

Australia's public galleries are catalysts for community wellbeing

According to a new report launched today by the National Public Galleries Alliance (NPGA), in 2019 Australia's small-to-medium public galleries:

- presented over **1,700 exhibitions**;
- employed around **700 FTE staff**;
- supported more than **21,500 living artists**;
- actively engaged over **5 million visitors in person** and a further **7.5 million online**; and
- received more than **\$13.0 million** worth of labour from its **4,500-strong volunteer workforce**.

In a joint statement NPGA members said, "The [Australian Public Galleries Snapshot](#) is the second major report specifically for our sector. Capturing data of 170 of our country's estimated 434 public galleries (39%), this report reflects just over one third of our dynamic network."

"Based on the analysis of an in-depth sector-wide survey, the 2019 *Snapshot* highlights the extraordinary impact small-to-medium public galleries make to the social, cultural and economic wellbeing of Australia's metropolitan, regional and remote communities."

"Public galleries are important cultural hubs in our communities providing safe places for people to connect, as well as inspiring learning, debate, critical thinking and creative expression."

"Engaging audiences through a diversity of exhibitions, education and public programs, Australia's small-to-medium public galleries are catalysts for sharing stories and sparking conversations about the world in which we live."

The Snapshot defines a public gallery as a not-for-profit, non-commercial gallery, encompassing metropolitan, regional and remote public galleries, contemporary art spaces, contemporary craft and design spaces and art museums, including those operated by local government and universities. Unless specified, the report does not include information about national, state or territory public gallery institutions.

NPGA comprises state peak bodies and public gallery membership organisations. Established in 2018, NPGA members donate their time and work strategically to collect sector-specific data to advocate for and strengthen Australia's small-to-medium public gallery sector.

Download the report here: <https://magsq.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2019-Australian-Public-Galleries-Snapshot.pdf>.

Australian Public Galleries at a glance

[Based on available data for 2019]:

- **Local Government is the largest investor** in small-to-medium public galleries (**50%** of the 170 public galleries captured in the Snapshot are **owned or operated by Local Government**).
- More than **21% (>\$21 million)** of Australia's small-to-medium public galleries' **income is self-generated**.
- Small-to-medium public galleries **employ more than 700 FTE staff**, 4% of these staff are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- **56% of small-to-medium public galleries** are housed in **buildings 50+ years old**.
- Over **\$4.7 million** was invested in **artists' fees**, supporting more than **21,500 living artists**.
- Small-to-medium public galleries hold of over **819,200 collection items** of local, state, national and international significance, with a combined value of \$1.5bn.
- Overall, **74%** of small-to-medium public galleries' **collections** are **digitised**. Around **35%** of these are **publicly available online**.
- Annually, **over 16.3 million people visit** our country's public galleries including state, territory and national public gallery institutions.
- 80% of visitation is to small-to-medium public galleries in metropolitan areas, compared to 20% to public galleries in regional and remote areas.
- Annually, **more than 4,500 volunteers** donate their time and expertise to small-to-medium public galleries. Quantified, the value of this volunteer labour is **\$13.0 million**.

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The *Australian Public Galleries Snapshot* is a research initiative prepared by Museums & Galleries Queensland and Public Galleries Association of Victoria on behalf of the National Public Galleries Alliance.



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