



Museum of  
Australian Democracy  
Old Parliament House

OUR REF: MF-000392

The Hon Ben Morton MP  
Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister and Cabinet  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Mr Morton

**Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House – Statement of Intent 2020-2021**

Thank you for your letter of 5 June 2020, outlining your expectations for the Museum of Australian Democracy for 2020–21. On behalf of Old Parliament House’s Board, I am pleased to respond to your Statement of Expectations with the attached Statement of Intent.

As with the rest of Australia and the world, the impact of COVID-19 on MoAD has been significant on both our business operations and budget. As a result it may be that some of the activities that you and indeed MoAD wishes to pursue will need to be held over to future years or until sufficient philanthropic or other support is received.

We will continue to seek own source revenue and mutually beneficial partnerships to address these limitations and greatly appreciate your ongoing support in forming new partnerships, as outlined in your Statement of Expectations.

We greatly look forward to working with you to celebrate Australia’s world class democracy and empower our visitors to further understand, appreciate, and engage with it.

Yours sincerely

The Hon Nick Minchin AO  
Chair Board of Old Parliament House

9 September 2020



## Statement of Intent 2020-2021 – Museum of Australian Democracy

This statement of Intent provides the response of the Museum of Australian Democracy (MoAD) at Old Parliament House (OPH) to the Ministers Statement of Expectations dated 5 June 2020.

The Museum of Australian Democracy at OPH celebrates the stories of Australia's democracy and the power of our voices within them. We aim to create experiences that are bold, relevant and authentic and to empower and inspire civic engagement and advance national conversations about democracy – past, present and future. The [2018-2023 MoAD Strategic Framework](#) guides how we achieve this through a combination of onsite, digital and schools participatory experiences that inspire and educate visitors about our unique democracy and their role in strengthening Australia's place as a world leading democratic nation.

The impact of COVID on visitation and revenue generation provides a particularly constrained fiscal environment, and will require continual review during 2020-21.

### 1. Educate, Inspire and Engage Visitors

We will continue to provide opportunities to educate, inspire and engage with visitors in the manner that speaks to them – onsite, online, and through formal learning programs – encouraging them to be active, engaged and informed citizens.

During 2020-21 a number of new galleries will provide additional context and learning opportunities for visitors, including the first of the new multi gallery **Democracy DNA** permanent exhibition. Framed around *Prime Minister's of Australia*, it will include a much-needed timeline of the key events that shaped our democracy since Federation, providing international and national context to the decisions made. The gallery includes a central temporary exhibit focusing on stories and motivations of those serving our democracy in different ways. The second of the galleries – *Gold Medal Moments* (working title) – will open late in 2021. These core galleries will take up almost all our capacity for 2020-2022 and will underpin our successful schools programs for the next decade.

**Let's Party** explores the many elements of party activity through a five-component, distributed experience that includes the Government Party Room, the Prime Minister's Suite, and the *Life of the Party* exhibit. A new exhibit and interpretation of the Country Party Room includes an exhibition on *the National Party*, with an opening scheduled for November 2020. The reach and impact of **Truth, Power and a Free Press** will be expanded through a media literacy and schools learning program and will continue to enhance visitors' understanding of the importance of a free press and of journalism's role in democracy. **Speakers Suite Interpretation** will include a renewed focus on democracy, leadership and governmental processes told through the Hon Joan Child AO (1986-1989) as the first female Speaker and first female Labor MP, the Rt Hon Sir Billy Snedden KCMG, QC (1976-1983) and the Hon Harry Jenkins AO (1983-1985).

### **Digital engagement**

Due to the changes brought about by COVID-19, onsite visitation has been dramatically impacted, and MoAD has widened its focus to maximise its digital methods to interact with our visitors and schools groups. Investment in our website is integral to the success of this transformation and additional funding will be sought in order for us to continue our important work of educating Australians. Methods to measure digital engagement will be developed over the course of 2020-21.

## **Schools and learning**

To present a shared and consistent narrative of Australian democracy MoAD will continue to collaborate with agencies involved in the PACER program, and with other civics-focused national institutions on the role that voters as individuals have and continue to play in Australia's democratic system.

We will continue to work with and support organisations such as the National Capital Educational Tourism Project; membership of the National Institutions Civics Educators network: joint student programs such National Constitutional Convention; and participation in the Civics and Citizenship Education Project, a federally funded review of all online civics resources for schools.

## **Research and partnerships**

MoAD plays a central role in promoting the strength of our democracy and driving engagement with it. We will continue to explore and challenge perceptions that lead to disaffection with our democratic system, through research, collaborations and activities.

We will continue working with the Australian Electoral Commission and the Institute of Public Administration Australia, and explore future partnerships and collaboration opportunities with the Australian Public Service Commission to develop educational resources and experiences that showcase the roles of individuals and institutions within our democratic system.

We will continue to maximise the collective impact of the national cultural institutions based in Canberra through collaborations and sharing of experience. To offset our limited capacity for events and publications, we will seek to partner with like-minded organisations, like the Parkes Foundation, and others to enable us to provide seminars, lectures and events of mutual benefit.

We will continue to mark significant events and anniversaries in our democracy through exhibitions, publications, social media, blog posts, lectures, debates and other events.

MoAD will continue to collaborate widely, sharing our expertise and drawing on the best that others can offer, including civics focused national institutions. MoAD has successfully partnered with a number of government agencies, with these highly targeted activities extending MoAD's reach and impact. We will continue to actively identify appropriate government partnerships that enhance our activities.

## **2. Revenue generation**

Own-source revenue generation continues to be a priority. While the post COVID-19 environment makes it unlikely that we will retain current levels of own source revenue, we will continue to seek and actively develop avenues for revenue, including exploring private sector, philanthropic and commercial activities and support.

MoAD prioritises leasing of commercial and office areas, both in the private and public sectors. This includes ongoing discussions with Department of Parliamentary Services and the Australian Public Service Commission.

MoAD's financial focus is to provide accurate estimates and to achieve a break-even position (excluding depreciation and amortisation expenses), while ensuring the efficient, effective, ethical and economical use of resources.

MoAD aims to continue to meet our financial management obligations and will deliver outcomes as sustainably and cost effectively as possible.

### **3. Heritage and conservation**

The three year (2018-2020) capital revenue investment, through the Government's Modernisation Fund, provided valuable additional resources for the preservation and presentation of Old Parliament House and its collections and enabled us to improve access, upgrade interactive components for schools learning, and to address urgent and critical safety elements. Managing the heritage and conservation of Old Parliament House is a challenging undertaking, and MoAD will continue to need sustained fiscal support for this task.

We will continue to be a leader in preventative conservation approaches to heritage management and to preserve and display Old Parliament House and its collections to the extent our capital funding allows. Our heritage management activities are undertaken in line with the *OPH Heritage Management Plan 2015-20*. This plan is currently under review and will be finalised by the end of 2020.

#### **Conclusion**

MoAD aims to continue its effective relationship with Government and the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet through timely and accurate advice on significant matters relating to its functions and activities including appropriate and accurate information flow and performance reporting against the corporate plan and budget.

In this nationally significant building, we will create a vibrant and contemporary hub that empowers civic and individual engagement in the democratic process, by engaging the public in the story of Australia's democracy. We will continue to engage visitors, measuring their learning and satisfaction, as well as seeking to develop tools for analysis of our digital engagement. Our learning programs will seek to extend understanding of civic engagement into the future and support social cohesion.

MoAD will continue to educate, inspire and engage visitors, whether in person or online, with the ongoing story of Australia's unique democracy, and visitors will be provided with a clear understanding of how they can further engage in our democracy and will feel encouraged and empowered to do so.

MoAD will continue to strive to be a high performing and responsive organisation that delivers on our objectives and purpose as set out in the [MoAD Corporate Plan 2020-2024](#).