

**BENALLA
ART GALLERY**
Cultural Foundation



**Benalla Art Gallery
Cultural Foundation
Strategic Plan 2026–2035**

Acknowledgement of Country

Benalla Art Gallery Cultural Foundation respectfully acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we live, work and share stories. We respectfully acknowledge the Taungurung, Yorta Yorta and Pangerang peoples of Benalla and its surrounds and the Elders past and present for their enduring cultural and spiritual connection to the lands and waters.

About the Foundation

Established in 2022, the Benalla Art Gallery Cultural Foundation is a registered charity. In partnership with the Benalla Rural City Council and our community, the Benalla Art Gallery Cultural Foundation advocates for and raises funds to develop and maintain the Benalla Art Gallery and through its Future Fund, sustain long-term impact. Our purpose is to generate lasting cultural, social and economic benefits for Benalla and the region by lifting the Gallery to lift the community.

The Benalla Art Gallery Cultural Foundation is a separate entity to Benalla Rural City Council and is governed by an independent Board of Directors.

Chair's Foreword

The decade ahead

The next decade represents a defining period for the Benalla Art Gallery Cultural Foundation and for our community. Together, we have the opportunity to build upon the legacy of an extraordinary cultural asset, create new opportunities for learning and creativity, and ensure future generations continue to experience the power of the arts in regional Victoria.

We begin this next chapter with confidence and determination, thanks to the commitment of our community, donors, volunteers, partners and government. Together, they have already helped us lay strong foundations and initiate action.

Momentum is building.

Stage 1 of the Gallery upgrade is underway and growing philanthropic interest and support is encouraging us to think boldly about the Gallery's future.

Over the next decade, the Foundation will work alongside Benalla Rural City Council, to help secure the investment needed to realise the Gallery's redevelopment while building a permanent Future Fund to provide lasting support. Together, these ambitions will strengthen the Gallery's capacity to inspire, educate and connect our community well into the future.

This Strategic Plan is both an invitation and a commitment. It invites our community, donors, government and partners to help shape the future of the Benalla Art Gallery, while committing the Foundation to responsible stewardship, strong governance and ambitious fundraising.

Our success will be a shared achievement.

Together, we can secure a Gallery that continues to inspire creativity, strengthen community connections and enrich the lives of generations to come.

Winsome McCaughey AO
Chair, Benalla Art Gallery Cultural Foundation
October, 2026



Our Gallery. A place for all.



A cultural landmark for 50 years

For 50 years, Benalla Art Gallery has enriched the cultural life of North East Victoria. It is more than a gallery. It is a place where people gather, learn, connect and experience the power of the arts; a source of civic pride, a tourism destination and a cultural heart for the region.

Designed by architects Colin Munro and Philip Sargeant, the Gallery is recognised as an important example of Australian brutalist-influenced modernist architecture. Its striking design and sensitive integration with the surrounding Benalla Botanical Gardens and Lake Benalla earned the 1975 Victorian Architecture Award and established the building as a landmark of architectural excellence.

Today, that legacy is protected through its inclusion on the Victorian Heritage Register, recognising the Gallery's enduring architectural and cultural significance.

In a regional community of around 14,000 people, Benalla Art Gallery performs well beyond its scale. Each year, more than 75,000 visitors experience exhibitions, discover local and regional artists, and participate in education and community programs.

Beyond its cultural contribution, the Gallery attracts visitors to Benalla and supports the regional visitor economy while strengthening creativity, learning, wellbeing, identity and community connection.

75,000+ visitors each year

50 years at the heart of Benalla

1975 Victorian Architecture Award

2010 Recognised on Victorian Heritage Register for modernist gallery building



Image: Group depicted with Sidney Nolan's 'Glenrowan' tapestry and associated Ned Kelly prints. Photo: Shape Creative, 2018

PART 1.

Our strategic direction



Why this moment matters

The Gallery now stands at one of the most important points in its history.

A two-stage redevelopment will protect the architectural and cultural legacy of the Gallery while creating the infrastructure, spaces and opportunities required for its next 50 years.

STAGE 1

Protecting what we have

Now underway, Stage 1 provides critical infrastructure to improve environmental conditions, safety, security and the preservation of artworks.

These measures, together with a new contemporary restaurant space, strengthen the Gallery's capacity to care for its significant collection, host important exhibitions, and serve as a social and creative hub for the region.

While construction is underway in 2026-2027, the Gallery continues to connect with the community through its temporary Pop Up location.

The Foundation has committed to raising **\$1.35 million** towards this \$8.2 million investment in the Gallery's future.

STAGE 2

Realising what is possible

Stage 2 represents the next transformational opportunity.

The proposed redevelopment will significantly expand the Gallery, with enhanced spaces providing opportunities for national and international 'blockbuster' exhibitions, a children's art and discovery space, a theatrette, and a contemporary retail facility.

Importantly, it will support a more sustainable Gallery operating model and amplify the cultural, social and economic contribution the Gallery makes to Benalla and the wider region.

The Foundation has committed to raising **\$11 million** towards the estimated \$26 million Stage 2 redevelopment, working alongside Benalla Rural City Council as it seeks significant State and Federal Government investment.

Together, these projects represent much more than an investment in a building. They are an investment in creativity, education, tourism, community connection and the future of Benalla.



Imagine Benalla in 2035

Imagine children learning, creating and engaging with art in inspiring, purpose-built spaces.

Imagine artists choosing Benalla. Young professionals and families choosing to live here. A city recognised for creativity, culture and excellence.

Imagine Benalla as a regional cultural destination, attracting visitors from across Australia to exhibitions of national significance.

Imagine increased visitation driving growth for local businesses and a stronger, more diverse visitor economy.

Imagine the Benalla Art Gallery at the centre of this transformation: a renewed cultural institution, a destination in its own right, and a catalyst for the city's future.

This is the opportunity before us.

Building a Foundation for the future

The Benalla Art Gallery Cultural Foundation exists to help turn this ambition into reality.

Led by a community-based Board and supported by professional expertise, volunteers, donors and advocates, the Foundation raises philanthropic support for the Gallery and builds the relationships needed to strengthen its future.

Over the decade to 2035, the Foundation has two defining ambitions:

1. Secure the **philanthropic investment** required for the Gallery's redevelopment and
2. Build a **\$6 million+ Future Fund** that will provide an enduring source of support for the Gallery and the Foundation.

This is a long-term commitment.

The building redevelopment will create the setting for the Gallery's future. The Future Fund will help ensure it can continue to thrive.

Through major gifts, annual giving, trusts and foundations, bequests, partnerships and community support, the Foundation will bring together people who share a belief in what the Benalla Art Gallery can contribute to our region.

'Benalla Art Gallery is a place where people connect with each other and engage with inspirational creativity that tells the stories which shaped our past, challenges us to question the present, and inspires us to think about building a better future together.'

Winsome McCaughey AO, Chair,
Benalla Art Gallery Cultural Foundation

Image: Benalla Art Gallery Stage 1
Redevelopment conceptual render,
Williams Boag architects, 2025

Our strategic priorities

Four priorities will guide our work and investment over the decade to 2035.

FUND

Raise the funds needed to redevelop the Gallery and help secure its future.

Raise **\$12.35 million** towards Stages 1 and 2 of the Gallery redevelopment.

Build a **\$6 million+ Future Fund** to provide ongoing support for Gallery operations.

Work with Council to help secure government funding for the Stage 2 redevelopment.

PARTNER

Work with Council and the Gallery to turn our shared vision into action.

Define and clarify our different roles and responsibilities.

Work together through strong communication and shared planning.

Coordinate fundraising, government engagement and communications.

Build strong relationships with government, donors, business and community.



Image: Jason Parker: *Rise, Ruin, Renew, Repeat*: music and movement response performance for the Benalla Street Art Festival 2025.
Photo: James Bugg, 2025



Image: 'Gonketa: *Moving Forward*' installation image.
Photo: Serana Hunt-Hughes, 2023

ENGAGE

Inspire more people to become part of the Gallery's future.

Grow our community of donors, advocates, volunteers and supporters.

Build lasting relationships with people who support the Gallery.

Ensure every donor feels valued, informed and connected.

Stay connected to Benalla and the wider region.



Image: Little Artists Program, Benalla Art Gallery

DELIVER

Build a trusted and capable Foundation that can deliver on our goals.

Be transparent, accountable and responsible in how we work.

Build a skilled Board and Committees and plan for future leadership.

Invest in the people and systems needed to achieve our fundraising goals.

Manage every donation responsibly and with care.



Image: Guests contributing to an interactive community mural within the exhibition 'Mimi Leung: Growing up with you', 2024

Our guiding principles

Vision

Our Gallery. A Place for All.

Mission

In partnership with Council and community, we raise funds and secure resources to upgrade the Gallery and sustain its long-term impact through the Foundation's Future Fund.

Purpose

Generating lasting cultural, social and economic benefits for Benalla and the region by strengthening the Gallery, and through it strengthening the community.

Values



COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

We put community at the heart of everything we do.



EQUITY AND INCLUSION

We strive to ensure everyone can access and engage with arts and culture.



INTEGRITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

We act with professionalism, transparency and ethical responsibility.



STEWARDSHIP AND TRUST

We manage philanthropic support responsibly to deliver measurable, lasting public value.



COLLABORATION

We work with donors, partners, government, and community to amplify impact.



CULTURAL LIFE

We champion high-quality artistic practice that honours local voices and contributes to wider cultural dialogue.



SUSTAINABILITY

We strengthen the long-term future of the Gallery and Foundation for Benalla and the region.



INDEPENDENCE AND AGENCY

We value our capacity to advocate freely for a rich future for the Benalla Art Gallery and for the cultural life of the region.

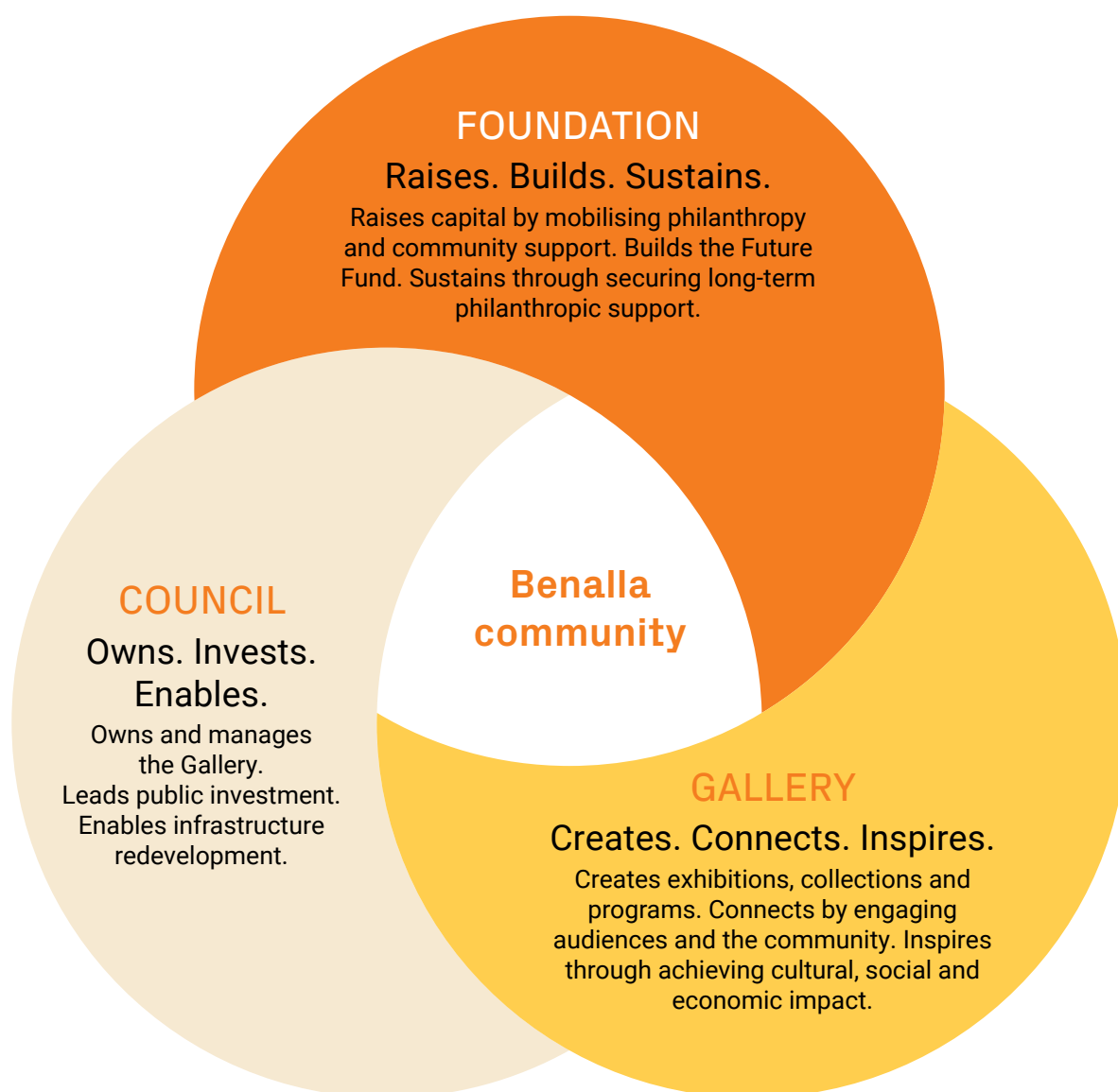
PART 2.

How we will deliver

Working together. Three partners. One vision.

The future of the Benalla Art Gallery is built upon a strong partnership between Benalla Rural City Council, Benalla Art Gallery and the Benalla Art Gallery Cultural Foundation. Each has a distinct and complementary role, united by a shared ambition for the Gallery and the community it serves.

Working together, the three entities can bring together public investment, cultural leadership and philanthropic generosity to realise a shared vision: a thriving Gallery delivering lasting benefit for Benalla and the wider region.



A strong Foundation

Achieving our ambitions requires a strong Foundation: well led, properly resourced, connected through trusted partnerships and accountable to our community and the people who support us.

Four pillars underpin our approach:



Image: Guests enjoying the 'Benalla Street Art Festival Lounge' within the Benalla Art Gallery, 2025. Pictured with works by Festival artist Gus Leunig

Leadership & Governance

STRONG LEADERSHIP PROVIDES THE DIRECTION AND OVERSIGHT NEEDED TO ACHIEVE OUR GOALS.

- Maintain a skilled Board with expertise, networks and strong connections to Benalla and the region.
- Recruit Board and Committee members with the skills needed as the Foundation grows.
- Plan for future leadership and Board renewal.
- Keep our focus firmly on the Foundation's purpose and priorities.

People & Capability

OUR AMBITIONS NEED PEOPLE WITH RELEVANT SKILLS AND SYSTEMS EXPERIENCE BEHIND THEM.

- Invest in professional support and specialist expertise where needed.
- Build strong systems to support fundraising, donor relationships and reporting.
- Support our volunteers and ambassadors to make a meaningful contribution.
- Ensure our resources grow in line with our fundraising ambitions.

Strong Partnerships

WE ACHIEVE MORE BY WORKING TOGETHER.

- Work closely with Council and the Gallery towards shared goals.
- Maintain clear roles and responsibilities.
- Communicate openly and plan together.
- Build strong relationships with government, donors, philanthropy, business and community.

Trust & Accountability

WE MANAGE THE SUPPORT ENTRUSTED TO US RESPONSIBLY, TRANSPARENTLY AND WITH CARE.

- Make decisions openly, responsibly and in the Foundation's best interests.
- Maintain strong financial oversight and reporting.
- Manage donations and the Future Fund responsibly for long-term benefit.
- Be accountable to our donors, partners, community and the purpose we serve.

Our structure

The Foundation is built on the commitment of people who give their time, expertise and connections to support the future of the Benalla Art Gallery.

Our Board provides strategic leadership and accountability, supported by focused Committees that bring together expertise in finance, investment, fundraising, donor engagement and community connection. A Joint Committee provides a formal forum for the Foundation and Benalla Rural City Council to work together on shared priorities.

This volunteer leadership is supported by professional expertise and a growing network of community volunteers and advocates. Together, this structure enables the Foundation to make informed decisions, build strong relationships and maintain the focus needed to achieve its ambitious fundraising goals.



Image: 'Gonketa: Moving Forward' installation image.
Photo: Serana Hunt-Hughes, 2023



PART 3.

What it will take

Image: Benalla Art Gallery Stage 1
Redevelopment conceptual render,
Williams Boag architects, 2025

Our ambition is significant: to help transform Benalla Art Gallery while building the financial strength to support it well into the future.

By 2035, the Foundation aims to raise \$18.35 million through capital fundraising, major gifts, bequests and Annual Giving. Alongside this, we will secure funding to support the Foundation's work as it delivers these ambitious goals.

Our fundraising is focused on three priorities.



1. Gallery redevelopment \$12.35 million

The Foundation has committed to raising **\$12.35 million** towards the two-stage redevelopment of Benalla Art Gallery.

Stage 1 – \$1.35 million

The Foundation aims to contribute \$1.35 million towards the \$8.2 million Stage 1 Gallery upgrade, providing critical infrastructure to improve the care and protection of the collection and enhance the Gallery experience.

Stage 2 – \$11 million

The Foundation aims to raise \$11 million towards the estimated \$26 million Stage 2 redevelopment.

The campaign will be delivered in two phases:

\$6 MILLION – QUIET PHASE BY 2028

- Major donors, trusts and foundations and other philanthropic partners.

\$5 MILLION – PUBLIC PHASE BY 2030

- Building on early major gifts to broaden support and complete the campaign.
- Council will lead efforts to secure the remaining government investment required for Stage 2, supported by the Foundation's networks and advocacy.

‘The highly anticipated project will secure the Gallery’s place as one of the premier Victorian and North East cultural destinations.’

Bernie Hearn, Mayor, Benalla Rural City Council



2. Future Fund \$6 million+ by 2035

Redeveloping the Gallery is only part of our responsibility. We also want to help secure its future.

The Foundation will build a permanent **\$6 million+ Future Fund**, creating an enduring source of income to support the Gallery and the Foundation.

The Future Fund will grow through **major gifts, gifts in Wills and Annual Giving**. As the Fund grows, investment earnings will provide increasing support for Gallery programs and projects and help sustain the Foundation’s work.

Our goal is simple: **build the Gallery for the future and build the financial strength to help it thrive.**

The Foundation aims to generate approximately **\$240,000-\$300,000 annually** to build the Future Fund.

3. Annual Giving Growing community support every year

Annual Giving gives everyone an opportunity to play a part in the Gallery’s future.

From gifts of \$50 to Named Funds of \$10,000 and larger annual donations, every contribution helps grow the Future Fund while demonstrating the strength of community support.

Our ambition is to grow Annual Giving year on year, building towards **\$6+ million in cumulative giving by 2035.**

Importantly, Annual Giving is about more than the amount raised. It’s about building relationships, encouraging more people to engage with and support the Foundation and creating a growing community of people invested in the Gallery’s future.

Resourcing the Foundation for impact

Delivering an \$18.35 million fundraising program requires skilled people, strong systems and sustained effort.

The Foundation will continue to secure **multi-year funding and investment income** to support its work, with a current target of at least **\$150,000 each year**.

As the Future Fund grows, investment income will contribute to resourcing the Foundation, reducing reliance on external operational funding and helping build a financially sustainable Foundation.

Our goal	Target	Secured	Remaining	Target date
Stage 1 redevelopment	\$1.35m	\$880k	\$470k	Dec 2026
Stage 2 – Initial campaign	\$6m	\$1.05m	\$4.95m	Dec 2028
Stage 2 – Broader campaign	\$5m	—	\$5m	Dec 2030
Future Fund – Major gifts, gifts in Wills & Annual Giving	\$6m	~\$536k	\$ 5.46m	Dec 2035
TOTAL	\$18.35m	\$2.46m	\$15.88m	

Note: The \$18.35 million target relates to the Gallery redevelopment and Future Fund. Separate capacity funding supports the Foundation's work to achieve these goals.

‘Strong core operations, capable leadership and long-term sustainability are essential for charitable organisations to deliver meaningful impact.

The Benalla Art Gallery Cultural Foundation is demonstrating the strategic focus required to build a strong philanthropic foundation for the Gallery’s future and create lasting benefit for its community.’

Paul Conroy, CEO, The Ian Potter Foundation



Our Gallery project



Image: Krissy Heany and daughter Lily, with Our Gallery chosen work, *Landscape, Avonsleigh*, Charles Blackman, 1955. Photo by Stephen Winkler.

Krissy is a Swimming Teacher from Lima.

'Being the daughter of a shearer/farmer, this painting resonates with me. It reminds me of my roots and simpler times. It brings a sense of calm each time I look at it.'

Krissy Heaney

PART 4. A long-term view

Our roadmap

Our Strategic Plan looks to 2035, with a deliberate focus on the first three years. These early priorities will build the capability, partnerships, fundraising momentum and community support needed to achieve our longer-term ambitions.

Progress will be reviewed regularly, allowing priorities and targets to evolve as the Gallery redevelopment progresses and the Foundation grows.

2026–2028

Build & accelerate

Strengthen Foundation capability

Formalise key partnerships

Complete Stage 1 fundraising

Reach \$6m Stage 2 milestone

Broaden community support

2029–2031

Deliver & grow

Achieve \$11m Stage 2 target

Support Council to secure Stage 2 government investment

Grow Annual Giving and Future Fund

Strengthen community support

Review capability for the next phase

2032–2035

Sustain & look ahead

Grow Future Fund to \$6m+

Increase long-term financial support and advocacy

Sustain a strong community of donors and supporters

Continue Board renewal

Set priorities beyond 2035



Image: Little Artist participants with Deborah Kelly work. Photographer: Cassandra Briggs

What success looks like

Our ambition extends well beyond fundraising targets.

Success will mean a transformed Gallery making an even greater contribution to the cultural, social and economic life of Benalla and the wider region. It will mean a strong Future Fund providing ongoing support, a growing community of people who believe in the Gallery, and a trusted Foundation with the capability to support it for generations to come.

By 2035 our aim is:

Gallery redevelopment fundraising commitments achieved.

A **\$6 million+** Future Fund established and growing.

A growing community of **donors, volunteers, advocates and supporters.**

Strong partnerships across **Council, government, philanthropy, business and community.**

A resilient **Foundation** supporting a thriving Gallery.

A redeveloped Gallery making an even greater cultural, social and economic contribution to **Benalla and the wider region.**

The future of Benalla Art Gallery will be shaped by the choices we make today and by the people who choose to be part of its future.

Together, we have the opportunity to create a legacy that extends well beyond a revitalised building: a place that inspires creativity and curiosity, brings people together, strengthens our community and contributes to a thriving region.

Success will depend on the continued commitment of our community, donors, volunteers, partners, government, Council and the Gallery, united by a shared belief in what is possible.

With that shared commitment, we can ensure Benalla Art Gallery continues to enrich lives and inspire generations to come.

‘By supporting the Foundation, you help build a community that thrives through innovation, inclusion and imagination.’

Eric Nash, Director, Benalla Art Gallery



**The Benalla Art Gallery
Cultural Foundation**

ABN 53 697 540 079
ACN 697 540 079
Registered Charity
Deductible Gift Recipient
DGR Item 1

Contact us

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