



**STATE LIBRARY  
VICTORIA**  
What's your story?

## MEDIA RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** 12:15pm Thursday September 10 2015

### State Library Victoria receives \$10 million donation from The Ian Potter Foundation to restore iconic Queen's Hall

State Library Victoria is delighted to announce that The Ian Potter Foundation will become the lead philanthropic donor for the refurbishment of the Library's historic Queen's Hall through a \$10 million donation from the Foundation.

The 156-year-old Hall will be renamed in honour of Sir Ian Potter as the Ian Potter Queen's Hall.

The refurbishment of the Hall, Australia's first public library space, will be the jewel in the \$83.1 million redevelopment of the State Library announced in this year's state budget.

The Victorian Government has committed \$55.4 million towards the redevelopment, which is expected to be completed over a five year period.

The donation is the largest grant ever made by the Ian Potter Foundation's education program and the largest donation ever received by the State Library.

Library Board of Victoria President John Wylie AM said, "We are immensely grateful for the generosity of The Ian Potter Foundation for supporting the Library in breathing new life into what will become the Ian Potter Queen's Hall."

"This project will return the original reading room to its former glory and will respect the Hall's Victorian heritage features. We will expand the public space within the Library for our ever-growing number of students and visitors, and reopen the doors to one of the most beautiful buildings in Melbourne," he said.

"This wonderful gift acknowledges and celebrates the history of this great institution, but also looks to its future."

Chairman of The Ian Potter Foundation Charles Goode AC said The Ian Potter Foundation has been a supporter of the State Library for nearly 50 years.

"This is a major grant for a very significant project which aligns closely with our philosophy of encouraging excellence and innovation," said Mr Goode.

"The Hall, with its magnificent reading room, is one of Australia's most architecturally significant heritage spaces. Redeveloping the Hall and returning it to full public use after it has been closed for more than a decade is important and exciting. We are very proud to support this project and help the State Library Victoria in its public fundraising for its worthy redevelopment project."

Minister for the Creative Industries Martin Foley MP said: "The Ian Potter Foundation is one of Australia's most passionate and prominent supporters of creative endeavour, research, education and community projects – and this extraordinary act of generosity will touch on all of those areas."

"Together with funding from the Victorian Government, this donation will see the Hall rejuvenated and returned

#### Media inquiries

Anna Whitelaw | State Library Victoria | [awhitelaw@sl.vic.gov.au](mailto:awhitelaw@sl.vic.gov.au) | 0410 724 227  
Ben Starick | Starling Communications | [ben@starling.com.au](mailto:ben@starling.com.au) | 0411 029 393





## MEDIA RELEASE

to the people of Victoria. True to its rich history, it will be a place for discovery and inspiration – at the heart of one of our great centres for culture, connection and learning - for generations to come."

### HISTORY AND FUTURE OF QUEEN'S HALL

The Queen's Hall was first opened on Queen Victoria's birthday in 1859, and was originally the Queen's Reading Room. The Hall and the foyer below comprised the original Melbourne Public Library.

After the famed Dome was completed in 1913, Queen's Hall was used by the Museum of Victoria until the 1970s when it was renovated and turned into an arts library. Since 2003, Queen's Hall has been closed to the public, as the dilapidated building waited to undergo a major refurbishment.

The refurbishment will see the Ian Potter Queen's Hall transformed into a public reading room and reception space with a new rooftop terrace.

The redevelopment project proposes to include the restoration and reopening of the Russell Street entrance and new spaces for early learning, digital media, entrepreneurship and exhibitions, and an e-Town Hall to connect regional public libraries with the State Library.

Full realisation of these plans will depend upon the completion of the proposed philanthropic fundraising campaign for the redevelopment, for which The Ian Potter Foundation grant is a significant contribution.

Construction is due to commence in 2017 and be completed in 2020.

### ABOUT THE IAN POTTER FOUNDATION

The Ian Potter Foundation was established in 1964 by Australian financier, businessman and philanthropist Sir Ian Potter (1902-1994) and is today one of Australia's major philanthropic foundations.

Based in Melbourne, The Ian Potter Foundation was the first public charitable fund created under an amendment to the Income Tax Assessment Act which allowed the Foundation to receive tax deductible donations.

The Ian Potter Foundation has awarded over \$260 million in grants over the last 51 years to thousands of projects both large and small to support the arts, education, scientific research, environment, medical research and community wellbeing.

**ENDS**

### MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES

For any media enquiries including interviews, images of Queen's Hall (both historic and artist impression images), overlay vision and filming opportunities, please contact:

**Anna Whitelaw** in Media & Public Affairs, State Library Victoria on 03 8664 7533 or 0410 724 227

[media@slv.vic.gov.au](mailto:media@slv.vic.gov.au)

**Ben Starick** at Starling Communications on 0411 029 393 or [ben@starling.com.au](mailto:ben@starling.com.au).

### Media inquiries

Anna Whitelaw | State Library Victoria | [awhitelaw@slv.vic.gov.au](mailto:awhitelaw@slv.vic.gov.au) | 0410 724 227

Ben Starick | Starling Communications | [ben@starling.com.au](mailto:ben@starling.com.au) | 0411 029 393

