A library for all in a changing world

One hundred and sixty years ago the Melbourne Public Library was opened as the people’s university. It was designed to be ‘a great emporium of learning’, a place of knowledge, creativity, enterprise and innovation – a gathering place, where everyone was welcome and access to information was free.

Those first principles remain at the heart of State Library Victoria today.

The Library is busier and more widely used than ever. As Victoria grows and technology transforms the way we live and work, the Library is constantly evolving to meet the changing needs of the community. The people we serve are at the heart of all we do.

We are finding new and dynamic ways to develop and share the Library’s collection and expertise – to tell Victoria’s stories and help shape its future.

We are transforming the Library’s services, spaces and programs and enhancing our role as a driver of Victoria’s education, innovation, tourism and creative industries.

We are looking to the future and building a Library that inspires possibilities now, and for generations to come.

We look forward to working with the community to deliver this vision.

John Wylie
President, Library Board of Victoria

Kate Torney
Chief Executive Officer
OUR PURPOSE

Inspiring possibilities

We believe in the power of knowledge to change lives.
We encourage learning, exploration, imagination and creativity.
We open up possibilities for all Victorians.
We preserve and share the stories of Victoria and the world, so they can inform and inspire.
We provide innovative programs and spaces for wonder, contemplation and connection.
We are leaders in our industry and a partner of choice, striving to make a positive difference.

OUR VALUES

Innovation
We recognise and embrace new technologies, ideas and opportunities to improve, grow and develop as individuals and as industry leaders in a challenging environment.

Collaboration
We work together and with partners, sharing knowledge and resources to advance universal access to information.

Engagement
We work to understand, connect and meet the needs and expectations of our communities in the most appropriate ways.

Excellence
We provide an outstanding service at all times in a professional and ethical manner.

Respect
We strive to create an open and caring community by valuing and supporting individuals, and acknowledging the strength of diversity.

OUR GOALS

1. People at the heart
   The needs of the people we serve are central to all that we do.

2. No barriers
   We are accessible to everyone and welcoming to all.

3. Open and inviting
   We surprise, delight and inform by sharing stories, collections, spaces and expertise.

4. A library for the future
   We are agile, innovative and forward-thinking. We offer world-class library services today and are building strong foundations for tomorrow.
GOAL
People at the heart

The needs of the people we serve are central to all that we do.

Outcome
We are relevant and valued, driven by the needs of the community we serve.

PRIORITIES
We foster a strong culture that places people at the centre of all our decision-making.

We support students and researchers of all ages by designing services and spaces that meet their changing needs.

We develop a deeper understanding of community needs by investing in consultation, data gathering and ongoing analysis.

We collaborate with users and stakeholders to design our services and spaces.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
Vision 2020 and BOSS2
Redevelop our building to open 40 per cent more public space, transform our digital delivery and create a welcoming experience for all visitors.

New model for customer service
Reshape our front-of-house customer service, applying our new service principles in the redeveloped building.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
• Increase in new visitation onsite and online
• Increase in return visitation onsite and online
• Improved percentage of satisfied visitors
• Increase in number of Library Members and Friends
• Enhanced volunteer engagement
• Increase in program attendance and participation.
GOAL

No barriers

We are accessible to everyone and welcoming to all.

Outcome
We are a world leader in access, engagement and diversity in library services and programs.

PRIORITIES
We remove barriers to accessing our spaces, collections, services and programs, both onsite and online. We prioritise culturally diverse communities and people from disadvantaged communities across our four focus areas:

• early literacy
• students and schools
• digital literacy
• universal access.

We extend our reach by strengthening our digital and regional delivery.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Access for all
Adopt best practice principles so that people of all abilities can use our spaces and services.

Digital inclusion
Introduce programming to build digital literacy, access to digital information, and exploration of new creative technologies.

Young learners
Create enriching experiences for young learners and their families, carers and teachers. Build dedicated spaces to deliver early years literacy programming and expanded learning opportunities for Victorian school students.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

• Growth in target audience participation
• Increase in our international engagement, relationships and partnerships
• Growth in visitation to new dedicated children’s and youth spaces
• Increase in number of staff and volunteers representing target audiences
• Increase in number of regional and international first-time online visitors.
GOAL
THREE
Open and inviting

We surprise, delight and inform by sharing stories, collections, spaces and expertise.

Outcome
We reach more people in more ways than ever before.

PRIORITIES
We introduce new ways to discover, share and use our collections through technology and expertise that supports access and engagement.
We create broad-reaching, innovative exhibitions and programs that encourage curiosity, discovery and participation.
We celebrate and further build the role of libraries as drivers of social, cultural, educational and economic growth.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
Digital collection discovery
Open up our collections for discovery, sharing and creative use by introducing intuitive digital interfaces underpinned by robust technology systems. This will be supported by increased staff capabilities in digital collecting, preservation and access.

Exhibition journey
Inspire people to connect to our collections in imaginative ways through creative and contemporary curation and design of exhibitions onsite, regionally and online.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
• Increased percentage of collection items discoverable online
• Increased access to collections
• Increase in first-time visitation online
• Increase in exhibition attendance and participation
• Enhanced volunteer engagement
• Improved percentage of satisfied visitors.
GOAL

A library for the future

We are agile, innovative and forward-thinking. We offer world-class library services today and are building strong foundations for tomorrow.

Outcome

We are a recognised world leader in libraries, programs and partnerships.

PRIORITIES

We are a world leader in contemporary library services and spaces.

We ensure long-term sustainability by diversifying our funding and revenue sources.

We are a partner of choice, contributing to Victoria’s social, economic and cultural growth.

We empower entrepreneurs and innovators to bring ideas to life.

We build our skills and embrace change. We learn from others and we share what we learn.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Operational agility and sustainability

Align our business operations with our strategic priorities, ensuring every decision is based on audience needs, supported by solid data and evidence. Build a sustainable future by increasing revenue streams.

Connected network of ideas and debate

Facilitate discussion and debate by being a hub for digitally connected events. Link audiences and speakers in our new e-Town Hall with regional, national and international audiences.

Entrepreneurship

Develop partnerships within Victoria’s innovation industries and provide pathways for emerging entrepreneurs to connect with mentors, programs, resources and advice.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

• Increased returns from diverse revenue streams
• Successful delivery of new service models, digital services and exhibitions
• Increased percentage of activities supported through targeted partnerships
• Increased profile as a key part of Victoria’s education sector
• Growth in attendance at e-Town Hall events
• Improved staff satisfaction.
ABOUT US

Opened in 1856 as the Melbourne Public Library, State Library Victoria is Australia’s oldest public library and one of the first free public libraries in the world. We began with a collection of 3846 volumes on the shelves and over the past 160 years have collected more than 4.9 million items including books, manuscripts, serials, photographs, artworks, maps and ephemera. Each year we add more than 70,000 items to the Library’s rich collection and we lead the sector with our ambitious digitisation program.

Located in the heart of Melbourne, the State Library is a cultural icon dedicated to history, creativity and learning, and is one of the city’s premier heritage destinations. We have a full calendar of free exhibitions, events, talks, tours and children’s programming every season. Each year we welcome more than 1.8 million visitors to the Library and more than 4 million visits online. Our visitors include families and children, local and international students, researchers and culture lovers from all over the world.

Over the next five years the Library’s Vision 2020 redevelopment will transform our spaces, services and programs, including the reopening of Queen’s Hall, our original reading room and the oldest part of the Library. Newly designed public spaces will also be created so that all Victorians and visitors can continue to be inspired by possibilities.