

7.1 MONASH GALLERY OF ART COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2019 - 2020

Responsible Committee: Monash Gallery of Art Committee of Management

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Notes the 2019 – 2020 Annual Report presented by the Monash Gallery of Art Committee of Management.*
- 2. Acknowledges the leadership of the Committee of Management in the achievement of Monash Gallery of Art’s strategic vision.*

INTRODUCTION

On an annual basis, the Monash Gallery of Art (MGA) Committee of Management (COM) submits to Council its report on MGA activity over the past year.

The Monash Gallery of Art Committee is constituted as a community asset committee in accordance with Section 65 of the Local Government Act 2020 and is referred to as the Committee of Management (CoM).

Consistent with the COM’s Terms of Reference the annual report for MGA 2019-2020 as approved by CoM is attached. This report is submitted to the CEO and provided to the Councillors for information. The report will be available for public view on MGA’s website. This report presents the MGA Annual Report 2019 – 2020 at **Attachment 1**.

BACKGROUND

MGA’s Annual reports on key aspects of the Strategic Plan that speak to how MGA achieves its mission, vision and strategic statement in particular how it is delivering on its four key initiatives:

- Compelling must see exhibitions
- Nationally significant collection
- Culturally enriching experiences
- Build our capacity to deliver by increasing revenue & professional development of the team

DISCUSSION

When the year began, MGA could not have anticipated how the world would change in such a short period of time. During such a tumultuous year, MGA has pivoted towards digital engagement, a transformation that had already begun from mid-2019. MGA’s exhibition and engagement programs and the utilisation and development of the collection responded to

the challenges, encouraging different thinking, not just for MGA as an organisation but also for the artists and creatives it works alongside.

A strategic focus throughout the year has been the MGA/Wheelers Hill Library feasibility study, fully funded by the Victorian State Government through the Community Support Fund. As MGA enters its 30th year this initiative seeks to look at the future of MGA and its ability to adapt and grow to meet the needs of diverse audiences within an integrated cultural precinct that harnesses MGA's unique and nationally significant collection of Australian photographs, embedding the visual with the literary arts to leverage the important role libraries play within the community.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Activities conducted during 2019-2020 were based on the MGA Strategic Plan, to achieve the development and implementation of its vision as the Australian Home of Photography. The MGA Strategic Plan 2018-2022 supports the delivery of the Council Plan 2017-2021. In particular, it meets the aspiration of:

Strategic Objective - An inclusive community: Our people and communities are healthy, connected and engaged.

The MGA Strategic Plan 2018 – 2022 includes a three year annual action plan, capturing current activities for MGA COM and staff to identify, assess and address the priorities of the Plan.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

MGA has a unique role in the cultural and community life of Monash. It is an important local destination for social and cultural connection, for creative and intellectual wellbeing. This is typified by the MGA volunteer program, which provides vital support to MGA and an inclusive opportunity for volunteer participation, representing over 2000 hours of support annually.

A priority for the COM is the development of activities and business support that represent and reflect the city's demographic diversity, to sustain relevance and ownership by the community. In particular the Bill Henson Commission that showcased the Monash landscape, and the *Portrait of Monash: the ties that bind* commissioning exhibition which showcased and responded to issues our community is dealing with.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

The Monash Gallery of Art exhibition and activities programs accord with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities act 2006 and in particular the following rights:

- (vii) freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief;
- (viii) freedom of expression;

- (ix) peaceful assembly and freedom of association;
- (xi) taking part in public life;
- (xii) cultural rights.

CONSULTATION

Through the year, consultation has occurred with visitors to MGA by the medium of a visitor survey. This is a regular feature of MGA's connection with the community and an essential part of its framework for future planning.

Significant consultation has also occurred as part of the feasibility study.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

For the financial year 2019 – 2020 MGA. The fundraising campaign Photography 500: curate, collect, conserve, in 2018-19 had created a secure platform for MGA to develop new and deepen existing donor relationships for the future (\$100k). This was pivotal in providing the evidence we needed to redesign the philanthropic relationship engagement model to focus on building strong relationships with people who desire to be connected and engaged with MGA in order to develop a sustainable funding base.

MGA implemented a new engagement calendar over the last year that focused on more intimate events for donors, facilitating a rich and meaningful connection with MGA for all levels of supporters of MGA's Patrons Program, including a mixture of free and ticketed events. MGA also launched an online store that enabled MGA to continue to raise funds while MGA was closed due to COVID-19.

CONCLUSION

In 2019-20, MGA has continued to grow and cement its reputation locally, nationally and internationally as the Australian Home of Photography with high quality exhibition programming, public programs and partnership development. This has been supported by a focus on renewal, sustainability, network development and excellent governance by the COM.

The COM Annual Report 2019-20 reflects the success of the past twelve months including the response to the challenges faced during the pandemic, and is attached for Council's noting.