

A new Warrnambool Art Gallery driving cultural tourism to the South West

We are seeking

Funding support to deliver this exciting cultural tourism infrastructure for our city, and the region.

The Warrnambool Art Gallery, owned and operated by Warrnambool City Council, was established in 1886 and is the fifth oldest public collecting institution in Australia.

Located on Liebig Street, the current facility, built in 1986, holds approximately 5,000 items with an overall value of \$13.68 million. The collection is a significant cultural asset owned by the Warrnambool City Council and held in trust for the people of Warrnambool and South West Victoria.

As the collection has grown over the years, the existing facility has not kept pace with its regional counterparts and its infrastructure and amenities are declining requiring ongoing and urgent upgrades.

Investment is required to allow Warrnambool Art Gallery to compete for the economic benefits of regional tourism, continue to grow its connection with First Nations people and stories, and develop its reputation as the destination for the local community to visit. A New Warrnambool Art Gallery was identified in the South West Victoria Creative Industries Strategy as a priority project with the best opportunity to positively impact on the region's creative industries sector.

Benefits of an upgraded facility include:

- First Peoples cultural visibility: creating strong connection to the Eastern Maar community and establishing Great South West region as a cultural tourism destination.
- Cultural safe spaces for indigenous communities' inclusion of spaces for First Nations to participate in creative industries.
- Professional facilities for touring shows: inclusion of larger and flexible exhibitions spaces that offer high quality technical and environmental conditions expected of a touring exhibition program.

- Visual arts presentation spaces: increased capacity for local and regional artists to present work and engage with wider audiences.
- Professional storage and archival facilities: back of house storage and conservation facilities that will ensure the important collection of works are maintained for future generations. This will also relate to storage of First Nations collections items.
- Creative practitioner gathering spaces: seminar and studio spaces that can be shared between creative artists.
- Youth engagement spaces: project spaces where youth can connect and create in a safe environment.

Two business cases have been developed with funding support from Regional Development Victoria. After significant community consultation a business case for a new gallery in the existing CBD location in the heart of the cultural precinct was endorsed by Council in 2024. The business case found that a new Warrnambool Art Gallery will help generate \$13.5 million in expenditure by 2030 and generate 116,000 visits in its fifth year (current average annual visits: 55,100). The benefit cost ratio indicates a positive rate of 1:16.



Cost: \$52.5 million (excluding escalation and GST)

Contact

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