



Benalla Art Gallery Strategic Plan  
2019 – 2023

**BENALLA**  
ART GALLERY

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## Purpose

To enhance people's lives by providing access to excellent art.

### The Benalla Art Gallery is unique

The Gallery was established in 1967 following a meeting of the Benalla Arts Group, the Apex Club and the Benalla Council. The Gallery was officially opened in Nunn Street, Benalla on 15 March 1968.

The Gallery Collection was established at the same time with an acquisitive exhibition funded by the Apex Club, with advice and assistance from *Patrick McCaughey*. The works acquired from this exhibition were by the most contemporary artists of the day and represented an engagement with new ideas about art and a forward-looking approach.

Laurie Ledger, a local stock and station agent, approached Council about building the current Gallery in 1971. He offered to contribute privately to building the Gallery and to donate his personal collection, on the proviso that the Gallery be built in the premier location it now enjoys – on the shores of Lake Benalla.

The donation of the Ledger Collection began in 1975 and was handed over in instalments until his death and bequest in the mid-1990s. His collection represents the art of the past and a much more conservative view of the world.

Gladys Bennett, Laurie's niece, donated \$1 million for the acquisition of contemporary art in 1997. Her contribution to the Gallery is also enormously significant.

The Gallery is the premier institution for fine art in northern Victoria. Within the walls of the Gallery, is a curated landscape of creative, contemporary and sophisticated art. Beyond its walls, the Gallery adds to the beauty and power of the landscape; Lake Benalla, the Benalla Botanical Gardens, the hills, mountains and flat plains of northern Victoria.

**Context**

The Benalla Art Gallery is the premier regional art gallery in north-east Victoria.

It is owned and operated by the Benalla Rural City Council, which is its major funding source. It also receives recurrent funding from Creative Victoria.

The Gallery actively seeks financial and in-kind support from private and corporate partners as well as operating revenue from admissions and retail sales. The Friends of the Benalla Art Gallery Inc. is an incorporated body of volunteers which raises funds for the Gallery through planned activities.

Above this Strategic Plan 2018 – 2023 sits the Council Plan 2018 – 2022, which is the plan for the whole of Benalla Rural City Council. Alongside it sits the 2018 – 2022 Benalla Rural City Tourism and Events Strategic Plan.

The Benalla Rural City Council, under Section 86 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, has appointed the Benalla Art Gallery Special Committee.

The Benalla Art Gallery Special Committee is responsible for delivering this Benalla Art Gallery Strategic Plan.

The Council Plan  
2017 – 2021

**Thriving and Progressive Economy**

- *We will support, promote and encourage the long-term growth, diversification and strengthening of our economy as a key contributor to a healthier and more sustainable community.*
- *Strengthen and grow tourism across Benalla Rural City.*

**High Performing Organisation**

- *We will be a high performing, efficient and innovative organisation based on sound financial management, accountability and good governance to provide best value service to our whole community.*

The Benalla Art Gallery  
Strategic Plan 2019 - 2023

Within this context, the Strategic Plan 2019 – 2023 presents the Benalla Art Gallery goals for the four year period and its strategies to achieve them.

With the Strategic Plan 2019 – 2023 sits business plans with key performance indicators that relate to the programmed activities for each of the strategic goals.

The Strategic Plan is a living, active plan and is reviewed annually. Progress against these goals is tracked at every meeting of the Benalla Art Gallery Special Committee.

**Goal 1****To improve, protect and conserve the Benalla Art Gallery permanent collection.****Objective 1.1****To improve the Benalla Art Gallery permanent collection****Key strategies**

- 1.11 Acquire, by purchase, gift and bequest, works of art of outstanding quality in line with the Benalla Art Gallery Collections and Acquisitions Policy
- 1.12 Where possible, remove from the Gallery collection, by an appropriate deaccession process, works that do not fit within the Benalla Art Gallery Collections and Acquisitions Policy
- 1.13 Encourage, facilitate and acknowledge funding, donations, gifts and bequests that enhance the Benalla Art Gallery collection

**Objective 1.2****To protect and conserve the Benalla Art Gallery permanent collection****Key strategies**

- 1.21 Provide appropriate storage, security and environmental conditions
- 1.22 Provide appropriate financial and other resources to adequately conserve and repair works
- 1.23 Document and manage the collection, including maintaining current digital records
- 1.24 Continue with securing copyright permission for individual work

**Performance indicators**

- 1.3 That the actual annual spend on conservation and repair work be no less than \$1 for every \$2000 worth of total collection value.
- 1.4 That all works considered to be of significance be digitised within the life of the Plan.
- 1.5 That all works considered to be of significance are reviewed to establish clear copyright status within the life of the Plan
- 1.6 That short and longer term storage solutions, with the available budget and resources, be executed.
- 1.7 That the industry accepted deaccession process be applied.
- 1.8 That the collection store have appropriate environmental controls, including temperature and humidity.

**Goal 2****Increase engagement of the community with the Gallery collection, exhibitions and programs.****Objective 2.1**

Display and exhibit works of art

## Key strategies

- 2.11 Display art works from the permanent collection in a manner that provides opportunities for deeper engagement
- 2.12 Present a well-researched, balanced, stimulating, informative and enjoyable exhibitions program

**Objective 2.2**

Promote the Benalla Art Gallery

## Key strategies

- 2.21 Develop and launch a new brand identity for the Gallery
- 2.22 Promote highlight exhibitions, and other opportunities for engagement to increase visitation
- 2.23 Present the Benalla Art Gallery in a consistent and credible manner
- 2.24 Promote the Gallery as a regional tourism product, with a focus on partnerships and collaboration

**Objective 2.3**

Increase access to the permanent collection

## Key strategies

- 2.31 Use collection displays, Gallery exhibitions, travelling exhibitions, loans, publications, programs and new technology to increase access to the permanent collection
- 2.32 Finalise the business case and plans for the development of the Art Gallery masterplan

<p>Objective 2.4</p> <p>Provide interesting and relevant education and public programs</p>	<p>Key strategies</p> <p>2.41 Present innovative, informative and engaging public programs</p> <p>2.42 Stimulate engagement with and understanding of the visual arts through events, workshops, learning opportunities and lectures</p> <p>2.43 Engage with the Victorian School Curriculum to ensure programs are targeted and appropriate for students and teachers</p>
<p>Objective 2.5</p> <p>Provide high-quality services and an enjoyable, accessible environment for visitors</p>	<p>Key strategies</p> <p>2.51 Provide a level of visitor service which is welcoming, knowledgeable and consistent with a Gallery of premium standing</p> <p>2.52 Seek and respond to visitor feedback</p> <p>2.53 Seek to refine the Gallery Café Lease Agreement</p> <p>2.54 Continue to improve the Gallery retail space</p>
<p>Performance indicators</p>	<p>2.6 Visitor numbers grow and visitor feedback is positive</p> <p>2.7 New brand identity for the Benalla Art Gallery launched</p> <p>2.8 Social media engagement grows</p> <p>2.9 Engagement in public programs is meaningful</p> <p>2.10 Different sections of the permanent collection are displayed</p>



**Goal 3****Maximise support for Gallery operations****Objective 3.1**

Develop and maintain strategic relationships

**Key strategies**

- 3.11 Actively engage with all levels of Government
- 3.12 Work collegially as part of the visual arts sector
- 3.13 Develop and maintain productive relationships with artists, donors, sponsors, members, collectors and other key stakeholders
- 3.14 Continue to work with Tourism North East, other Galleries and other appropriate regional tourism operators

**Objective 3.2**

Secure and manage the Gallery's financial resources

**Key strategies**

- 3.21 Establish a Foundation for the Gallery for the purpose of securing its long-term financial security
- 3.22 Secure funding and support for Gallery operations and programs from Government, corporate and private sources
- 3.23 Maximise return to the Gallery from commercial operations
- 3.24 Manage financial resources effectively, aligning them with strategic and financial plans

**Objective 3.3**

Manage the infrastructure of the Gallery

**Key strategies**

- 3.31 Maintain the Gallery building to a high standard
- 3.32 Maintain the Gallery building so it best protects the Gallery permanent collection
- 3.33 Consider environmental sustainability in the Gallery operations

<p>Objective 3.4</p> <p>Renew the Gallery infrastructure</p>	<p>Key strategies</p> <p>3.41 Finalise the business case and plans for the development of the Gallery masterplan, ensuring it best serves the needs of the Gallery and its audience.</p> <p>3.42 Seek Government and non-Government support for the redevelopment project</p>
<p>Performance indicators</p>	<p>3.5 Sound financial position and financial capacity to host large scale events</p> <p>3.6 Stakeholder satisfaction with facilities and services</p> <p>3.7 Establish a Foundation for the Gallery through which funds can be raised for the redevelopment of the Art Gallery</p> <p>3.8 Raise funds for the redevelopment of the Art Gallery</p>

## Strategic Risks

The Benalla Art Gallery Special Committee, on behalf of the Council, recognises a number of risks that may impede fulfilment of the goals outlined within this Strategic Plan.

Goal 1	To develop, protect and conserve the Benalla Art Gallery permanent collection.
<p>Risk 1</p> <p>The Benalla Art Gallery permanent collection is currently valued at \$16M. It is stored in substandard and inappropriate conditions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. As a matter of urgency, minimise the immediate issues associated with the collection storage facilities</li> <li>ii. Develop a longer-term solution to the inadequate storage that ensures the collection is appropriately stored, including off-site storage</li> <li>iii. Take all possible measures to ensure issues with the Gallery building, such as ceiling leaks and temperature and humidity variations are rectified to protect the collection</li> </ul>
Goal 2	Increase local community engagement with the Gallery collection, exhibitions and programs
<p>Risk 2</p> <p>Engagement with the community is dependent on a range of factors, all of which contribute to maximising community cultural and artistic awareness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Ensure staff resources provide the capacity to deliver the artistic program and that the Gallery is an employment place of choice</li> <li>ii. Ensure clarity of the roles of each stakeholder group and accordance between them, including the Council, the Benalla Art Gallery Special Committee and the Friends of the Benalla Art Gallery Inc.</li> <li>iii. Ensure the building infrastructure provides an appropriate backdrop for a range of artistic experiences, including providing appropriate internal spaces as well as access to all people including the very young, the very old and those with a disability</li> <li>iv. Ensure the capacity of the Gallery to run public program is linked to the improvement of the commercial operations, including developing new revenue streams like retail and license agreements.</li> </ul>
Goal 3	Maximise support for Gallery operations
<p>Risk 3</p> <p>The Benalla Art Gallery is a major tourism attraction and can delivery significant economic activity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Deliver a unique, relevant and best possible exhibition program, that is adequately funded</li> <li>ii. Gain co-operation from the tourism sector, locally and more broadly</li> <li>iii. Recognise the Benalla Art Gallery as an important tourism and economic asset</li> <li>iv. Develop a strong, recognisable brand for the Gallery and publicity program</li> </ul>