

2.2 BOWNESS FAMILY FOUNDATION TRAVEL GRANT - MGA STAFF TRAVEL TO INDIA REQUEST

Responsible Director: Julie Salomon

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. *Approves international travel and five working days for Monash Gallery of Art Gallery Director Anouska Phizacklea to travel to India to support the delivery of MGA's first international travelling exhibition, John Gollings: the history of the built world, increase MGA's international networks and programming development; and*
2. *Notes that a grant of \$5,000 for this proposal has been received to fully fund this travel by the Bowness Family Foundation.*

INTRODUCTION

A grant has been received by the Bowness Family Foundation of \$5,000 to fund the MGA's Gallery Director to travel to India. This grant proposal seeks to support the establishment of Monash Gallery of Art's international touring program. This will be MGA's first tour exhibited outside of Australia, and marks an important milestone in reach, profile and standing of MGA's exhibition program. The exhibition is part of the Festival of Australia in India in collaboration with the Australian Embassy in India, and will tour to at least three venues from December 2018 to April 2019. Importantly, it provides an opportunity to secure exhibitions and relationships to further engage Melbourne's Indian community, notably the 6% of Monash residents of Indian background.

PURPOSE

Council's approval is required for international travel to India and the 5 working days allocated to coincide with a leg of the MGA's first international touring exhibition to India between January and April 2019 (pending confirmed opening dates). There is no additional funding requirement by Council to fund the proposal.

BACKGROUND

MGA is the Australian home of photography. As Australia's only public institution solely dedicated to the collection, exhibition and promotion of photography, MGA holds a unique place in the nation's network of art institutions. The Monash community is transitioning to one of the most

multicultural communities in Australia, with 49% of Monash residents born overseas and over 6% from India backgrounds.

The positioning of MGA as the Australian home of photography was clearly sign-posted during 2017 with a series of exceptional international exhibitions MGA brought to Australia, which included *China: grain to pixel*, an exhibition delivered in partnership with Shanghai Centre of Photography (SCôP). The exhibition resonated with audiences and created new pathways and opportunities for the community to engage with MGA, inspired new audiences to explore photography, and advanced MGA's profile and reputation.

MGA seeks to reciprocate the cultural exchange with International partners. One of the key ways to do this is to tour MGA's exhibitions to International venues. As a result of the record-breaking attendance of *John Gollings: the history of the built world* exhibition, MGA sought touring venues through an Expression of Interest (EOI) process. As a result, a number of positive EOI's were received. This included three venues in Australia and the Australian Embassy in India. In addition, funding was also received from the Gordon Darling Foundation and the Vizard Foundation to support the production of a catalogue. The Australian Embassy in India and the Bowness Family Foundation are jointly funding the tour to India. There will be no cost to MGA.

DISCUSSION

MGA is seeking to continue development of strategic relationships with international institutions and partners by supporting the Director to travel to India to coincide the tour with the potential to participate in public programming. This will therefore support the establishment of MGA's international touring program, to continue to develop International exhibition partnerships and provide her with an exceptional professional development opportunity. It will also deliver of key strategic goals including achieving MGA's mission, to champion Australian photography globally.

Collectively, MGA staff and the Committee of Management have a highly developed awareness of the responsibility and opportunity this travel grant presents, reflected in MGA's Strategic Plan 2018-22. Given Monash's diverse cultural profile, MGA seeks present exhibitions that reflect, inform and include the Indian community as a key part of its future exhibitions and programming. This exhibition is incredibly significant for MGA's standing and marks the first international tour, increasing MGA's reach and profile within the community as a leading and globally significant cultural institution.

The travel grant will provide a unique opportunity to directly engage with galleries and cultural organisations in India facilitated through the Australian

Embassy in India. This will expedite identification of exhibitions suitable for MGA and establish relationships with cultural institutions for future pursuit.

Each institution listed in the exhibition touring venue list (Attachment 1). The Gallery Director's travel will also support the goal to build MGA's capacity to deliver the strategy by increasing revenue, developing and supporting MGA by the provision of professional development opportunities and attracting sponsorship opportunities.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This proposal supports the **MGA 2018 – 2022 Strategic Plan** endorsed by Council in June 2018.

The mission of MGA is to champion Australian photography and inspire audiences to explore the art form. Plan's Strategy Statement notes that MGA is Australia's leading public art gallery devoted to the collection and exhibition of photography that engages local, national and international audiences in arts and cultural experiences. In five years, we have committed to double visitor numbers, engagement, sector relevance and influence. MGA will achieve this by focusing on four key goals:

- Present compelling, must see exhibitions that meaningfully contribute to arts scholarship and the advancement of photography
- Build a nationally significant collection of Australian photographs
- Deliver culturally enriching experiences that inspire audiences to embrace, explore and value photography
- Build our capacity to deliver our strategy by increasing revenue and developing and supporting our people.

This proposal seeks to advance specifically MGA's goals to present relevant, must see exhibitions that meaningfully contribute to arts scholarship and the advancement of photography. Underpinning this are the following initiatives:

- Inspire audiences to explore photography with compelling, must see exhibitions that grow and enrich audiences
- Present a national and internationally significant touring program, developing global partnerships that champion and support Australian artists and arts workers
- Demonstrate excellence and leadership within the sector including profiling and championing photography, increasing collaborative projects, producing publications of significance and providing professional development opportunities.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The *China: grain to pixel* exhibition was sourced by the previous Gallery Director Kallie Blauhorn and COM member Milton Harris in 2015. This exhibition became the most popular exhibition in the history of the gallery. It raised the profile of the gallery amongst prominent leaders and generated significant financial support from sponsors. Its success demonstrates the

value to the Monash community of securing international exhibitions relevant to a local audience at MGA. Exposure to global trends, ideas and relationship development in India has significant potential for MGA to extend this recent success for the benefit of the Monash community and the national reach of MGA. This opportunity marks a significant milestone for MGA in its mission to champion Australian photography, achieving a key initiative to establish an internationally travelling exhibition program.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

No human rights implications inform this proposal.

CONSULTATION

This proposal is supported by the MGA Committee of Management who has endorsed the proposal prior to presentation for Council's consideration.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Funding for this proposal has been secured through a grant from the Gordon Darling Foundation according to the following summary:

ITEM	DETAILS	EXPENDITURE
Flights	Qantas Flights	\$3000
Accommodation	7 days	\$1150
Meals / Other costs	Meals \$50 per day	\$350
	Travel \$15 per day	\$500
TOTAL (Inc. GST)		\$5,000

Note: costs current at time of grant application

CONCLUSION

This grant opportunity is a unique and highly valued opportunity to pursue strategic and creative partnerships with arts and cultural organisations in India. Building on the success of MGA's Australian touring exhibition, this will be the first International tour. The proposal supports the development of an international touring program directly relevant to the community of Monash and new partnerships that support the future success of Monash Gallery of Art's new Strategic Plan recently endorsed by Council.

Exhibition Touring Schedule

Name of Venue: Bhau Daji Lal Museum, Mumbai
Street address: 91A, Rani Baug, Veer Mata Jijbai Bhonsle Udyan, Dr
Baba Saheb Ambedkar Rd, Byculla East, Mumbai,
Maharashtra 400027, India

Name of Venue: CEPT University
Street address: Kasturbhai Lalbhai Campus, University Rd,
Navrangpura,
Ahmedabad, Gujarat 380009, India

Name of Venue: Experimental Art Gallery
Street address: India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi 110003,
India