

Museums & Galleries of NSW

Annual Review 2015



CEO Introduction

The long awaited move to The Arts Exchange characterised a renewed and energetic approach to our support for museums, galleries and Aboriginal keeping places in 2015. Devolved funding programs, professional and skill development opportunities, advocacy, planned research and touring exhibitions, along with website and social media connection, ensured meaningful support was delivered sector-wide.

In its final year, the Travelling Places project was a highlight of our program, as it engaged with Wiradjuri and non-Wiradjuri Aboriginal people of NSW.

The museum audience benchmark study, *Guess Who's Going to the Museum?* another highlight, was launched in Wagga Wagga, in September. A companion research piece to the NSW and Queensland gallery audience studies (2007-2012), the report received extensive media coverage and completed a seven-year investigation into museum and gallery audiences in NSW.

With our National Exhibition Touring Support (NETS) hat on, M&G NSW toured seven visual arts and craft exhibitions that showcased the works of 92 living artists and included over 130 objects that were seen by more than 196,000 people.

In mentioning only a few of our achievements for the year I would like to acknowledge the work of M&G NSW staff and Board in successfully delivering a wide-ranging and challenging program. I also acknowledge the ongoing support of the State Government through Arts NSW, and the Federal Government through the Australia Council.

Michael Rolfe



Chair statement

Throughout 2016, what I found most inspiring was encountering leadership being displayed by so many museum, gallery and Aboriginal cultural centre staff and volunteers. M&G NSW champions their work and determination, because much of the cultural, social and economic return achieved in any community is dependent on the quality of programs run, the exhibitions, activities, research, collections and storytelling, the ideas, initiative and excitement generated. That is what we are focused on supporting.

Attending the opening of the Murray Art Museum Albury, otherwise known as MAMA was, for me, a great reminder of local government's important contribution. Not only is MAMA a testament to the vision of Albury City Council, it proudly champions a community belief in the value of arts and cultural heritage that is increasingly being seen as a key driver of lifestyle and amenity across New South Wales.

This snapshot of our activity charts an energy and momentum further charged by notification in November of our successful application to Arts NSW, which ensures funding for programs and operations through to the end of 2018. On behalf of the M&G NSW Board I want to thank the staff for their continued and much appreciated dedication to the task at hand.

Jennifer Barrett



Cover image:
Stars + Stripes: American Art of the 21st Century from the Goldberg Collection
on display at Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, 2016 Photo: Jacob Raupach

Goal one

To improve capacity, program delivery, sustainability and networks in the sector and within the organisation.

Strategies and programs that supported this goal included:

- Touring Exhibitions
- Professional Development
- Devolved Funding Programs
- Volunteer Museum Standards Program
- Museum Advisor Program
- Reconciliation Action Plan

As the NSW NETS organisation, we toured seven visual arts and craft exhibitions:

- The 2014 Archibald Prize
- In-Habit: Project Another Country
- The Last Supper
- Richard Bell: Imagining Victory
- Objects & Energies
- Stars + Stripes: American Art of the 21st Century from the Goldberg Collection
- Striking Contrasts

7 visual arts and craft exhibitions

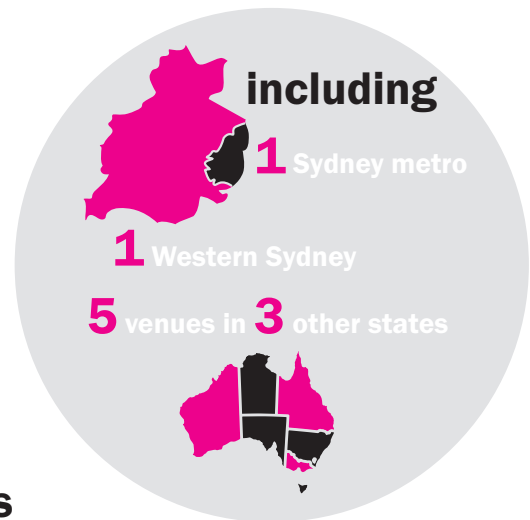
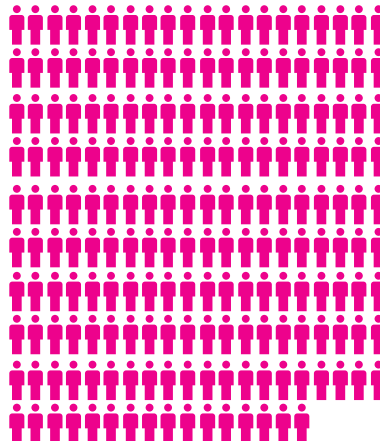


showcased the work of

92 living artists **138 objects**

and seen by more than

196,000 people



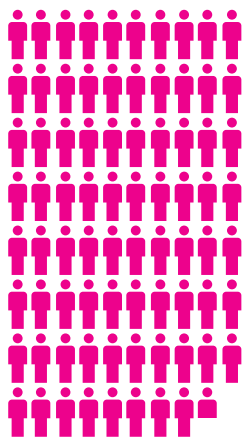
Our Professional Development Program was delivered in partnership with:

- Local Government NSW
- Regional Public Galleries of NSW Inc.
- The Arts Law Centre of Australia
- Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation.

33 individual professional/skills development events

attracting

787 participants



Professional Development Program

Topic areas included:

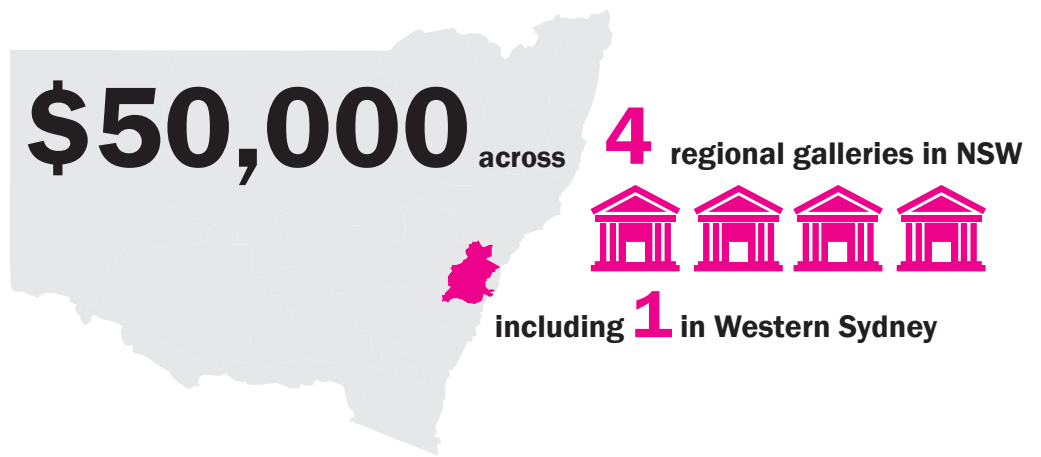
- digital storytelling
- strategic planning and marketing
- tourism data capture
- collection management
- conservation
- intellectual property rights
- Aboriginal keeping places
- use of content management software and digitisation

On behalf of Arts NSW, we managed three existing devolved grant programs:

- Curatorial Support Initiative
- Volunteer Initiated and Run Museum (VIM) Programs
- Mentorships and Fellowships

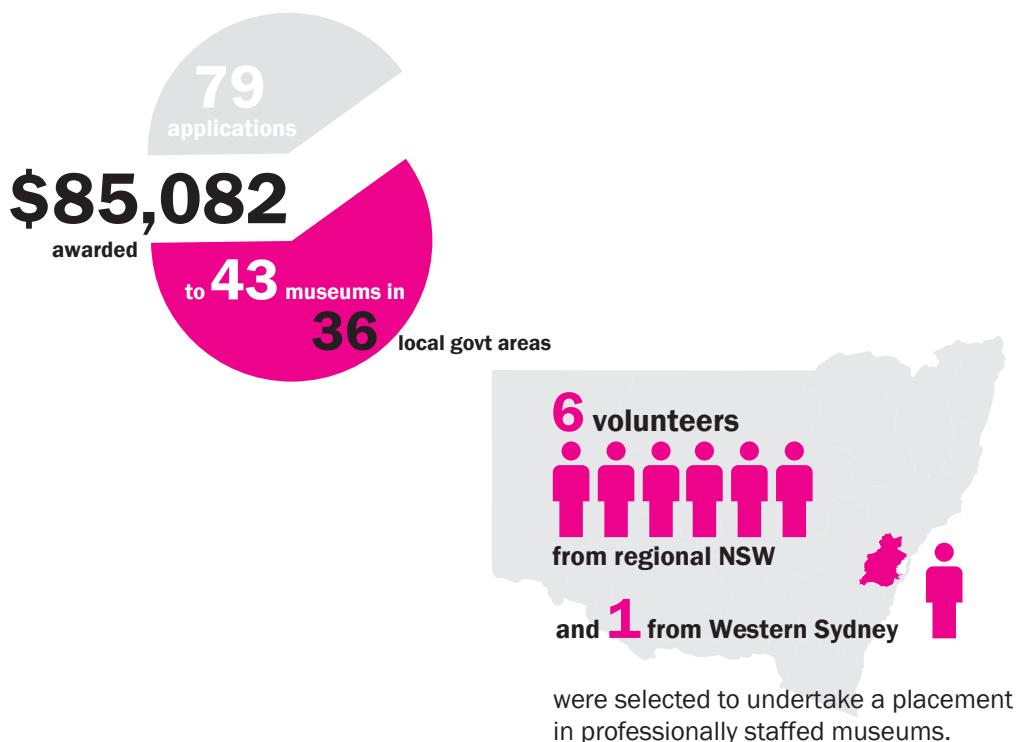
Curatorial Support Initiative

This program provided assistance towards engaging a professional curator (emerging or established) to research and/or develop a new exhibition of contemporary visual arts, craft or design for the gallery's community.



Volunteer Initiated and Run Museum (VIM) programs

On behalf of Arts NSW, M&G NSW devolved over \$85,000 to support the work of the small-to-medium museum sector that is managed and implemented by volunteers.



Mentorships and Fellowships

\$22,000

devolved through

2 fellowships



4 mentorships



to paid museum and gallery staff across NSW

The Artist and Curator in Residence Program (ACR), funded by the Copyright Agency Limited's (CAL) Cultural Fund had a national focus in 2015 with grants being devolved to galleries in Victoria and Tasmania. The program aims to further encourage audience engagement with innovative and adventurous contemporary art.

Projects funded in 2014 and delivered in 2015 as part of this program included partnerships with Tarrawarra Museum of Art (Victoria), Goulburn Regional Gallery and the Murray Art Museum, Albury (MAMA).



Images left to right:

Ngurini, Jessie Boylan collaboration with Linda Dement and Nuclear Futures, The Block QUT, 2015, Immersive 360° video installation. Jessie Boylan and Linda Dement were supported through a 2016 ACR grant to undertake a residency at Burrinja Gallery, Vic.

2015 Mentorship recipient Tesha Malott, General Manager, Firstdraft and Emma Crimmings, Director, Gertrude Contemporary. Courtesy Tesha Malott.

The Museum Standards Program



Greater Sydney region and Lithgow

in partnership with **4 councils**

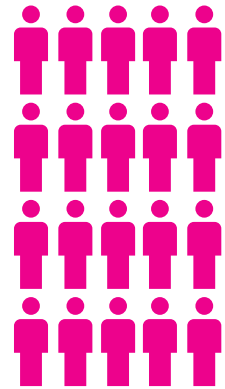
strengthened the museum practices and sustainability of

10 local museums



engaged over

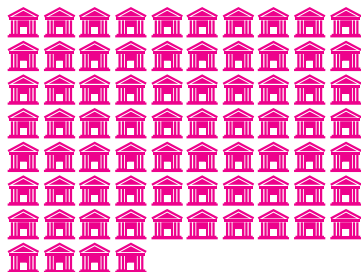
200 volunteers



The Museum Advisor Program

Supported

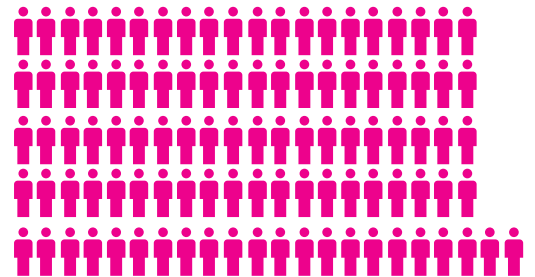
74 museums



in **7 local govt areas**

and assisted the work of over

1,200 volunteers



through the provision of advice and specialist skills.

Goal two

To advocate and communicate the value of programs and activities to stakeholders and communities – state-wide

Strategies and programs that supported this goal included:

- Travelling Places - Aboriginal Sector program
- IMAGinE Awards
- M&G NSW website and e-newsletters
- Research

In its final year, Travelling Places continued to engage with Wiradjuri and non-Wiradjuri Aboriginal people of NSW. Workshops were held in Bathurst, Dubbo, Moree, Armidale and Sydney. Delivered in partnership with AFTRS and Arts Law Centre of Australia, and with funding from the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation, the program provided training to over 100 people across workshops in digital storytelling, intellectual property and use of Mukurtu as a collections management system.



In partnership with Regional Public Galleries Association of NSW and Museums Australia (NSW), we presented the **8th annual IMAGinE Awards** in November 2015.

An additional award was given to recognise the contribution of the late Wendy Hucker to preserving women's history and developing museum practice in NSW.

The M&G NSW website continues to deliver both information and resources to the sector. The sector-focused e-news, Alert, and the public-focused, M&Gazine both continued to grow their subscriber base.

152,800 visits

to the M&G NSW website



including

103,000
unique visits

Alert sector-focused e-news

44% open rate



2,079 subscribers

M&Gazine public-focused e-news

44% open rate



2,864 subscribers

*industry average **24%** open rate

The museum audience benchmark study, *Guess Who's Going to the Museum?* was launched in Wagga Wagga in September of 2015. A companion research piece to the NSW and Queensland gallery audience studies (2007-2012), it provides benchmarks for an average museum audience that is directly comparable to an average gallery audience. The report received extensive media coverage across print, web and radio and completes a seven-year investigation into museum and gallery audiences of NSW.



Project partners at the launch of *Guess Who's Going to the Museum?* at the Museum of the Riverina at Wagga Wagga.

Goal three To develop diverse support for M&G NSW's activities and service delivery

In 2015, we partnered with Local Government NSW for a round table for museum staff employed by local government. Partnerships with local government continued to grow with financial support for the Standards Program and the Museum Advisor Program now engaging over 22 local government areas.

The Standards Program partnership with Museums & Galleries Queensland, now in its 10th year, continues to strengthen the relationship between the two organisations.

Sydney Living Museums, The NSW State Library, Australian Museum, Art Gallery of NSW, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences and NSW State Records continue to support and work with M&G NSW in the delivery of exhibitions, professional development programs, expertise and venues that in turn support the small-to-medium sector.

Partnerships with regionally based cultural institutions such as Hawkesbury Regional Museum, Museum of The Riverina, Murray Art Museum Albury, Tamworth Regional Gallery, Tweed Regional Museum, and Bathurst Regional Art Gallery also continued in 2015.

The touring of exhibitions created in the regions, as well as the support for programs such as the Standards Program and the delivery of regionally delivered workshops as part of the Professional Development Program, are made possible through these partnerships.



Images top to bottom:

Standards 2015 participants celebrate the completion of the program at Tarella Cottage in the Blue Mountains.

New information panel produced for the *Identity* project at Holbrook Submarine Museum. *Identity* was funded by a M&G NSW Regional Networking Grant, a devolved funding program supported by Arts NSW.

Staff comings and goings

There were changes to M&G NSW staff during the year.

In the Gallery Programs and Touring Exhibition (GPTE) team, Rachel Arndt returned from maternity leave while Jasmin Dessmann took maternity leave from October. Katinka Bracker, who was acting as GPTE coordinator while Lillian Lim was on extended leave, left in April after completing her contract and Ms Lim's resignation. Madeleine Brady transferred from the Information and Resources team to replace Ms Lim.

Andrew Brettell resigned as Information and Resource Manager. Carole Best acted as the renamed Communications Manager until Jason Gee, who had previously worked at the Powerhouse Museum, was appointed as a replacement for Mr Brettell. Emily Priddel joined the Communications team in September, contributing design and co-ordination skills.

Museums & Galleries of NSW is supported by the NSW Government through Arts NSW.

Museums & Galleries of NSW is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.

