton Regional Council \$36.5m

This **Plan** recognises the tangible and intangible benefits from investing in the cultural and creative industries and identifies several critical infrastructure and investment opportunities that underpin enabling QVMAG to successfully realign, activate and reposition the institution as a dynamic, inclusive and central component of the region's innovation agenda. **It is the recommendation of this Plan that the following key projects are prioritised.** Recognising that in principle support is provided and subject to further investigation on funding provisions (including recurrent operational costs) being sourced and secured from multiple stakeholders across the public and private sector.





# PRIORITY PROJECT ONE

## EXPANDED ART GALLERY ROYAL PARK

**Project:** Art Gallery at Royal Park Expansion  
**Estimated Cost:** \$75 million

QVMAG's Art Gallery at Royal Park is northern Tasmania's premier visual arts institution and home to the significant holdings of the QVMAG visual art and design, and the world-renowned natural sciences collections.

The Royal Park site has served the institution, and the community more broadly, proudly since its establishment in 1891 when the former Launceston Mechanics Institute transformed into the Victoria Museum and Art Gallery (later renamed to the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery) and has stood as the foundational home of QVMAG before the separation of the museum and art gallery functions of the institution, across the Royal Park and Inveresk sites, was implemented in 1995.

However, despite this proud history, the current infrastructure accommodations are not fit-for-purpose to that which is synonymous with contemporary art museums around Australia, and further is placing the significant collections contained therein at considerable risk.

Succinctly, the Royal Park site lacks essential social amenities: including ease of access, parking provisions, food and beverage offers and functions and event spaces; it has limited public spaces through which to develop, procure and showcase world-class exhibitions and product.

The building is not suitable to house the vast collections contained therein and lacks critical space to safely accommodate the collection, which is limiting safe access to both staff and visitors; has limited education and programming spaces through which to activate supplementary and stand-alone initiatives, which increase engagement and own-source revenue generation; and most critically is in dire need of major plant and capital works upgrades to ensure that the building's environmental systems consistently maintain international standards in climate control.

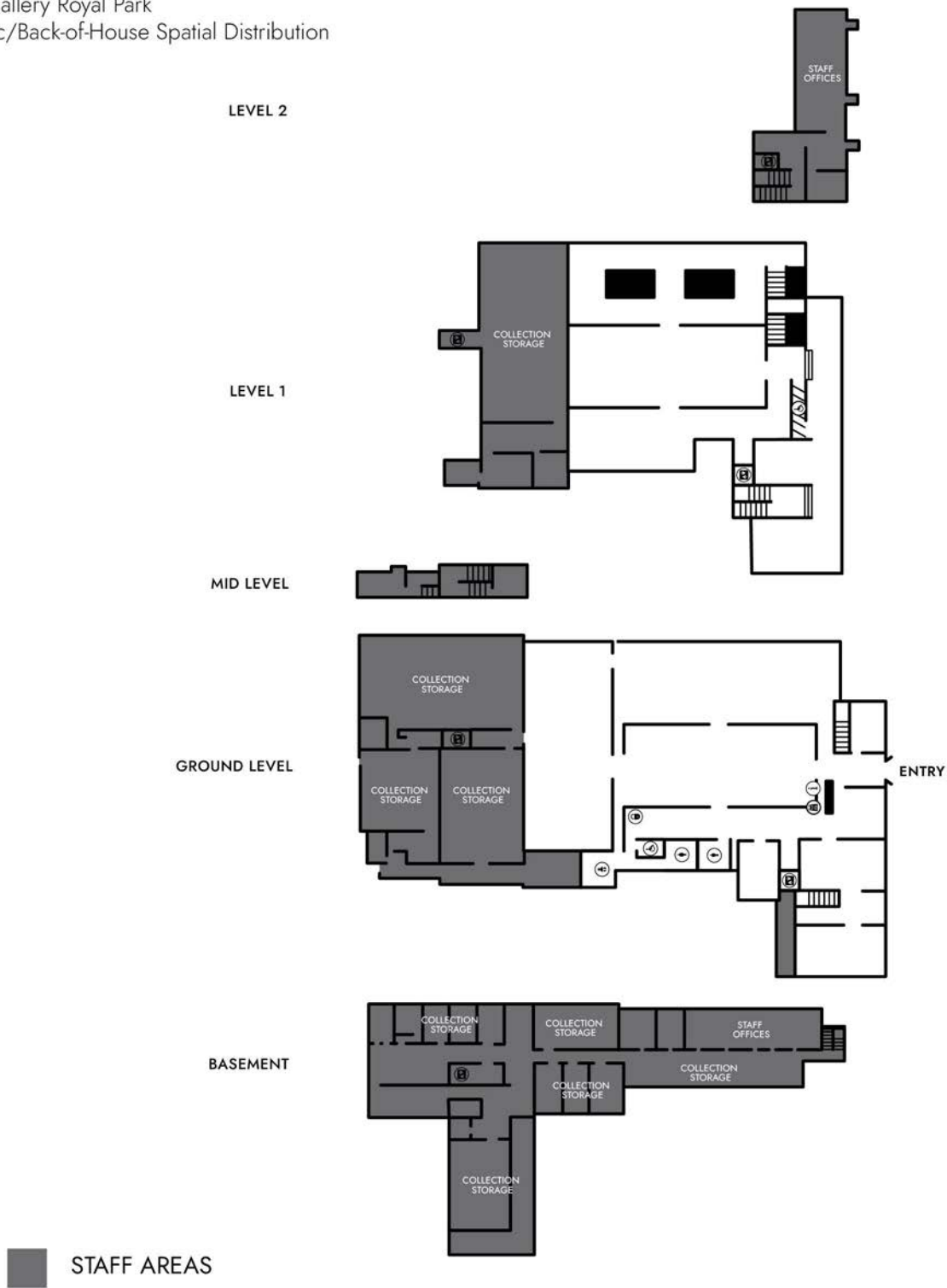
Provisions such as modern technological amenities, appropriate commercial space, dedicated children and youth amenities, sustainable and contemporary museum lighting, and an expansion of access to First Nations material culture, to name a few, similarly contribute to the Gallery's ability to effectively provide a comprehensive, diverse and dynamic cultural experience.

Upon review of the operational and infrastructure deficiencies of the Royal Park site, and in a holistic manner which considers the full strategic reimagining of QVMAG, this Plan has identified the addition of a contemporary wing to the existing building, in association with the relocation of the Collection to dedicated offsite and visible storage, as part of the **QVMAG Collections Discovery Centre**.





figure twenty two  
Art Gallery Royal Park  
Public/Back-of-House Spatial Distribution



This initiative, would enable:

- + the reclamation of current space utilised for collections storage (approximately 20%) [figure twenty two] and remodelled to provide greater public access, education, programming and exhibition amenity;
- + provision of a food and beverage amenity which will support general visitors and provide a destination dining and social function enterprise;
- + much needed visitor parking and the mitigation of accessibility challenges currently prevalent at the site;
- + appropriate freight logistics amenity that allows the site to safely and securely receive and dispatch material culture frequently and in line with increased programming outputs;
- + establish the **Centre of Aboriginal Science and Education** with adjacency to *The First Tasmanians: our story* exhibition and establishing a unique and innovative reimagining of the role and function of the institutional archetype and access by Aboriginal custodians to their material culture;
- + inclusion of a commercial, event and function amenity to foster and enable QVMAG to leverage and elevate own-source revenue generation;
- + upgrade the plant, building services and technology within the site to meet international standards, allowing the institution to fully implement the programmatic realignment and activation strategies identified in this **Plan**;

- + through considered and innovative design principles, realise a contemporary addition to the current heritage structure that repositions the building as an iconic landmark destination that links Launceston's historic CBD and Cataract Gorge.

Maximising the proximity of the Royal Park site to the Cataract Gorge to create a restaurant and/or exhibition experience which cannot currently be accessed by locals or visitors in the Launceston region will serve to elevate the attractiveness of QVMAG.

Such an experience will promote repeat visitation by locals, and, with the right packaging and marketing, will attract more interstate and international visitors who are currently travelling to the State to experience MONA and TMAG, but not QVMAG.

The proposed redevelopment will also enable more innovative exhibition and food experiences to be provided together with more visiting and/or locally produced ticketed exhibitions. The provision of such amenity will allow QVMAG to support, promote and leverage Launceston's unique status as a **City of Gastronomy** under UNSECO's Creative Cities Network through partnerships with local service providers.

This would also serve to increase the membership and sponsorship options which can be offered by QVMAG.



This opportunity—the provision of a high-quality food and event experience—takes advantage of the view to Launceston’s most treasured (and visited) natural features, the Cataract Gorge. There would also be an ability to offer improved member experiences, increased sales of goods and a broader range of ticketed events which would grow visitation and increase the revenue generated by the institution.

Sustainability is not simply a matter of keeping the doors open and the provision of commercial, food and beverage offers, but is also about maintaining, and having, the capacity to interpret collections to create interesting and relevant ways for communities to experience their local heritage and provide unique cultural experiences that draw upon a global network of cultural product and innovation.

This delicate balance—one of weaving significant local stories for community and visitors alike, alongside the provision of national and global cultural practice accessible here at home—plays an equally important role in the activation of the gallery but also provides a rich cultural asset for local residents to use and enjoy, and an increase in national and international visitation and economic activity within the city and the region.

To achieve this, the **Royal Park expansion** increases the spatial provisions accessible to the public, establishing increased exhibition, program and education amenities through the relocation of the Collection to dedicated offsite storage.

In order to attract and offer major touring exhibitions sourced nationally and internationally, QVMAG needs to have exhibition spaces that meet international standards. This is not currently the case, with most spaces at the Royal Park site lacking the lighting, technological and environmental systems to meet the requirements of partnering institutions and international standards.

Further, *The First Tasmanians: our story* exhibition at Royal Park is a powerful example of co-creation between QVMAG and the Tasmanian Aboriginal community, however we recognise that further progress is required and momentum must continue.

QVMAG recognises and acknowledges Aboriginal Australians as the oldest continuous living culture in the world and similarly recognises that the extensive material culture held within the QVMAG Collection that reflect Country, cultural traditions, ancestral and contemporary knowledge, science, technology and innovation of elder’s past, present and emerging, remains largely inaccessible.







To protect, preserve, grow, share and learn from this rich, enduring and unique scientific tradition, and forming part of the **Royal Park expansion** project, QVMAG will undertake the establishment of the **Centre of Aboriginal Science and Education**, which will complement the permanent exhibition spaces and embed the right to Aboriginal self-determination and access over the collection, storage, sharing and use of this traditional knowledge.

QVMAG, in partnership with the QVMAG Aboriginal Reference Group, and Tasmania more broadly, have a unique opportunity to show leadership in this area, through a commitment to truth-telling and healing, reversing traditional archetypes of the 'museum' ensuring that QVMAG is a safe and inclusive space where our Aboriginal communities can share their stories, their experiences, their science, their innovation and their right to self-determine.

There can be little doubt that a redevelopment of the Royal Park site is needed and would provide a facility that appeals to a much broader cross-section of people than it currently does.

Alongside empowering the institution to leverage opportunities that are supported by appropriate provisioning, the expansion would reposition social and cultural narratives in both the Tasmanian and Launceston context and, more importantly, the role of a regional cultural institution within the Australian lexicon.







## PRIORITY PROJECT TWO

### ABORIGINAL SCIENCE & EDUCATION

**Project:** Establishment of the Centre of Aboriginal Science and Education  
**Estimated Cost:** Forms part of the Royal Park expansion

As a distinctly forward-looking institution choosing to de-establish traditional archetypes and reposition QVMAG as a genuinely activated, accessible and accountable cultural entity it is essential that we enable connections between all peoples and arts and culture.

Access to a vibrant cultural sector reflective of the ambitions and aspirations of our community, and responsive to the distinctive identity, cultural legacies and traditions of the region is pivotal.

Critical here is the recognition of arts and culture priorities for Aboriginal Tasmanians, and First Nations people more broadly.

*The First Tasmanians: our story* exhibition at Royal Park is a powerful example of co-creation between QVMAG and the Tasmanian Aboriginal community, however we recognise that further progress is required and momentum must continue.

QVMAG, in partnership with the QVMAG Aboriginal Reference Group has a unique opportunity to show leadership in this area, through a commitment to truth-telling and healing, reversing traditional archetypes of the 'museum' ensuring QVMAG is a safe and inclusive space where our Aboriginal communities can share their stories, their experiences, their science, their innovation and their right to self-determine.

QVMAG supports Article 31 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People which affirms:

*Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.*

For more than 60,000 years, Aboriginal Australians have observed, understood and developed practices to engage with, and care for, Country and nature, making them amongst humanity's first—and today's only continuous—scientists.

They watched the stars, seas and land over millennia, developing complex understandings of astronomy, health, wellbeing, language, land and water management, and agriculture. These were, and are, shared orally, through ceremony, art, painting and dance, across the generations, creating vast and diverse systems of knowledge.







QVMAG recognises and acknowledges Aboriginal Australians as the oldest continuous living culture in the world and similarly recognises that the extensive material culture held within the QVMAG Collection that reflect Country, cultural traditions, ancestral and contemporary knowledge, science, technology and innovation of elders past, present and emerging, remains largely inaccessible.

To protect, preserve, grow, share and learn from this rich, enduring and unique scientific tradition, QVMAG in partnership with the QVMAG Aboriginal Reference Group, and forming part of the Royal Park expansion project, will undertake the establishment of a **Centre of Aboriginal Science and Education**, which will complement the permanent exhibition spaces and Planetarium and embed the right to Aboriginal self-determination and access over the collection, storage, sharing and use of this Traditional Knowledge.

Also crucial is the importance of visual identity and how QVMAG addresses Aboriginal and First Nations identities, ancestors and places through placemaking, wayfinding, architecture, language and artistic commissions. This necessitates a rethinking of how we give voice to narratives of Aboriginal culture; and how we give expression and create specific spaces for cultural activities across all campuses of QVMAG. There is an unquestionable need for deeper engagement with our Aboriginal community and similarly there is an unquestionable right of our Aboriginal community to their intellectual property.

As such, QVMAG’s priorities in the establishment of the **Centre of Aboriginal Science and Education** include:

- + promoting and valuing Aboriginal cultural and artistic intellectual property,
- + sharing the breadth and depth of Indigenous science and innovation with a vision to promote research that empowers Aboriginal Australians,
- + working with local networks and partners to develop and support practices to support Aboriginal employment,
- + developing cross-disciplinary opportunities for community, students, stakeholders, and partners,
- + investing in community engagement and Aboriginal creative leadership.

Enabling this **centre** to collect, store and share First Nations Science, will not only develop a truthful historical record and the opportunity to grow further these knowledge systems, but will also demonstrate how these ancient practices can be shared for contemporary use.

Given how precious this traditional knowledge is to Aboriginal Australians, it is critical that the terms by which the knowledge is shared and protected, are clearly defined by the Aboriginal community.

This will ensure that Aboriginal knowledge owners maintain custodianship over their expertise, intellectual property and right to self-determine the sharing and teaching of valuable lessons from one of the world’s oldest continuing civilisations.







## PRIORITY PROJECT THREE

### COLLECTION DISCOVERY CENTRE

**Project:** Fit-for-purpose consolidated state-of-the-art offsite visible collection storage facility  
**Estimated Cost:** \$85 million

As previously highlighted, the core strength of QVMAG lies in the vast and deep collections which traverse all subject areas and media.

These collections, representing the past knowledge of Launceston and the surrounding region, and its interactions with the local community, Tasmania, Australia and the world, provide both critical historic reference points and springboards to new ideas.

The Collection, representing as it does a vast repository of collective knowledge, is a constantly evolving and consistently utilised resource through which local, national and international partnerships within the scientific, cultural, creative and education sectors continue to advance research and development in many diverse and critical fields such as climate change, species identification, cultural awareness, gender equity, and socio-cultural development.

Succinctly, the depth, breadth and significance of the QVMAG Collection cannot be overstated.

Not unlike most cultural institutions globally, the vast holdings of the material culture within the Collection remains largely inaccessible.

Outside of the small selection on display within the Art Gallery and Museum, and the access afforded to partners and collaborators through research and development projects, much of the Collection remains in storage, dispersed across our two sites at Royal Park and Inveresk, and remains inaccessible to our stakeholders, visitors and patrons.

This circumstance is not unique to QVMAG and is a challenge faced by all collecting institutions as they grapple with limited exhibition space through which to provide contextualized access to their collections and seek to maximise interaction with what is essentially a public asset that should be equally accessible.

Recognising this challenge, in the 1970s, the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia undertook what was then a radical and innovative strategic approach towards rethinking access to its vast collection and developed through considered design what would become widely recognised as 'visible storage'.

Over the course of the decade that followed, several world-renowned institutions, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Strong Museum and Museum Reitberg et al., would follow suit providing unprecedented access to their vast collections through the implementation of visible storage solutions.







More recently the Victoria and Albert Museums' V&A East Storehouse development, opening in 2024, will provide unprecedented access to this globally recognised collection and is described:

*Designed by New York architects Diller, Scofidio + Renfro with support from UK based architects Austin-Smith:Lord, V&A East Storehouse is a 16,000m<sup>2</sup> purpose-built home for over 250,000 objects, 350,000 library books and 1,000 archives.*

*Offering an entirely new museum experience, V&A East Storehouse will take visitors on a journey across time, through self-guided tours and changing displays. The Storehouse's programme will explore why objects are collected, how they are cared for, conserved and displayed and will reveal the latest research emerging from the collections.*

*Further spaces within the centre will host pop-up displays, workshops, performances and screenings alongside live encounters with the museum's work – from conservation and research to exhibition preparation.*

For QVMAG the implementation of consolidated offsite 'visible storage' not only provides unique opportunities for the institution to realise increases in visitation, accessibility, and new pathways in own-source revenue generation, it more importantly addresses several critical key challenges facing the Collection.

The QVMAG Collection is presently held within various tangible amenities across both sites of the institution, remaining largely inaccessible to the visiting public and within climatic environments that struggle to meet international standard controls.

Further, there is little room within the current spatial allocations for staff to safely access the collections and no opportunity for growth.

These factors combine to present significant challenges to QVMAG in collections management, but perhaps the most significant risk facing the institution is the utilisation of the Inveresk site, which is recognised as being a major flood plain adjacent to the North Esk River.

This alone presents an untenable existential risk to the Collection as it is widely regarded that it is not a matter of if, but when, the region and the Inveresk site, will experience a major flooding event.



The development of the **QVMAG Collections Discovery Centre** will not only mitigate the risk resulting from inundation at Inveresk and the sub-standard spatial provisions at Royal Park but would additionally:

- + Consolidate the QVMAG Collection at a single site and therefore allow the reclamation of physical amenities at both Royal Park and Inveresk with the relocation of the Collection.

This would allow greater flexibility in the Royal Park renewal to focus on human-centred design and greater public access to the building, that is: more front-of-house and less back-of-house, whilst at Inveresk the increase in available infrastructure will support the strategic objectives in the development of an aggregated community/cultural/creative precinct providing much needed infrastructure for non-QVMAG organisations;

- + Provide the opportunity through considered design and benchmarking to implement a truly visible and accessible Collection Storage Facility which meets international standards in climatic control, allows for multi-organisation partnerships and collaboration, integrated state-of-the-art digital integration and collections management practice, and future proof strategies in growth and storage needs;

- + Provide a holistic visitor offer through unique visible access to the Collection (presently regarded as a behind the scenes insight) across a number of platforms such as bookable guided tours, educational visits, VIP events, programmatic workshops, digital classrooms, internships and collaborative research projects, and much more, meeting the proposed vision of a **Collections Discovery Centre**;
- + This significant increase in access provides new pathways to own-source revenue generation; local, national and international reputational gain; enhances Launceston as a cultural destination of substance; and supports the generation of new ways of thinking and innovation through hitherto unrealised access to the vast material culture holdings; and
- + Support and enable innovative curatorship, ideation and collaboration resulting from unobstructed and safe (to visitors, staff and objects) access to the entirety of the Collection at a single site and with ease, thus minimising risk of damage from reduced human handling, movement and transportation.







Worldwide, material culture collections are recognised as an important element of the knowledge economy, acting as a resource and revenue generator.

QVMAG's cultural collections provide a critical resource for researchers and generates in-house research projects and collaborations with other research agencies and academies, across the sciences and humanities, between disciplines and with regional, national and international partners.

QVMAG is recognised as part of the Federal Government's National Research Infrastructure (NRI) and plays a key role in leading and supporting science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) based research and education.

When supported by appropriate infrastructure and correctly harnessed, knowledge and intellectual property are sizeable economic assets.

Recognising this challenge, and the need to leverage in full the unique attributes of the institution, this Plan has identified that the design, development and provision of a state-of-the-art dedicated, consolidated offsite collections storage facility—the **QVMAG Collections Discovery Centre**—as a key priority of the region and that when realised will in fact be one of very few in the entire country, therefore reinforcing the broad appeal and uniquely distinctive value of such an initiative.







# PRIORITY PROJECT FOUR

## INVERESK PRECINCT

**Project:** Aggregated Community/Cultural/Creative/Education Precinct  
**Estimated Cost:** \$250 million

The only major public infrastructure project in Launceston which presently supports the creative/cultural sector is the University of Tasmania's (UTAS) Northern Transformation Project at Inveresk [figure twenty four].

This joint initiative between local, State and Federal governments in partnership with UTAS is to be commended as the investment in fit-for-purpose education amenities is well overdue.

The consolidation and co-location of UTAS within the Inveresk precinct establishes the beginnings of a centrally located cultural/creative/education precinct within the heart of Launceston.

This initiative provides unique advantages in considering future development of an expanded community/cultural/creative/education precinct—as the role of the public institution underpins the dynamism of a holistic expanded precinct through interdependent relationships and shared identity.

In addition, it is recognised that the creative and education industries are enablers in the wider economy. They provide leadership in thinking, ideas and design capabilities, and add value across all spheres of economic activity – from innovation, research and development, to investment.

Whilst there is little doubt that investment into the education sector is critical, limiting the current renewal strategies for the Inveresk site to just the Northern Transformation Project is akin to putting lipstick on a precinct with no face.

QVMAG currently inhabits (within this site) the aging, yet historically significant, railyards buildings within the Inveresk precinct. Due to the challenges associated with these amenities 50% of the buildings remain underutilised or uninhabitable entirely [figure twenty five].

Not to mention that their dilapidated state do little to promote the new UTAS developments.

Given that the region's arts and cultural organisations are similarly seeking fit-for-purpose accommodation, and that majority of the existing structures do not meet international standards for museums and galleries, a holistic renewal strategy that addresses the sub-standard accommodation challenges alongside co-locating community/creative industries is the key to defining and transforming the Inveresk precinct, and Launceston as a whole.





figure twenty three  
UTAS Northern Transformation Project: Inveresk Site Map

INVERESK PRECINCT PLAN

- Key:
- 1. Library & Student Experience
  - 2. River's Edge building
  - 3. Willis St building
  - 4. Pedestrian and cycle bridge
  - 5. University Square
  - 6. Food Gardens
  - 7. Esk Activity Space
  - 8. Future student accommodation
  - 9. Existing student accommodation
  - 10. Creative Arts & Media
  - 11. Architecture & Design
  - 12. Annexe Theatre
  - 13. Launceston Big Picture School
  - 14. Tramway Museum
  - 15. UTAS Stadium
  - 16. QVMAG
  - 17. Welcome Space
  - 18. Green spine
- Existing UTAS  
● Future UTAS  
● Future UTAS Accommodation

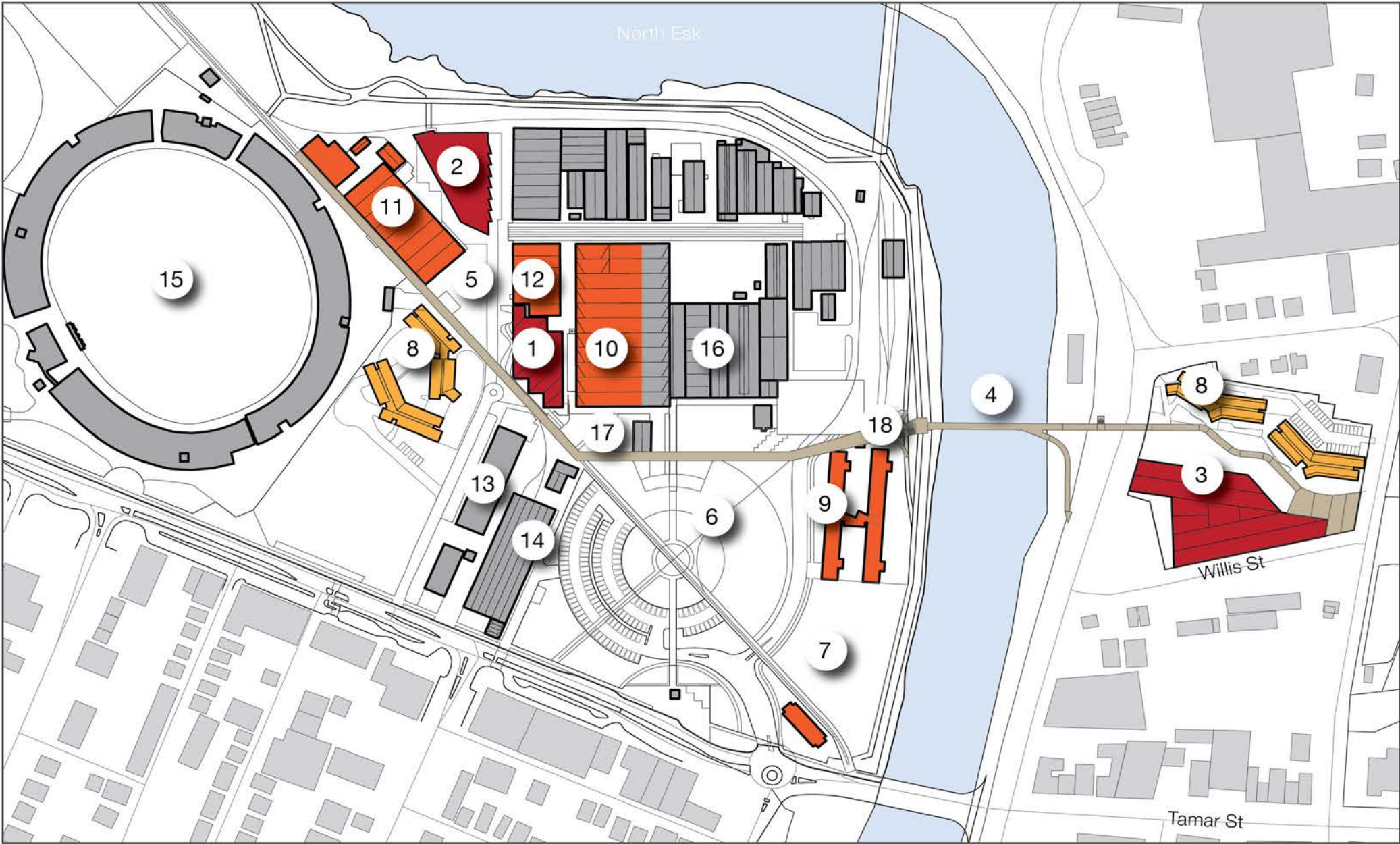
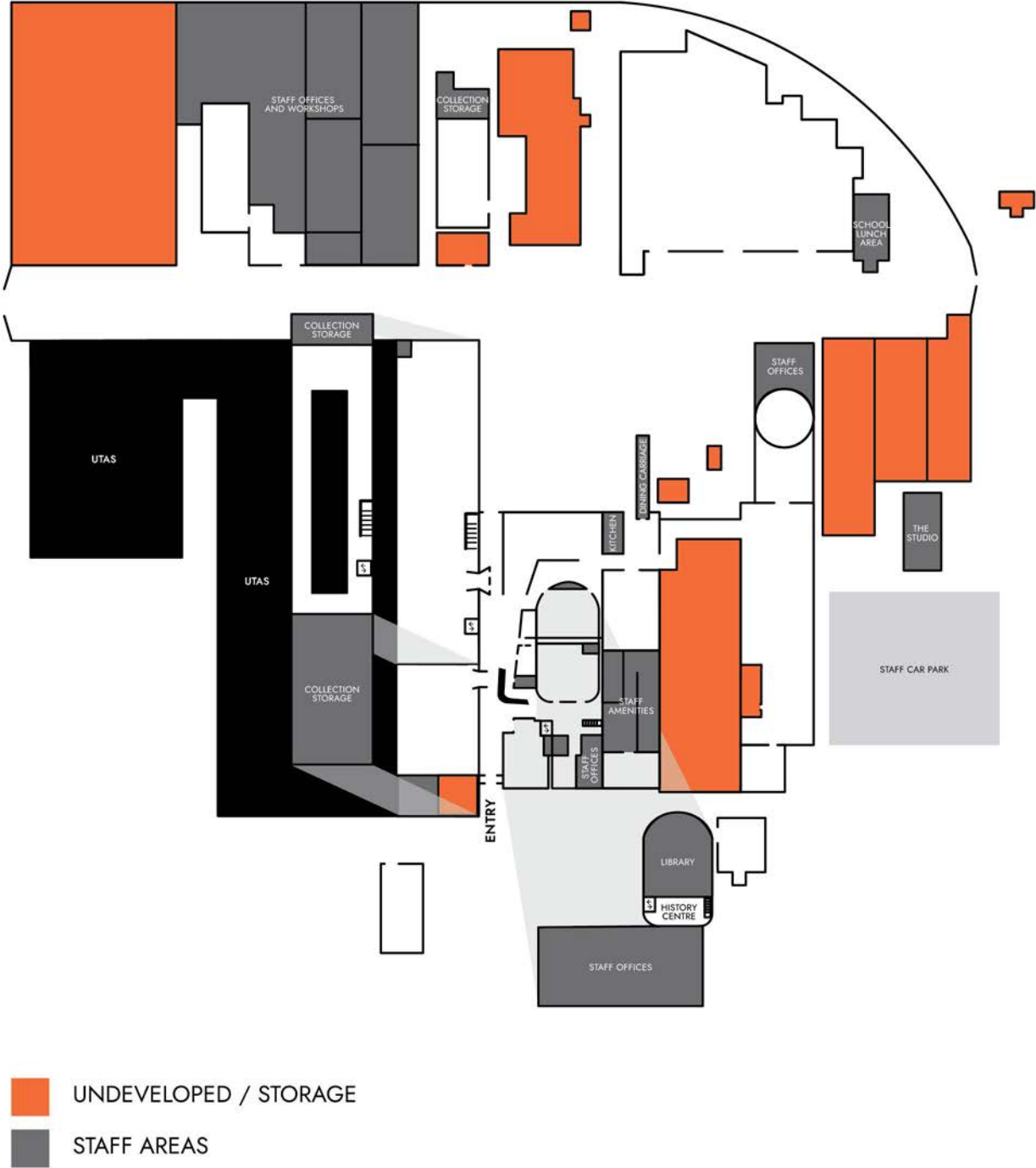




figure twenty four  
QVMAG Inveresk Site Map



In successful precincts, these two elements of community and content are highly complementary, linked by an idea that focuses and aligns the whole enterprise.

Community cultural delivery benefits from access to unique content; this content is contextualised and made more accessible by being linked to people and place.

This integrated approach of consolidating the University, cultural and creative sectors provides a high-quality attraction for a wider audience and uses strategic relationships to maximise the use of existing capabilities and investment by government and other project partners.

The benefits of such urban planning have been clearly identified and achieved in other cities worldwide as demonstrated in the Guggenheim Bilbao, Southbank Brisbane and Federation Square Melbourne.

The opportunity for Launceston and Tasmania to strategically harness and support this development within the northern region cannot be overstated.

In addition to a flagship **Art Gallery at Royal Park** with a **Centre of Aboriginal Science and Education**, and a dedicated accessible **QVMAG Collections Discovery Centre**, an 'artshub' of aggregated cultural/creative/education industries at Inveresk would play an equally important role in the beating heart of a creative and progressive city.

Supporting and enabling a thriving creative/cultural/education sector, which in turn, generates an exciting, stimulating city with great lifestyles, amenities, and rich cultural and social environments will attract more creative thinkers, innovators and knowledge-economy entrepreneurs across the whole economy.

Cultural precincts or districts are an important civic investment and support the long-term development of creative economies and urban centres.

They bring about substantial economic outputs and employment, as well as significant social benefits. There is an obvious synergy between the location and investment of major cultural/creative facilities within the Inveresk precinct, on the doorstep of the Launceston CBD, and complementary to the existing Northern Transformation strategies.

Importantly, this strategy does not constrain options for spatial distribution of facilities.

For both infrastructure and programming, an 'artshub' model provides many local governments with an efficient delivery mechanism that includes visible core cultural facilities for coordinating cultural delivery and programmes, co-located with other cultural/creative functions.



Presently, the generational benefits for the Launceston region through the activation of QVMAG and the development of an aggregated cultural/creative precinct at Inveresk remain unrealised.

When compared with our regional counterparts, Launceston's cultural offerings attract more attendances than any other regional city in northern Tasmania, yet the region remains overlooked in key cultural infrastructure initiatives that could further elevate and secure Launceston as an international and national cultural destination of substance.

The development of an aggregated cultural/creative/education precinct at Inveresk would provide a master planned and visionary platform upon which Launceston could harness and support the creative sector whilst building on its strengths as a destination city by better utilising existing amenities and the creative industries to attract people to visit, live and work here, providing a positive economic return for the region.

Further, the realisation an aggregated cultural/creative precinct at Inveresk, comprised of dynamic and active community spaces, creative industries, green spaces, workshops, galleries, studios and retail, and commercial interests, will complete the reinvigoration of the Inveresk site—complementary to the UTAS development—establishing a truly porous multi-disciplinary local, national and international cultural destination of substance for the northern Tasmanian region.









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1. Dave manguenner Gough *The First Tasmanians: our story* exhibition at the Art Gallery at Royal Park.

2. Exhibition view of the Australian War Memorial Touring Exhibition *For Country, for Nation* at the Museum at Inveresk, 17<sup>th</sup> April - 11<sup>th</sup> July 2021. Photograph: Rob Burnett.

3. Installation view **QAGOMA**. Ron Mueck / England, b.1958 / *In bed* 2005 / Mixed media, ed. of 1 / Purchased 2008. Queensland Art Gallery Foundation / Collection: Queensland Art Gallery / QAGOMA Photography / © The artist.

4. Daytime render of winning concept design for The Fox: **NGV Contemporary** by Angelo Candalepas and Associates, arrival gallery and central spherical hall. Render by Secchi Smith.

Artwork centre: KAWS (American born 1974), *Gone* 2019. Commissioned by the National Gallery of Victoria, 2020.

Artwork left: Reko Rennie (Kamilaroi born 1974), i) *OA WARRIOR I* (blue) 2020, ii) *OA WARRIOR II* (pink) 2020. Purchased, Victorian Foundation for Living Australian Artists, 2020.

Artwork right: Pae White (American born 1963), *Spearmint to peppermint* 2013. Purchased NGV Foundation with the assistance of the Donald Russell Elford and Dorothy Grace Elford Bequest, 2017

5. Visitors at the Queen Victoria Art Gallery at Royal Park standing in front of commissioned work *A New Kind of Union* by Tasmanian artists Mish Meijers and Tricky Walsh. Photograph: Melanie Kate Photography 2021.

6. Families participating in interactive learning environment of the *Phenomena Factory* at the Museum at Inveresk. Photograph: Tourism Australia 2022.

7. Main Gallery vista at the Museum at Inveresk.

8. Installation view at **Guggenheim Museum** Bilbao, 2009 Cai Guo-Qiang, *Head On* 2006, Deutsche Guggenheim, Berlin, 99 life-sized replicas of wolves and glass wall. Wolves: gauze, resin, and hide, Dimensions variable, Commissioned by Deutsche Bank AG. Deutsche Bank Collection. Photograph: Erika Barahona-Ede.

9. Les Filles De Illighadad, Mona Foma 2019. Photograph: Mona/Remi Chauvin, courtesy of the artist and MONA Museum of Old and New Art, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia.

10. Tasdance, *Fragile Matter* 2017. Photograph: Dermott McElduff, courtesy of Tasdance.

11. Families enjoying the *Tasmanian Connections* exhibition, at the Museum at Inveresk. Photograph: Tourism Australia 2022.

12. Architectural render of the **Powerhouse Parramatta** designed by architectural team Moreau Kusunoki (France) and Genton (Australia).

13. Architectural render of the new **Shepparton Art Museum** designed by Denton Corker Marshall (Melbourne).

14. Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery. Post \$30 million redevelopment.

15. Community headdress making workshop with Vicki West, QVMAG Aboriginal Learning Facilitator, at the Art Gallery at Royal Park in celebration of International Women's Day. Photograph: Carmencita Palermo 2022.

16. Installation view at **Carriageworks**, Sydney. Zhang Huan, *Sydney Buddha* 2015, ash and aluminium. Photograph: Zan Wimberley.

17. Main Gallery vista at the Museum at Inveresk.

18. External view **Carriageworks**, Sydney.

19. In Conversation community event, featuring Tasmanian artist Greg Leong at the Art Gallery at Royal Park. Photograph: Carmencita Palermo 2022.

20. Families exploring space in the *Southern Skies* exhibition at the Museum at Inveresk. Photograph: Tourism Australia 2022.

21. Garry Greenwood, *Ace of Spades* 1998. Photograph: Angela Casey 2020.

22. Community weaving workshop at the Queen Victoria Museum at Art Gallery. Photograph: Carmencita Palermo 2022.

23. Murray Fredericks, *SALT 400* 2014 Digital pigment print on cotton rag, 140 x 255 cm Edition of 7.

24. External view, entrance to the Art Gallery at Royal Park.

25. Exhibition view of the Australian/Canadian collaborative First Nations exhibition *Wrapped in Culture* at the Art Gallery at Royal Park, 22<sup>nd</sup> January - 18<sup>th</sup> July 2021. Photograph: Melanie Kate Photography 2021.

26. Families enjoying the School Holiday Program at the Museum at Inveresk. Photograph: Melanie Kate Photography 2021.

27. from left to right: Azita Rezaei Chalehzeini, Dina Saffar Alkhalili, Maryam Heidari, Marjam Godazgar with Mehrangiz Modarres Tabatabaei. *Windows* 2021. Photograph: Jacob Collings 2021.

28. Ricky Maynard, *Saddened Were the Hearts of Many Men* (Detail) 2015. Photograph: Jacob Collings.

29. Participant of the School Holiday Program at the Museum at Inveresk. Photograph: Melanie Kate Photography 2021.

30. Exhibition view of Garry Greenwood's exhibition *Skin* at the Art Gallery at Royal Park, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2020 - 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2022. Photograph: Angela Casey 2020.

31. Architectural render of an exhibition gallery within the new **Powerhouse Parramatta** designed by architectural team Moreau Kusunoki (France) and Genton (Australia).

32. clockwise from top left **NGV Contemporary / Powerhouse Parramatta / Rockhampton Museum of Art / Sydney Modern / Shepparton Art Museum / Australian Museum**.

33. Amanda Parer, *Intrude* as part of the Junction 2014 festival. Photograph: Scott Gelston 2014.

34. Street view of the new \$50m Shepparton Art Museum.

35. Teamlab, *Borderless* 2022, Aomi Station, Odaiba, Tokyo.

36. Daytime render of rooftop restaurant in winning concept design for The Fox: NGV Contemporary by Angelo Candalepas and Associates. Render by Secchi Smith.

37. Smoking Ceremony at Powerhouse Museum, Ultimo Photograph: Syrenne Anu.

38. Exhibition view of *The First Tasmanians: our story* exhibition at the Art Gallery at Royal Park.

39. Exhibition view of the *Linear* exhibition at the Powerhouse Museum, Ultimo.

40. External render view of the new **V&A East Museum** at Stratford Waterfront, designed by O'Donnell + Tuomey. © O'Donnell + Tuomey / Ninety90, 2018.

41. Visible collection storage at the **Rietberg Museum**, Zurich.

42. Visible collection storage.

43. Visible collection storage, Natural Sciences Collection, at the **Übersee-Museum**, Bremen.

44. Internal render view of the central public collection hall in new **V&A East Storehouse** at Here East, designed by Diller Scofidio + Renfro. © Diller Scofidio + Renfro, 2018.

45. Entrance view of **Bunjil Place**, the City of Casey's Cultural Precinct.

46. Families exploring the Launceston Planetarium at the Queen Victoria Museum at Inveresk. Photograph: Tourism Australia 2022.

47. External render of the **Sydney Modern** Project by Kazuyo Sejima + Ryue Nishizawa / SANAA.

48. Aunty Dorothy Murray inspecting her shell necklace at *The First Tasmanians: our story* exhibition at the Art Gallery at Royal Park.



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*We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land where we work and live, the Stoney Creek Nation, made up of at least three clans - Tyerenotepanner; Panninher and Lettermairrener.*

*The Stoney Creek Nation clans lived along the riverways in harmony with the seasons for several thousand generations, and today they are remembered as the Traditional Owners of this land.*

*We celebrate the stories, culture and traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Elders of all communities who also work and live on this land.*

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A Paradigm Shift

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Cover images  
Exterior of the Queen Victoria Art Gallery at Royal Park, QVMAG 2018 [top]; Exterior of the Queen Victoria Museum at Inveresk, QVMAG 2019 [bottom].











