

Annual Report

2022-2023



Royal
Botanic
Gardens
Victoria



Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria (RBGV) acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land we work on: the Bunurong and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation. We honour their custodianship, knowledge of, and connection with plants, land, water and sky.

We pay our respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and Elders past and present.

Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners	ii	Our People	92
Chairperson & Director and Chief Executive Report	2	Public Sector Values and Employment Principles	93
Vision, Mission and Objectives	4	Executive Officer Data	95
Our Vision	5	Workforce Inclusion Policy	96
Our Mission	5	Occupational Health and Safety	96
Our Charter	6	Other Disclosures	102
Our Organisation	9	Consultancy expenditure	103
Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne	10	Local Jobs First – Victorian Industry Participation Policy statement	104
Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne	11	Establishing Legislation	105
Scientific Research	12	Legislative Compliance	105
Governance and Organisational Structure	13	Freedom of Information	105
Board Members 2022–23	14	Competitive neutrality policy	105
Board Committees	15	Compliance with the Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012	105
Executive Team as at 30 June 2023	16	Office based environmental impacts	107
Our Performance	18	Attestation for financial management compliance with Standing Direction 5.1.4	114
Visitation	19	Compliance with the Building Act 1993	115
State Botanical Collection	19	Disclosure Index	118
Performance Measures (Annual Business Plan)	19		
Our Goals and Achievements	20		
Our supporters	32		
Financial Overview	42		
Revenue Generation and Budgetary Objectives	43		
Income from Government	43		
Financial results for 2022–23	44		
Comparison of Financial Performance and Position	44		
Five-year comparison of financial results	45		
Financial Statements	46		
Statement of Financial Position	50		
Statement of Comprehensive Income (Profits and Losses)	51		
Statement of Cash Flows	52		
Statement of Changes in Equity	53		
Notes to Financial Statements	54		

Responsible Body Declaration

In accordance with the *Financial Management Act 1994*, I am pleased to present the Royal Botanic Gardens Board Victoria's Annual Report for the year ending 30 June 23.



Chris Trotman (*she/her*)
Chairperson
Royal Botanic Gardens Board
14 September 2023

Chairperson and Director and Chief Executive's Report

As we reflect on the accomplishments of the past year, we are reminded of the unwavering support from our donors, supporters and partners whose passion for nature and commitment to conservation continue to be the driving force behind our success. We would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Ingrid Stitt, Minister for Environment, and The Hon. Lily D'Ambrosio MP, the former Minister for Environment and Climate Action, for their invaluable support and sustained belief in our vision.

Our commitment to excellence in horticulture, scientific research, education and engagement is evident in the remarkable achievements highlighted in this report. Over the past 12 months, we welcomed more than two million visitors to our Melbourne Gardens and Cranbourne Gardens sites and remain confident that visitation numbers will continue to increase following the global pandemic.

One of the highlights of this year has undeniably been the success of the first season of our much-celebrated and sold-out event – *Lightscape*. Through innovative lighting installations along the 1.8 km night-time trail, Melbourne Gardens was transformed into a magical wonderland, captivating the hearts of visitors of all ages. *Lightscape* not only brought joy to our local community but also attracted tourists from across Australia, cementing Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria as a must-visit destination for immersive cultural experiences. *Lightscape* literally brought the Gardens to light, attracting audiences familiar and new, including many

who had never visited the Gardens before or who had not visited us in a very long time. That's what made *Lightscape* so special – it allowed us to reach out and encourage more people to spend more time in nature and to hopefully develop a value and appreciation for the natural world. That, and the opportunity to see our beautiful landscapes in a fresh light and perspective. We were very excited that *Lightscape* returned to Melbourne Gardens for a second season in late June 2023, and we look forward to reporting on its success in our next Annual Report.

At the heart of our mission lies a deep dedication to scientific exploration and understanding. The Gardens' living and dried collections have continued to thrive and expand, providing support for biodiversity conservation, and a living classroom for learning and discovery. Through pioneering research, we have deepened our understanding of plants vital role in our ecosystem and their potential to address pressing global challenges. Our botanists and horticulturists continued to support the state's biodiversity through their work in bushfire recovery and seed banking of rare species. Many other rare and threatened plants were also protected through our world-leading conservation programs and thanks to the efforts of our talented scientists, two previously presumed extinct plants (a species of sedge, *Cyperus squarrossus* and an orchid, *Prasophyllum morgani*) have been rediscovered. Not seen since 1953, the rediscovery of *Cyperus squarrossus* in Victoria highlights the importance of the interaction between citizen scientists and RBGV botanists

in documenting our unique biodiversity. We remain inspired by the boundless potential of plant sciences to drive positive change and to support a sustainable future.

Over the past year, our two beautiful gardens continued to be spaces for learning, discovery, and shared experiences. Through a diverse array of programs and activities, we invited individuals of all ages and backgrounds to immerse themselves in the wonders of nature. In March 2023, we were excited to lead the 'Growing Beyond Earth' Australian pilot which saw students from Catholic Regional College, Caroline Springs and Mount Lilydale Mercy College collect data to help National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) discover new fresh and nutritious foods for astronauts to grow and eat on the International Space Station. Other popular visitor engagement programs included well attended NAIDOC cultural activities, the award-winning Gene Tree immersive musical trail and the Butterfly House which thrilled hundreds of children on Oak Lawn during the 2023 January school holidays.

In late 2022, we were privileged to be awarded *Best Major Tourism Attraction* at the Victorian Tourism Industry (VTIC) Awards for the third year in a row securing the organisation a place in the prestigious VTIC Hall of Fame. It reflects our standing as one of the world's leading botanic gardens and a centre of excellence for horticulture, science and engagement. It also confirmed our place as one of Victoria's top tourist destinations.



We have continued to make a range of building upgrades and additions to improve visitor engagement and accessibility. At Melbourne Gardens, the historic Temple of the Winds near City Gate was renovated and, after a significant refurbishment, we were excited to see The Terrace Café reopen its doors in December 2022. We also implemented a new and innovative wayfinding, signage and interpretation system that saw ageing signs at Melbourne replaced with more contemporary, accessible and innovative wayfinding. The project was a collaboration with Traditional Owners on both sites and reflects key components of Country. At Cranbourne Gardens, the new Woodland Picnic Area playground opened in June 2023 to the delight of the community, and we welcomed the installation of new highway signs to direct more visitors to the Gardens. Significant renovations were also made to the Cranbourne Gardens café, shop and visitor centre thanks to much needed funding provided by the Victorian Government. The Arid Garden precinct within the Australian Garden was also recently opened to the public following an extensive renovation.

Beyond the garden gates, our team continued to take on international leadership roles in climate change mitigation and horticultural excellence. In September 2022, Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria hosted the 7th Global Botanic Gardens Congress which saw 500

delegates from 36 countries attend stimulating field trips to Cranbourne and Melbourne Gardens and regional Victoria destinations, a dedicated education and engagement day, and a three-day program at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre. We were proud to launch a new Climate Assessment Tool at the Congress, further strengthening our international profile and expertise in climate adaptation and risk management (alongside the continuing growth of the Climate Change Alliance of Botanic Gardens which began in Melbourne in 2018). Shortly following this, we also hosted the 17th Australasian Botanic Guides Conference in October 2022 to much success, with 98 delegates, representing all Australian states and New Zealand.

We ended the year in a stronger financial position focusing on achieving efficiencies in how we operate and successes in our revenue-raising. Challenges remain and we will continue delivery of our financial sustainability model to deliver our long-term mission as a world-leading botanic garden.

While we reflect on all our achievements over the past 12 months, we must also start to look forward. The next year will involve a period of transition for the Gardens as the Board bids Director and Chief Executive, Professor Tim Entwisle, farewell following a decade-long tenure.

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria stands as a testament to what can be achieved when a community comes together in the pursuit of a shared vision. We couldn't be prouder of this years' achievements and know there are many more to come for the benefit of plants, people, place and planet.

Professor Tim Entwisle
Director and Chief Executive

Chris Trotman (she/her)
Board Chairperson

Vision, Mission and Objectives





Our Vision

Life is sustained and enriched by plants.

Our vision is a flourishing community and healthy planet, sustained and enriched by plants. Through iconic landscapes, horticultural excellence, world-leading engagement programs and scientific eminence, we will make an enduring contribution to this vision. Plants, along with fungi and algae, are fundamental to life on Earth. They provide the air we breathe, the food we eat, many of the medicines that heal us, and habitat and shelter for our planet's wildlife. They give our lives meaning and inspiration. We prosper and our planet benefits when we understand, appreciate and protect plants for their life-giving qualities. The actions we all take should be based on our knowledge and respect for plants and the natural world.

Our Mission

Safeguarding plants for the wellbeing of people and the planet.

Our mission underscores our commitment to evidence-based social, scientific, educational and economic benefit for the state. In this way, we are an influencer, communicator, collaborator and catalyst for behavioural change, both within Victoria and beyond, through our extensive international networks.



Our Charter

Under the *Royal Botanic Gardens Act 1991*, the objectives of our organisation are:

- To conserve, protect and improve the Botanic Gardens and managed land and their collections of living plants
- To conserve and enhance the State Botanical Collection and National Herbarium of Victoria
- To provide for the use of the State Botanical Collection or plants or plant specimens at the Botanic Gardens or managed land for scientific or reference purposes, consistent with accepted international practice
- To increase public knowledge and awareness of plants and plant communities
- To provide for the use of the Botanic Gardens for education, public enjoyment and tourism
- To provide for the carrying out of and contribution to research into biodiversity and the conservation of biodiversity.

Our Organisational Culture

Organisational culture arises from the shared beliefs, behavioural expectations and practices that govern how people approach their work and interact with each other. At Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, we're clear about the culture we wish to have, and this is reflected through our four values, which underpin the way we act and behave:

Creative – we are inventive and enthusiastic. Our curiosity allows us to find considered solutions to challenges. We use our resources wisely and draw upon our collective intelligence to answer questions. We have a joyful, positive and respectful approach that is expressed with a good sense of humour. Our inclusive and engaging style helps us to learn and share our knowledge in new and interesting ways.

Open – we make time to listen, learn and be clear. To help us achieve our vision we listen to each other and the community. We are friendly and respectful of different perspectives. We solve problems together because supporting and learning from each other results in better work. We share our knowledge because it helps people inside and outside our organisation to understand the importance of safeguarding plants for the wellbeing of people and the planet.

Brave – we have the courage to change things. We have the confidence to challenge established ways of thinking if it improves our collective understanding of plants. We embrace our responsibility to protect plants and biodiversity. We have the courage to try new things, and we help each other as we make these changes. We are positive, so we turn challenges into opportunities. We lead the way to inspire confidence and enthusiasm in others.

Remarkable – we leave a lasting impression. We create experiences and special places that help everyone to learn and see the world differently. Whether our actions are big or small, they inspire people to think and act. We seek out knowledge and apply our learning because we believe in the importance of plants and our planet. We do things that are different and exciting if they help us achieve our vision. We are proud of our past and passionate about our future.

Our Organisational Performance

We recognise that a great organisational culture is supported by a number of underlying elements, all of which influence how we perform as an organisation. These include:

- A clear strategy and goals so our people can immediately see and understand what Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria is aiming to achieve.
- Appropriate planning frameworks and mechanisms that are inclusive of staff, ensuring our people influence and contribute to the future direction of Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria.
- Strong systems and processes to support our people to be their best.
- Empowering leadership skills and behaviours that engage and involve people.

Awards and highlights



Best Major Attraction in Victoria for third consecutive year at VTIC Tourism Awards



Gene Tree: Listen. Now. Again won two Green Room Awards for Best Sound Design and Composition and Best Production

227,000

people were delighted by *Lightscape*

35,000

students participated in learning programs

571,000

audiences participated in public programs (including *Lightscape* and students)

16,000

people scanned QR codes on the new wayfinding signage in its first five months

7,000

people listened to an episode of *Sonica Botanica – Stories and Sounds from the Gardens*



Visitation at both Gardens was 2,001,659



Identity of presumed-extinct orchid ascertained



Genome of Victoria's Floral Emblem is sequenced



New highway signage installed at Cranbourne



New Tecoma Gate and Mosaic completed at Melbourne



New nature playground developed at Cranbourne



Our Organisation

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria

Voted Best Major Tourism Attraction for the past three years, Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria connects people with nature at two outstanding botanic gardens: a heritage-listed landscape in the heart of Melbourne and a contemporary native garden set within a natural bushland reserve at Cranbourne. These sites are home to extraordinary landscapes, innovative public programming and world-leading plant science, horticultural science and conservation research.

Beyond their physical beauty, the Gardens also contribute to global and local biodiversity knowledge, through research, discovery, protection, cultivation and restoration of rare and threatened plant species, both *ex-situ* and in the bushland, and as the insurance policy for a state's unique flora pre- and post-bushfire recovery.

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria is also the custodian of the \$414 million State Botanical Collection, housed within the National Herbarium of Victoria, and is a hub for global plant knowledge, with internationally recognised biodiversity management and conservation research programs. The Gardens are stewards for irreplaceable preserved plant collections, plant records, seeds and knowledge required for future generations to thrive.

The organisation is increasingly known for innovative engagement programs that highlight the role of nature in underpinning individual and community wellbeing, while fostering social inclusion for community benefit. It is also dedicated to stimulating conservation action and contributing to climate resilience, lifelong learning and unique memories for all visitors at every stage of their lives.



Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne

Established in 1846, Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne has been an iconic Victorian attraction for 177 years. This heritage-listed landscape is loved by generations of Victorians, as well as visitors from interstate and overseas.

Located less than three kilometres from the CBD, RBG Melbourne is an important green sanctuary and resource for learning, conservation, science and horticulture. The site extends over 38 hectares and houses a collection of 7,500 plant species from around the world, including diverse plant collections such as camellias, rainforest flora, cacti and succulents, roses, Californian species, herbs, perennials, cycads, plants from southern China and, in the Rare and Threatened Species Collection, plants from Australia.

It is home to the National Herbarium of Victoria, the ark for Victoria's flora, where scientific laboratories and the Victorian Conservation Seedbank are based, together with the irreplaceable State Botanical Collection. Here the science division works to further our knowledge of plant life and how to conserve it for generations to come.

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria is also the proud steward of the Melbourne Observatory site, established in 1862 to map the southern skies for the first time and serve as a scientific research institution for Melbourne. The Observatory closed its working operations in 1945 and is now opened for heritage research purposes.



Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne

Opened to the public in 1989, the 363 hectare Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne offers a natural bushland experience alongside the Australian Garden, an award-winning, contemporary botanic garden celebrating the beauty and diversity of Australian landscapes and flora and featuring more than 100,000 plants representing 1,900 different taxa.

The bushland has more than 450 indigenous plant species and includes over 10km of walking tracks, six kilometres of cycling tracks, a lookout tower, picturesque shelters, barbeques and playgrounds. It is a precious remnant of the vegetation that once covered the broader region and is actively managed to control non-indigenous plants and exotic weeds.



Scientific Research

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria is the Victorian Government's primary centre for botanical studies, including plant identification, systematics, classification and bioinformatics. Research areas encompass biodiversity, classification, evolution, genomics, biogeography, molecular systematics, conservation and horticulture.

The Board of the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria is custodian to the irreplaceable State Botanical Collection, Australia's largest and richest herbarium collection, founded in 1853 and housed in the National Herbarium of Victoria at Melbourne Gardens. This Collection is an invaluable resource of approximately 1.5 million dried specimens of plants, fungi and algae from across Australia and from abroad.

Historically significant, the State Botanical Collection is one of the world's premier resources for scientific research. It is used by the global scientific community and by the horticultural and biosecurity industries, providing data on climate change and the environmental health of Victoria, for enhanced biodiversity, improved agriculture and biopharma innovation.

The State Botanical Collection contains the oldest and most comprehensive botanical library in Australia, which includes a varied and valuable collection of botanical art. Sitting alongside the State Botanical Collection is the Victorian Conservation Seedbank, an 'insurance policy' against extinction for some of Victoria's rarest and most threatened plant species.



Governance and Organisational Structure

The Royal Botanic Gardens Board is a statutory authority established under the *Royal Botanic Gardens Act 1991*. The *Royal Botanic Gardens Regulations 2014* make provision for the care, protection, management and improvement of the Melbourne Gardens, the Cranbourne Gardens and the National Herbarium of Victoria.

The responsible Minister for the period commencing 1 July 2022 to 4 December 2022 was the Hon. Lily D'Ambrosio MP, Minister for Environment and Climate Action. From 5 December 2022 to 30 June 2023 Ingrid Stitt MP, Minister for Environment was the responsible minister.

The Board comprises a maximum of seven members, including a Chairperson and a Deputy Chairperson, who are appointed by the Governor-in-Council on the recommendation of the Minister. Appointed Board members have a diversity of knowledge and expertise in the fields of botany, financial and business management, fundraising, public administration, major projects and arts and culture. The members are appointed for a term not exceeding four years but are eligible for re-appointment. A quorum of the Board is four members.

The Board oversees the governance of Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria and may delegate its functions and powers to a committee of the Board, the Director and Chief Executive, any of the Board's members, or any of its employees. The Director and Chief Executive has responsibility for the day-to-day management and control of Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria.

Board Members 2022–23

Ms Chris Trotman B.Bus (Acc), Grad Dip Ed (Health) MoE, GAICD
Chairperson – Appointed 9 April 2020
Appointed to the Board 9 April 2020

Ms Trotman has more than 20 years of executive experience, most recently as Chief Executive Officer of public hospitals in Gippsland. She has extensive experience serving as chairperson and member of a range of boards and committees. A former registered nurse, Ms Trotman holds undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in accounting and business and has expertise in finance, corporate governance and strategic planning. Living on a farm, she has a keen interest in agriculture and is committed to public health, public land management and conservation.

Mrs Penny Fowler GAICD, BBus
Deputy Chairperson – Appointed 9 April 2016, reappointed 9 April 2020
Appointed to the Board 8 April 2014, reappointed 9 April 2020

Mrs Fowler has a Bachelor of Business (Marketing) and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a CEW member. She has been a member of the Royal Botanic Gardens Board since 2014 and is currently the Deputy Chairperson. She is also Chair of the Herald and Weekly Times, the Royal Children's Hospital Good Friday Appeal and the National Portrait Gallery. In addition, Mrs Fowler is a Board Member of Tourism Australia, Tech Mahindra, St George (Bank of Melbourne) Foundation and the Advisory Board of Visy.

Professor Tony Bacic FAA
Appointed to the Board 17 December 2013, reappointed 9 April 2020

Professor Bacic is a highly respected plant scientist. He is currently the Director of the La Trobe Institute for Sustainable Agriculture and Food at La Trobe University and ARC Industrial Transformation Research Hub in Medicinal Agriculture. Previously he was Director of the Bio21 Molecular Science and Biotechnology Institute

at The University of Melbourne, Deputy Director of the ARC Centre of Excellence in Plant Cell Wall and was a long serving member of the Maud Gibson Trust Advisory Committee. His primary focus is on understanding plant growth and development to secure a sustainable food supply with optimal nutritional and health benefits.

Ms Gillian Hund OAM B Ed, Grad Dip Spec Ed, MA Social Investment and Philanthropy
Appointed to the Board 9 April 2020

Ms Hund is a graduate of University of Sydney (Bach. of Ed), University of London (Grad Dip Teaching of ESN Children) and Swinburne University (Master of Social Investment and Philanthropy). She began her career in teaching, before co-founding and publishing a national magazine group. She currently holds several roles in the philanthropic sector, including Co-Founder of Melbourne Women's Fund, Director of Melbourne Women's Foundation and serves on Peninsula Kingswood Country Golf Club's Foundation Committee. She is also a member of Australian Institute of Company Directors and Philanthropy Australia and received an Order of Australia medal in 2020 for service to charitable organisations.

Ms Christine Wyatt MEnvS, BRTP (Hons), GAICD
Appointed to the Board 30 November 2021

Ms Wyatt is a non-Executive Director with substantial corporate and public sector executive leadership and expertise in urban planning and strategy, environmental management, infrastructure delivery and governance. Christine is currently the Deputy Chair of the Suburban Rail Loop Authority, and a Director of the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority and Melbourne Arts Precinct Corporation. Previously, Ms Wyatt held senior executive positions in the Victorian public service including as Deputy Secretary Planning at the Department of Environment, Land Water and Department of Transport. Before

joining the public service, Christine was a senior executive with global consulting engineering firms working with public and private organisations across Australia and internationally.

Mr Tim Jacobs BA (Hons)
Appointed to the Board 9 April 2020, resigned 11 April 2023

Mr Jacobs has contributed in senior management roles to a variety of high-profile cultural organisations over the past 35 years. He was previously Director of Visual Arts, Craft and Design at the Australia Council, Director of Arts Victoria, and Chief Executive of both the Sydney Opera House and the Victorian Arts Centre. He recently served as the Executive Director of Melbourne Festival, as a trustee of the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust, and as a director of The Myer Foundation.

Ms Susanne Williamson Grad Dip Bus & Marketing, GAICD
Appointed to the Board 9 April 2016, reappointed 9 April 2020, resigned 28 April 2023

Ms Williamson has been a senior executive and fundraising professional, advising leading organisations in the not-for-profit sector for more than 25 years. Winner of multiple awards for her work in the non-profit and commercial sectors, she is currently Chief Philanthropy Officer at Monash University, responsible for leading a team of 40 fundraising professionals, raising more than \$60 million a year. Susanne was chair of the Audit and Risk committee until the date of her resignation. Susanne is a Certified Change Management Practitioner (APMG International).

Board Attendance 2022—23

The Board meets formally at least six times a year or more frequently as required.

Board member	Number of meetings eligible	Number of meetings attended
Chris Trotman (Chairperson)	8	8
Penny Fowler (Deputy Chairperson)	8	8
Professor Tony Bacic	8	7
Gillian Hund OAM	8	8
Christine Wyatt	8	7
Tim Jacobs	6	6
Susanne Williamson	7	7

Board Committees

Board members participate in one or more Board Committees. During the 2022—2023 year, the following Committees were in place:

- Audit and Risk Committee (July 2022 — April 2023)
- Finance Committee (July 2022 — April 2023)
- Audit, Risk and Finance Committee (April 2023 — June 2023)
- Major Capital Projects Committee (July 2022 — April 2023)
- Remuneration Committee

Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee provides independent oversight and monitoring of Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria's performance, risk management, internal controls and compliance framework, and its reporting obligations under the Financial Management Act 1994. The Committee consists of six members, appointed by the Board, including four Board members and one external member. This Committee was amalgamated with the Finance Committee in April 2023 to improve organization efficiency.

Members: Susanne Williamson (Committee Chairperson, until 28/04/2023), Penny Fowler, Tim Jacobs (until 11/04/2023), Chris Trotman (Ex-officio), Professor Tim Entwisle (Ex-officio)
External Member: Rochelle Wrigglesworth

Finance Committee

The role of the Finance Committee is to oversee the financial reporting process and financial performance of Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria. The Finance Committee consists of four members, appointed by the Board. This Committee was amalgamated with the Audit and Risk Committee in April 2023 to improve organisational efficiency.

Members: Professor Tony Bacic (Committee Chairperson), Gillian Hund OAM, Chris Trotman (Ex-Officio), Professor Tim Entwisle (Ex-Officio)

Audit, Risk and Finance Committee

Amalgamation of Audit and Risk Committee and Finance Committee

Members: Professor Tony Bacic (Committee Chairperson), Penny Fowler, Gillian Hund OAM, Christine Wyatt, Chris Trotman (Ex-Officio), Professor Tim Entwisle (Ex-Officio)

External Member: Rochelle Wrigglesworth

Major Capital Projects Committee

(paused April 2023, when escalated to the remit of the full Board)

The Major Capital Projects Committee provides governance, oversight and advice to the Board relating to the delivery of major capital projects across Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria sites. The Major Capital Projects Committee consists of six members, appointed by the Board.

Members: Tim Jacobs (Committee Chairperson to 11 April 2023), Penny Fowler, Gillian Hund OAM, Christine Wyatt (from 1 January 2022), Chris Trotman (Ex-officio) and Professor Tim Entwisle (Ex-officio)

Remuneration Committee

The Committee is responsible for: advising the Board that RBGV complies with executive remuneration requirements, setting the Director and Chief Executive performance measures and reviewing the performance of the Director and Chief Executive. The Remuneration Committee consists of three members, appointed by the Board.

Members: Penny Fowler (Committee Chairperson), Professor Tony Bacic and Chris Trotman

Executive Team as at 30 June 2023

Director and Chief Executive (2013 —) Professor Timothy J Entwisle PhD, BSc (Hons)

Responsible for leading and promoting Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria to achieve the highest standards in horticulture, science, financial management and a broad range of visitor and education programs. Professor Entwisle is a highly respected scientist, scientific communicator and botanic gardens Director. He took up the role of Director and Chief Executive of Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria in March 2013, following two years in a senior role at Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and eight years as Executive Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust in Sydney. He is an Honorary Professorial Fellow at The University of Melbourne, and a regular contributor to print, radio and social media.

Executive Director Melbourne Gardens (2010 —)

Chris Cole Dip Hort (Kew)

Responsible for the leadership, development and management of Melbourne Gardens, including horticultural planning and operations, landscape design, management and development of living plant collections, and nursery operations. Mr Cole is also responsible for arboriculture and management of site facilities and infrastructure and provides strategic direction for the implementation of Master Plan, Integrated Water Management and Landscape Succession projects at Melbourne Gardens. He has 20 years' experience in public and botanic gardens management and has worked at Hampton Court Palace, National Trust and Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

Executive Director Science (2006 —) Professor David Cantrill PhD, BSc (Hons)

Responsible for directing research into plant biodiversity, systematics, and conservation and management of the State Botanical Collection. This entails statutory responsibility under the *Royal Botanic Gardens Act 1991* and the *Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981*. Professor Cantrill worked as a senior research scientist in Europe for 15 years, first for the British Antarctic Survey in Cambridge and later at the Swedish Museum of Natural History in Stockholm. He has published more than 125 scientific articles; is an editor of *Grana*, an international journal for pollen studies; and sits on several international editorial and scientific advisory boards. His research interests focus on integrating information from fossil and living floras to understanding the origins of patterns of diversity in the southern hemisphere. He holds an honorary professorship with the School of BioSciences at The University of Melbourne.

Executive Director Corporate Services (2020 —)

Fiona McLaughlin BA (Hons) GAICD

Responsible for overseeing all RBGV's commercial and business activities; strategic planning, human resources, financial performance management activities; technology management; as well as its corporate governance and policy framework. The Corporate Services Division also leads the provision of secretariat support to the Royal Botanic Gardens Board and its Committees. Ms McLaughlin has more than 15 years' experience in the Victorian public sector across governance, corporate services, fiscal strategy, and performance management. She has held senior leadership roles in the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, and Victoria Legal Aid. Ms McLaughlin holds a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) from The University of Melbourne.

Executive Director Cranbourne Gardens (2001 —)

Chris Russell BSc (Hons), Grad Dip Land Rehab

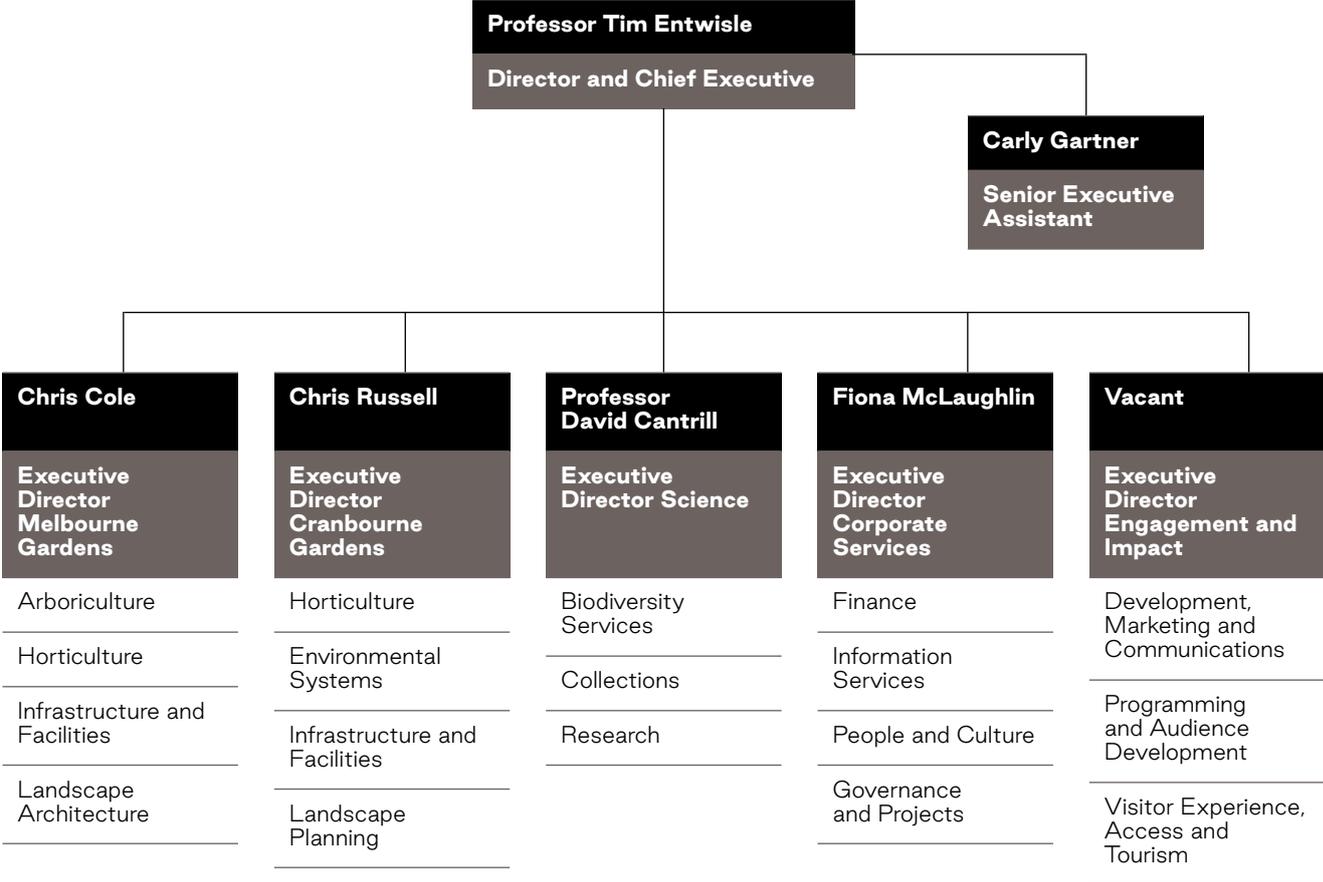
Responsible for the leadership, management and operation of RBG Cranbourne encompassing the Australian Garden and conservation areas, including horticultural planning and operations, natural areas research and management, and development and implementation of the site's Master Plan. Mr Russell is also responsible for delivery of capital works projects, strategic input into land-use planning and relationship management in the region, and organisational occupational health and safety. Prior to joining the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, he had experience in environmental management and capital projects with Parks Victoria, the building industry and scientific research.

Executive Director Engagement and Impact (2016 — 22 December 2022)

Robin Penty MFA, BFA (Hons)

Responsible for leading programming and audience development, visitor experience, access and inclusion, philanthropy, marketing, communications, partnerships, retail and tourism prior to resignation in December 2022.

Organisational Structure and Key Functional Areas



Our Performance



Visitation

	Sites	Target	Actual	Comments
Visitors to the Royal Botanic Gardens in Melbourne and Cranbourne	Total (BP3)	2.2 – 2.4 million	2,001,659	Gardens visitation is 9% less than the target due to slower return of international tourism and a wet Autumn, which particularly impacted Melbourne.

State Botanical Collection

	Target	Actual	Comments
Specimens curated in the State Botanical Collection	30,000	15,182	Target was not met due to redirection of staff resources to respond to incidents such as water leakage in the herbarium – storage facility and management of increasing constraints in storage space.

Performance Measures (Annual Business Plan)

Performance Measures	Unit of Measures	Target	Actual
Visitors to RBG Melbourne	Number	2,200,000 – 2,420,000 (Melbourne and Cranbourne)	1,655,191
Visitors to RBG Cranbourne	Number		346,468
Participation in RBGV-led programs, tours, events and interpretation	Number	270,000	570,760
Increase in the number of curated specimens in State Botanical Collection	Number	27,000	15,191
Visitors to RBG website and social media followers (combined figure)	Number	699,000	2,050,932
Increase in climate-suited taxa in Melbourne Gardens comprising a majority of wild provenance	Number	60, of which 75% are of wild provenance	125
Increase in tied and untied revenue through donations and corporate partnerships	Amount	\$500,000	\$790,733
Increase in the usage of eFlora products	Number	14,651 for HortFlora 401,767 for VicFlora	16,755 388,520
Increase in citations to peer reviewed publications	Number	2,784	3,366
Increase science communications across diverse platforms from 142 unique items.	Percentage	10%	42%
Development and implementation of Sustainability Framework	Reporting on all FRD24D office-based environmental impact indicators		78%
Increase RBGV's contribution to the protection of Victoria's biodiversity	Increase banked threatened species	10	18

Our Goals and Achievements



Pillar 1

People – Engaged communities

Over the next three years, we will seek to reach a broader, more diverse range of visitors through innovative engagement programs that promote inclusive nature-based experiences for individual and community wellbeing. We will focus our efforts on creating a deepened connection with and understanding of nature, and on advocating for the role individuals play in acting for nature (Goal 1, Victorians value nature, *Biodiversity 2037*, Department of Environment Land Water and Planning).

Through our Diversity, Inclusion and Access Plan and first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan, we commit to fostering an accessible and socially inclusive environment for and with the community. We will work in partnership with Aboriginal communities to foster reconciliation, respect and understanding, particularly in relation to Aboriginal people's deep cultural connection with and knowledge of plants and the living environment.

To deliver on our goal of engaging with communities, over the next three years we will:

- Invest more in our digital presence and strategy to reach and attract new audiences
- Expand our range of nature and science-based programs
- Be inclusive and meet the needs of a wide and diverse cross-section of the community

The Gardens Wins Gold

This year Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria won best Major Tourism Attraction category for the Victorian Tourism Industry Awards for the third consecutive year.

The Victorian Tourism Industry Council (VTIC) judges selected Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria from many outstanding competitors based on its achievements in areas of tourism, programming, business planning, marketing, customer service and sustainability. This award

helped further raise the profile of the organisation, across all mediums, and opened new opportunities for partnership and promotion.

“Royal Botanic Gardens is a major asset to Victoria and the current Lightscape event highlights their extraordinary value. The dazzling display demonstrates how we are gradually encompassing the rich and diverse culture of Indigenous Australians. This is a long way from the days when a token nod to selected dot paintings and the work of Albert Namatjira was considered sufficient recognition of our original inhabitants’ artistic endeavours.”

Letter to the Editor, The Age, 27 June 2023



Lightscape

The sell-out *Lightscape 2022* took audiences on a 1.8 km journey of light and sound through Melbourne's iconic Botanic Gardens, featuring luminous walkways and vistas, vibrant bursts of colour and large-scale installations. Selling more than 225,000 tickets, this was the hottest ticket in Melbourne during the winter of 2022, and led to many new opportunities for partnership, revenue and growth of visitation and awareness of the Gardens to a new audience. Following its great success, planning took place over the following 12 months to present a new and reimagined *Lightscape* that commenced in June (until 6 August) 2023.

Social and Cultural Impact

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria continued to develop and offer accessible and COVID-safe programs to Victorians, including several self-guided print, audio and digital programs.

The 2022 National Science Week partnership program with Royal Society of Victoria, Parliamentarians for STEM and Parliament of Victoria included a Caring for the Rare forum at Parliament House with colleagues from Zoos Victoria and Museums Victoria. The panel discussion was live broadcast and is available on RBGV's Virtual Garden.

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria contributed several programs to DELWP's 2022 Victoria Nature Festival including *First Peoples' Climate Justice Walk* and a spotlighting evening exploring the native bushland at RBG Cranbourne. City of Casey's Winter Arts Festival also featured *Seeing the Invisible*.

Regular wellbeing and nature focused programs including Forest Therapy, Botany Bootcamp and all-new Botany Braincamp as well as First Peoples NAIDOC and Bush Playgroup programs at Cranbourne Gardens provided audiences with opportunities to pause, heal and learn while families engaged with seasonal Nature Play programs and the multifaceted *Butterfly House* by Born in a Taxi.

Creative programs included *Climate Notes* by artists Anna McMichael and Louise Devenish responding to how we feel about climate change and Australian Shakespeare Company's and Moonlight Cinema's summer seasons. The Metro Tunnel Creative Program continued to present artworks on a range of hoardings throughout the city by three artists commissioned to create artwork in response to the State Botanical Collection. The program culminated in the exhibition, *Making the Metro Tunnel, Reflections by contemporary Australian Artists* at Domain House which included artwork representations of the Creative Program over the past six years.



Gene Tree: Listen. Now. Again, a site-responsive promenade performance delivered in partnership with St Martins Youth Theatre won two Green Room Awards for Best Sound Design and Composition and Best Production in the Independent Theatre category. *Seeing the Invisible*, an augmented reality contemporary art exhibition presented with 10 international botanic gardens wrapped up in September after being explored by more than 55,000 visitors at both Gardens across the year-long program.

More than 1,500 students were provided with philanthropically funded financial assistance to experience workshops at both sites, as well as four school partnership programs, providing two Catholic and two government schools with term-long, deep-dive programs.

The Care for the Rare interpretation project was delivered to six regional botanic gardens by interpretation specialist Dr Toni Roberts. The Project was integrated into the RMIT Communication Design Studio program.

Learning and Participation

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria delighted in welcoming school students back to its two Gardens with an expanded range of Designed by Nature biomimicry programs, and a new Young Botanists Art Series. 1,100 students participated in 45 programs as part of the Victorian Challenge and Enrichment Series, as well as the range of curriculum linked programs available to Victorian school audiences.

More than 37,000 participants returned to our suite of onsite learning programs including Wellbeing, First Peoples, STEM, Geography, Sustainability, Southern Brown Bandicoot and Nature Play programs. Teacher professional development programs were also offered and RBGV was supported to invest in its new biomimicry learning programs through funding from the Department of Education and Training and the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria.

The Growing Beyond Earth Australia pilot program was launched in March, with two schools taking part in the pilot. As part of the Australian pilot students test different species under varying growing conditions to assess their potential for being grown in space. This program is a collaboration between RBGV, the La Trobe Institute for Sustainable Agriculture and Food, Melbourne Archdiocese of Catholic Schools and Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden in Florida, USA. The program launch attracted the attention of online, radio and TV news.

A Raising Rarity pilot learning program was delivered with two schools from metro and regional areas in the mastery of plant conservation. Students were given the opportunity to 'walk in the shoes' of RBGV conservation scientists and expert horticulturalists, planting rare and threatened plants in dedicated garden beds and caring for them, collecting their seeds and sharing them back with our RBGV science team over the course of a year.



RBGV Interpretation and Storytelling Framework

RBGV undertook its first whole of organisation Interpretation and Storytelling Framework. Working with Freeman Ryan Design, Greenshoot Consulting and Greenaway Architects, this Framework was developed with the International Indigenous Design Charter and the Traditional Owners of both sites. It provides guidance for the interpretation and storytelling staff and interpretation specialists working on future RBGV projects.

7th Global Botanic Gardens Congress (7GBGC)

7GBGC was hosted by RBGV in Melbourne from 25 to 29 September 2022, under the auspices of Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) and Botanic Gardens of Australia and New Zealand (BGANZ). The overarching theme of the Congress was Influence and Action: Botanic Gardens as Agents of Change and explored how botanic gardens could play a greater role in shaping our future, especially in the context of

accelerated loss of biodiversity across the globe, increased urbanisation, population growth and climate change. Bringing botanic garden leaders and professionals to Melbourne provided an opportunity to showcase RBGV's landscapes, expertise and initiatives to an international audience, and assisted in building our reputation as a global leader in the sector.

The program comprised one-day field trip options, Welcome Reception, Gala Dinner and a 3-day program at Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre. The Congress also incorporated elements of BGCI's 11th International Congress in Education in Botanic Gardens, which was due to be held in Argentina in March 2022 but was cancelled due to the pandemic. This included a dedicated Education and Engagement Workshop Day held at Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne and an Impactful Engagement stream within the main program.

Optional field trips included visits to both Cranbourne and Melbourne Gardens, Geelong Botanic Gardens and Anglesea Heath, Ballarat Botanic

Gardens and Dandenong Ranges, tall temperate forests and Healesville Sanctuary. The diverse activities offered international delegates the opportunity to explore more of Victoria, some outstanding gardens, experience different aspects of Melbourne, and participate in interactive educational workshops.

There were 500 Delegates from 36 countries in attendance, with 218 abstract submissions received, and included a number of presentations by RBGV staff. Program highlights involved the strong emergence of the discipline of conservation horticulture, the launch of the Climate Change Alliance of Botanic Garden's Climate Assessment Tool and Landscape Succession Toolkit and numerous important case studies from gardens of all sizes, responding to challenges in a changing world.



Pillar 2

Place – Vibrant places

Over the next three years, we will seek to sustainably increase new and repeat visitation to both our sites by investing in the activation and improvement of our iconic landscapes. Conditional on the current COVID-19 environment, we will pursue a program of events to engage the general public through creative site interpretation, public talks and exhibitions, and in improvements to visitor amenity and interpretation.

As a world-leading botanic organisation, we pledge to maintain and enhance our beautiful displays and gardens so that there is always something new to stimulate the senses and delight domestic and international visitors.

To deliver on our goal of creating vibrant places, over the next three years we will:

- Create opportunities to drive repeat visitation at both gardens in order to promote deeper community engagement and learning
- Invest in and showcase our contemporary and heritage landscapes, buildings, collections and their interpretation to support increased visitation and positive visitor experience
- Expand our strategically aligned partnerships with the tourism, health and cultural sectors and with the community more broadly

New Wayfinding Design and Signage System

An extensive new wayfinding system was commissioned for both Melbourne and Cranbourne Gardens with capital works funding provided by Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA). Significant audits, visitor research and consultation were undertaken and the project was designed with the International Indigenous Design Charter working with Greenaway Architects, Aspect Studios, Studio Binocular and Greenshoot Consulting, together with Traditional Owners of both sites. A rich, colourful and effective system was designed reflecting the primacy of Country and includes new mapping, indigenous plant patterns and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung language in Melbourne. A complementary digital mapping and interpretation system was developed to provide significantly improved wayfinding and easy to access stories of place, plants and the work of RBGV.



Major Capital Projects

The capital works program delivered in 2022—23 has been significant at both sites.

A generous donation from Frank Van Straten and Adrian Turley funded the Tecoma Gate redevelopment, including unique new steel gates, a pavement mosaic, and landscaping. Similar works for the new City Gate have begun and were made possible through the generosity of Lady Primrose Potter AC and the refurbishment of Rose Pavilion, is in final stages of planning thanks to the support of Portland House Foundation.

A grant from the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing funded a new Changing Places facility at Melbourne Gardens which now provides 24-hour toilet and change facility for people with high care needs.

Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions and DEECA provided funding for the Eco-Tourism projects at Cranbourne Gardens. This includes construction of a new nature-based playground, refurbishing the Visitor Centre and Rockpool Pavilion, installation of a new access lift, and redeveloping the Dry Riverbed and Arid Garden landscapes, all of which were completed this year. Further Eco-Tourism projects are in planning and tendering stages with delivery scheduled for the second half of 2023.

DEECA also funded the restoration of Melbourne Gardens' perimeter fence and gates, critical asset remediation works at Melbourne Gardens, and new wayfinding signage across both sites.

New Partnership and Business Opportunities

Red Energy joined as the presenting partner for *Lightscape*. In addition to financially supporting the event over future years, Red Energy most notably provided *Lightscape* with accredited Green Power over the duration of the popular event.

RBGV secured two new commercial tenants, including the Darling Group at The Terrace and Curtis Stone Events as a hospitality and marquee events provider.

The organisation entered into a licence agreement with Myer to collaborate on a sleepwear range inspired by the botanic illustrations of Euphemia Henderson. Myer created three bespoke prints for uses across a sleepwear range. The range, part of Myer's in-house sleepwear brand Chloe & Lola, was launched for Mothers' Day 2023.

Learning Outreach to Regional Botanic Gardens

RBGV continued to deliver its regional outreach learning program using the extensive network of gardens across the state to bring science, STEM and sustainability programs to students in regional areas. With support from the Department of Education and Marian & E.H. Flack Trust, RBGV delivered programs for regional students in Shepparton, Geelong, Ballarat, Sale and Bendigo Botanic Gardens. These programs reduced the geographical and financial barriers regional students often face to participation in extension specialist learning opportunities.



Pillar 3

Plants – Sharing plant knowledge and discovery

Over the next three years, we will focus our efforts on the most urgent conservation needs of Australia’s rare and threatened flora. We will continue to support plant salvage work via scientific field work to aid conservation of rare and threatened plants.

To maintain the organisation’s reputation as one of the world’s leading botanical institutions and centre of plant knowledge, we will support effective research translation and communications, so that key discoveries, research and programs can be promoted to scientific, government and public audiences.

We will improve the way we conduct, support and communicate botanical research and its outcomes. In particular, we will increase access to information held within the corpus of the State Botanical Collection so that it remains the authoritative resource for information and identification of the flora of Victoria through curation, digitisation, databasing and provision of electronic and controlled access maintenance of online floras (*VicFlora*, *HortFlora*) – including any holdings of cultural significance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

To deliver on our goal of sharing plant knowledge and discovery, over the next three years we will:

- Improve how we translate our research and expertise within the broader community, making Gardens’ research more engaging and influential in society
- Expand Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria’s role as a catalyst and hub for plant biodiversity and conservation research
- Adopt innovative approaches to increase visitor engagement with the natural world

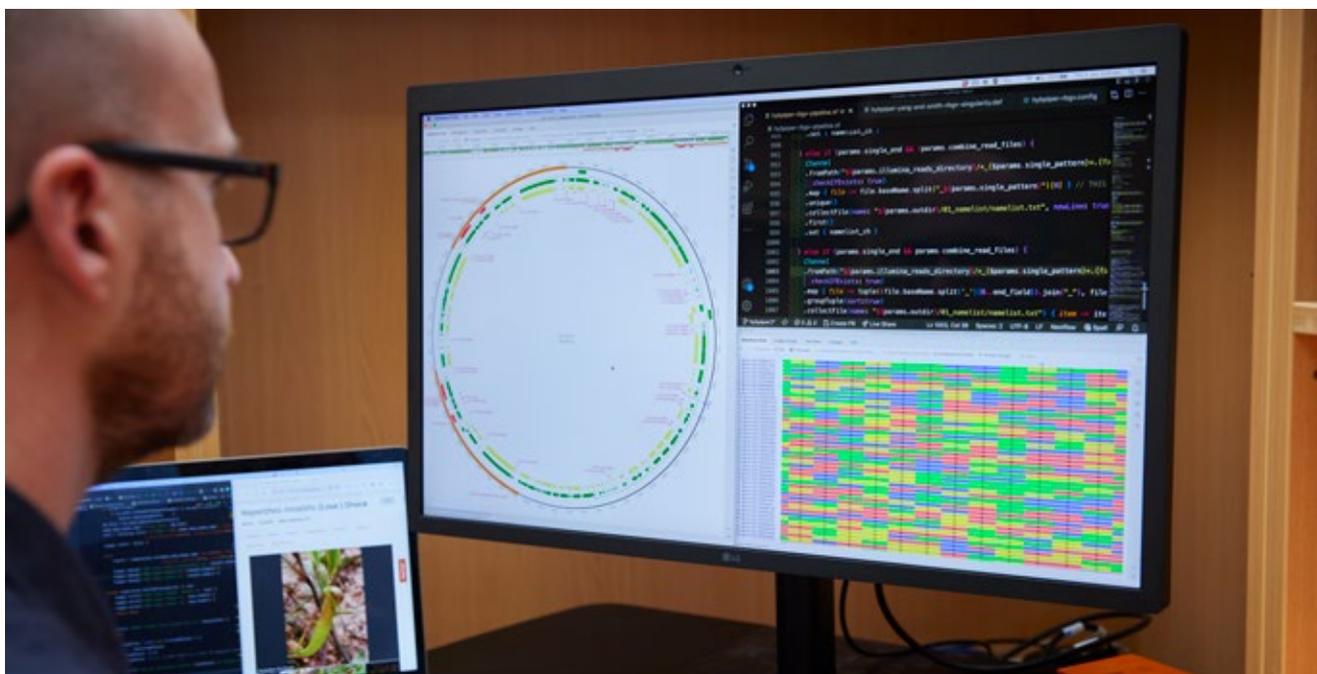
Increase in use of RBGV VicFlora

The transition of VicFlora to a completely modular, open-source online product is allowing for increased customisability of the platform. A prominent new addition this year was the ability to create plant checklists based on Registered Aboriginal Party boundaries, providing Traditional Owners and Aboriginal land managers in Victoria with customised views of public plant data that can be used to inform land management decisions. Usage of VicFlora was strong, with 388,520 sessions recorded during the

2022—2023 financial year. This total is slightly lower than for 2021—2022, however, usage was exceptionally high from June through November 2021 as a result of rolling lockdowns which ended in October 2021, thus the decreased total for this year was anticipated. Even so, usage of VicFlora was ahead of the 15% target for the first three quarters of the year, and slightly short of target for the last quarter (11.7%), typically the quietest period, but still on par with the same quarter last year.

Application of Research

The depth and breadth of RBGV science has continued to increase. Citations of published research remained at a high level, reflecting the relevance and applicability of our work. Knowledge of biodiversity was increased by description of new species of grasses, fungi, liverworts, pitcher plants, algae, and a fossil fern. Insights into pollination biology, germination requirements, and mycorrhizal associates of rare orchids informed practical efforts for their conservation. Studies of the phylogeography of the dominant Australian plant groups (eucalypts and wattles) provided unique insights into their evolutionary history, and the biogeography of different regions across the continent.



Databasing the Global Collection

To allow greater access to the scientific and historically important information from the Global Collection (the non-Australian component of the State Botanical Collection), 10,125 specimens were databased this year. Over the past year, the project team have focused on databasing the non-Australian lichens and completed work on the historically significant Wilhelm Sonder lichen collection, in early 2023.

Mounting Specimens

As the working tools of botanists, herbarium specimens need to withstand repeated handling and close inspection. To improve the accessibility of the herbarium collection, 8,607 plant, algae and fungi specimens were mounted by staff and volunteers this year. A variety of techniques are used to carefully conserve and protect the specimens so they can support scientific research for generations to come. Collections staff use traditional methods but also used specialised methods they developed to better conserve delicate slime mould, lichen, fungi and bryophyte collections.

Genomics for Australian Plants

RBGV has continued to lead this national collaborative project to develop genomics resources and capacity in the plant sciences research community. At RBGV, research focussed on genomics of *Eremophila* and *Olearia*, with a highlight being the publication of the genome of Australia's floral emblem, *Acacia pycnantha* (golden wattle). At a finer scale, genetic data and tools are being used to inform work on the classification and conservation of eucalypts, grevilleas, daisies, wattles, grasses, *Teucrium* and *Ajuga*. RBGV bioinformaticians have increased national research capacity and capability in handling and using new mega-scale data sets for biodiversity studies by playing a key role in development of software for analysis of sequence data.

Understanding fungal diversity and function

A key activity of RBGV mycologists is documenting new and known fungi through collecting, surveying, species description and DNA-barcoding. Over the past year, more than 400 fungal collections were made and more than 500 DNA sequences were generated from new and existing collections, including c. 100 new DNA-barcodes that will facilitate the identification of fungal species in environmental samples, such as from either soil or animal scats. Surveys were undertaken among existing fungarium collections and in the field, including surveys of the fungal food resources of endangered mammals in newly established predator-free areas. Newly described and newly recorded species included mushrooms, jelly fungi, cup fungi and truffle-like fungi that are food for native mammals. Complementing specimen-based approaches, RBGV mycologists and bioinformaticians implemented the first state-wide analysis of the soil microbiome, identifying more than 2,000 species-level units of fungi among DNA sequences generated from 106 sites across Victoria.

Advancing fungi conservation knowledge

Enhancing the evidence base for the conservation and management of fungi remains a priority for RBGV mycologists. Contributions in the last year included a global review upon reaching the milestone of 500 species of fungi included on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species; an assessment of the efficacy of compost teas for introducing symbiotic fungi to seedlings; and an analysis of the effects on fungi of the 2019–2020 megafires in Australia. RBGV scientists play a vital role in training and mentoring the next generation of mycologists: Four new postgraduate student co-supervisions in mycology commenced, involving students investigating the connections between soil eDNA and soil nutrients, the systematics of cup fungi, and the role of mycophagous mammals in fungal dispersal and in forest restoration. Mycology research at RBGV also contributes to sustainable development by conducting collaborative research and capacity building with institutions from the Global South, such as the Cape Horn International Centre in Southern Chile.

Highlights



52

research papers were published



Genome of Victoria's floral Emblem published



1,147

new images made available through VicFlora, totalling 33,974 images



10,125

specimens databased from the Global Collection



3,366

citations to RBGV scientific publications



270

new books catalogued.



11,465

11,465 of Ferdinand von Mueller's letters were published online in a searchable database



200

The Library delivered curated library group tours to more than 200 people.



7,100+

orchid seedlings were propagated and supplied for translocation back into nature



50%

of Victoria's rare plants protected in the Victorian Conservation Seedbank



8,607

specimens were mounted and prepared for digitisation



Mycorrhizal fungi have now been isolated and stored from all but one of the *Diuris* taxa recognised in Victoria



388,520

unique sessions – on VicFlora



34,123

34,123 pages contributed to Biodiversity Heritage Library (BHL)



1,280

1,280 images added to Cumulus



Pillar 4

Planet – Conservation action

Over the next three years, we will expand the role Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria plays in shaping how people value, perceive, and care for the environment and adapt to climate change. To do this, we will lead by example, especially in the area of environmental sustainability. We will continue with the growth of the Climate Change Alliance of Botanic Gardens and share important knowledge that will allow botanic gardens around the world to develop strategies to adapt and protect their collections from this threat.

We are in the strong position to raise public awareness of the importance of conservation and environmental sustainability through innovative site interpretation, indoor and outdoor exhibitions, educational programs and major events. We will continue to develop communications and programs that lead to an understanding of the threats and consequences of loss of biodiversity (such as the loss of plant and fungi species, as well as the habitat of the Southern Brown Bandicoot and other wildlife) and foster a greater appreciation of the need to preserve natural habitats.

To deliver on our goal of conservation action, over the next three years we will:

- Develop, refine and communicate our strategic responses to major biodiversity and conservation matters (i.e. climate change, land use changes, invasive species and individual action)
- Improve and promote our approach and outcomes in environmental sustainability across all areas of the organisation
- Further extend our international support, capacity building and partnerships consistent with our mission (i.e. scientific and conservation collaboration with Timor Leste, Climate Change Alliance of Botanic Gardens, contributions to Botanic Gardens Conservation International and the International Association of Botanic Gardens, 7th Global Botanic Gardens Congress in 2022)

Victorian Conservation Seedbank

The Seedbank team made collections of 18 rare or threatened species this year, exceeding the target of 10, along with accessory collections of 30 other taxa, mainly of species already held in the bank but representing additional populations or, in some cases, supplemental gatherings made to shore up small collections for which more seed material was required. The Seedbank now holds 884 taxa out of the approximately 1,770 state and federally listed threatened species, and 1,506 taxa in total across 2,238 separate collections. RBGV's Orchid Conservation Program separately banked seed for 81 orchid species this financial year, of which approximately 60 are listed as threatened.

Bushfire Conservation Programs

The Bushfire Conservation Genetics project undertook 6 extended multi-day field trips to finalise collections for the project. This resulted in the addition of 325 samples bringing the total to 2,430 bushfire conservation genetics collections for this project. Throughout the project, collections have included the addition of 182 specimens to the State Botanical Collection. Collections for all species in the Bushfire Conservation Genetics project have now been completed, this includes collections for 28 taxa, 8 of which are listed as critically endangered, 12 endangered and 5 vulnerable under the *Victorian Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (FFG Act). The project focus is now on analysis and report writing. Samples for 28 of the taxa have been sent to Diversity Arrays Technology for sequencing, results for 21 taxa have been received, and analysis completed for 17 species. Reports for 15 taxa have been completed and sent to DEECA and on-ground staff to allow our recommendations to be incorporated into land and natural resources management decisions. This work was part of a broader program of Plant Rescue and Care, involving the collection of seeds, cuttings and other plant materials across the state, but particularly those under threat after the 2019–20 bushfires.



Population Genetics Underpin Meaningful Conservation Actions

Results from genetic analyses are used to assist on ground management activities as well as guiding sampling for *ex situ* collections such as the Victorian Conservation Seedbank (VCS) and the RBG living collection conservation holdings. After the Black Summer bushfires razed large swathes across Victoria, *Banksia canei* (mountain banksia), a three metre shrub, was completely wiped out in Burrowa–Pine Mountain National Park in northeast Victoria. The park’s management sought to reintroduce this species to restore the ecosystem and initially considered sourcing the seeds from the nearest population in the Victorian Alps. Results from the Bushfire Conservation Genetics study on *Banksia canei* revealed an unexpected finding—the closest genetic match to the fire-affected population was not the nearby Victorian Alps population, but populations from New South Wales. This finding provided critical guidance for the reintroduction project. By recognising the genetic affinity between the Burrowa–Pine Mountain population and New South Wales populations, the conservation team avoided reintroducing less appropriate *Banksia canei* seed and enabled the

selection of the most suitable seed source to maximise the success of the reintroduction program. This highlights the practical need for genetic information in conservation initiatives to enhance the resilience of restored ecosystems and promote the long-term survival of reintroduced species, contributing to the success of restoration and biodiversity conservation efforts.

Southern Brown Bandicoot Recovery

Fifty-three long-term monitoring sites within the RBGV Cranbourne bushland were surveyed with autonomous cameras to determine the occupancy patterns of native and introduced mammals. The main focus was on the Garden’s crucial Southern Brown Bandicoot (*Isoodon obesulus*) population, invasive predators, and black wallabies. This work links with the work of the Southern Brown Bandicoot Regional Recovery Group in collecting and analysing mammal records from across the Westernport region, outside the Cranbourne Gardens fence. Cameras were used to monitor the impact of newly installed road fauna tunnels, fences and selective wildlife gates on wildlife movement. Data from these projects has been included in a large, international study looking at the impact of COVID-19 lockdowns on

wildlife activity. The RBGV Ecologist is collaborating with Westernport Biosphere Reserve Foundation, Parks Victoria and DEECA on the development and implementation of an *Isoodon obesulus* “genetic rescue” project involving the proposed translocation of individuals between disjunct populations.

Showcasing the Collection

Over the past year, RBGV’s Science team have showcased the State Botanical Collection and Victorian Conservation Seedbank to 35 tour groups, helping promote and connect people with our science and inspire them to action. The tour groups have included diverse audiences, including Victorian Traditional Owner natural resource management groups, historians, artists, secondary and tertiary students, community groups and conference attendees.

The Collections was also promoted to a wider audience through media articles about its importance, partnership with the Metro Tunnel Creative Program and also ministerial and government visits.



Conservation Cryobank

Since the installation of an ultra-low temperature (ULT) freezer in the Herbarium in July 2022, 47 fern and bryophyte taxa have been accessioned over and above the target of 35 taxa. The ULT, which operates at -150°C , houses 64 separate fern collections, some of which represent separate populations, and additional genetic diversity of the 47 taxa held. Successful spore germination methods have already been established for some collections, while future trials will establish suitable protocols for other species. The ULT is also being used to store fungal cultures, particularly fungi that have mycorrhizal associations with native orchids. More than 3,000 fungal cultures are now held in the freezer, and the Orchid Conservation Team published a reliable protocol for isolating, culturing and storing orchid mycorrhizal fungi in connection with this.

Living Plant Conservation Collections

More than 7,100 seedlings of threatened *Diuris* and *Caladenia* orchids were supplied by RBGV's Orchid Conservation Program to support translocation programs with various collaborating partner agencies including DEECA, Parks Victoria, and Murray Local Landcare Services. Germination and propagation trials were also completed for 18 endangered orchids, generating important data that will support any future production needs of these species for conservation actions. Currently in the *ex-situ* living plant collection in the Orchid Conservation Program at Cranbourne RBGV have 98 threatened species (either FFG or EPBC Act listed) growing.

Care for the Rare

The Care for the Rare project successfully completed its pilot phase, providing more than 2,000 threatened plants from 115 different taxa to six regional botanic gardens in Victoria. Funded by the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust, the project has established living collections of locally significant rare and threatened plants and engaged regional botanic garden visitors, using interpretation plans to explain the significance of each collection. A bursary was established to fund 40 regional botanic gardens staff to attend the 7th Global Botanic Gardens Congress. Throughout the year, Care for the Rare presentations, workshops, guided walks, and a live streaming event have been delivered to a broad cross-section of the community. Examples include a live-streamed event from Parliament House during National Science Week (365 views), a presentation to councilors and industry at a City of Melbourne forum (300 registered attendees), various friends and wildlife groups, and the Global Botanic Congress followed directly by the Australasian Botanic Guides Conference. Through collaboration with the University of Melbourne, a threatened plant living collection plan and selection tool was launched, enabling greater uptake of rare and threatened plantings as part of amenity horticulture.

Bushfire Recovery Living Collections

The funding of two horticulture positions – the Bushfire Recovery Living Collections Coordinator and Nursery Horticulturist (fixed-term), has led to the development of the Bushfire Recovery Living Collections Plan. This year, the project team have steered the propagation and production of 117 new Bushfire Recovery living collection accessions at Cranbourne Gardens. Cranbourne Horticulture and Science Division staff have continued to work in close collaboration to establish genetically diverse holdings of priority species and adding to underrepresented species in the Victorian Conservation Seedbank. Through separate grant funding, five raised Conservation Horticulture beds have been established at Cranbourne Gardens to hold many of these new accessions.

Promotion of Environmental Activities

Cranbourne Gardens horticulture staff have been working with Friends of Mallacoota on propagating plants for the Mallacoota Endemic Garden. The Mallacoota Endemic Garden was a post black summer fires initiative from the Mallacoota community to establish a small botanic garden in a prominent location in the Mallacoota township. Cranbourne Gardens staff have provided technical and horticultural advice on garden establishment and living collections aspects of this project. Cranbourne Gardens also hosted a Deakin University Environmental Sciences student placement who assisted in the propagation and production of 400 plants comprising 36 taxa for the garden.

Our supporters



Royal Botanic Gardens Foundation Victoria

Royal Botanic Gardens Foundation Victoria was established in May 2001 to provide the Gardens with a vital source of income from the investment of bequests, seat dedications as well as support for the Director's Circle, the Gardens' annual giving program. The Foundation is structured as a public ancillary fund, has Deductible Gift Recipient (Item 2) status and is endorsed as an Income Tax Exempt Fund.

Maud Gibson Trust

Royal Botanic Gardens Foundation Victoria Ltd is also Trustee of the Maud Gibson Trust, a public ancillary fund, which is required to make annual distributions to Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria. The Trust was established in 1945 with a donation from Miss Maud Gibson for the maintenance, development, or otherwise for the benefit of, Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria.

From Farren Williams, Royal Botanic Gardens Foundation Victoria Chairperson

The Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria Foundation was established by Melbourne philanthropist Dame Elisabeth Murdoch AC more than 20 years ago. This Foundation established in-perpetuity funding for the Gardens, to allow it to flourish beyond the Victorian Government's critical funding and public donation income streams. Today, the Foundation manages a pool of capital for the Gardens' benefit, providing long-term sustainable funding for many projects and initiatives at the Gardens. The Foundation works closely with the Gardens to understand the priority funding areas and support the most important of these, with a focus on those that are both top priorities and which would not otherwise receive funding from other sources.

The vision for the Foundation reflects this rich philanthropic history and our vision for the future:

Our treasured and iconic Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, nurtured by philanthropy, and sustained through responsible financial stewardship.

The Foundation's mission flows from this:

To establish, strengthen and honour donor relationships; raise and steward funds ethically and responsibly; and distribute critical funding to secure the future of Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria.

The Foundation was fortunate to receive two bequests over the year 2022–2023 which help grow the corpus and underpin critical long-term funding to the Gardens. We are enormously grateful for this support:

- The Estate of Maria-Jose Nascimento Herpe \$130,000
- The Estate of Mr Jack Reid \$7,000 (this estate has made distributions to the Foundation in previous years)

It is always a wonderful privilege when we hear that someone has chosen to leave a bequest to support the work of RBGV and we recognise the weight of responsibility that comes with a bequest. We understand how important it is that the corpus is managed responsibly, in line with our long-term objectives to provide sustainable support to the Gardens within an acceptable risk tolerance and consistent with our investment policy.

We are deeply appreciative of the donors who have supported the Gardens through the Director's Circle and the Seat Dedication program. There are currently 236 Director's Circle members and 219 people who have current seat dedications in the Gardens. Both of these programs provide important funding to the Foundation, that goes towards long-term support of the Gardens through our annual distributions.

During 2022–23, the Foundation distributed a total of \$611,897 in funding to the Gardens, including \$195,000 in grants from untied funds to the following priority projects:

- Genomics for Australian Plants
- Horticultural Apprenticeships
- 7th Global Botanic Gardens Congress

In addition, the Foundation distributed \$159,000 funding to the following projects via tied sub-funds:

- Jim Willis Studentships
- Pauline Ladiges PhD fellowship
- Global Collection

The Maud Gibson Trust distributed \$45,432 in support of the following projects at Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria during the year:

- Elisabeth Murdoch Scholarships for RBGV Staff
- Contribution to ARC Linkage Grant to RBGV Science
- Raising Rarity
- Global Collection

The Gardens have continued to provide a place of solace, beauty, wonder and enjoyment for the many thousands of people who come through the gates each day. It has also continued to be an important place for science, conservation and learning, and it was fabulous to be able to host the 7th Global Botanic Gardens Congress and see so many passionate and dedicated people engage in this event.

I would like to extend my deep appreciation for the generous contributions made by the Foundation Directors, and the Maud Gibson Committee and Advisory Panel members throughout the year in support of the Foundation and the Maud Gibson Trust for the ultimate benefit of the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria.



Members of the Royal Botanic Gardens Foundation Victoria Ltd Board (Trustee of the Foundation and Maud Gibson Trust):

- Ms Farren Williams (Chairperson), Mar 2018 — current
- Mr Ian Wong (Chairperson Finance and Audit Committee), Mar 2018 — current
- Professor Timothy Entwisle (Company Secretary), 2013 — current
- Ms Alice Sidhu, Feb 2019 — current
- Ms Michelle Varcoe, Nov 2018 — current
- Ms Kathryn Kings, Aug 2021 — current
- Ms Jan Robins, Aug 2021 — current
- Mr Alan Logan, Aug 2021 — current

Maud Gibson Trust Committee:

- Penny Woodward (Chair 2023) — Advisory Panel 2014 — 2019 Committee Deputy Chair 2020–2023, Chair 2023 — current
- George Howson (Treasurer) — Committee 2000 — current
- Professor Tim Entwisle (Director and Chief Executive RBGV) — 2013 — current
- Professor Ian Woodrow — Committee 2014 — current
- Jill Burness — Committee 2023 — current

Maud Gibson Trust Advisory Panel:

- Millie Ross
- Brian Snape AM
- Kate Walsh
- Rodger Elliott AM (Committee 1992–2023, Deputy Chair 2005–2019, Chair 2020–2023)

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RBGV would like to acknowledge their corporate partners Maxwell & Williams, Interflora and Neutrog for their continued support.

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Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne Inc.

This year the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne approved grants of \$115,429 to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Victoria through its Trust Fund. This represented \$115,429 for the Global Collection, \$13,700 for the Helen McClellan Research Grant, \$16,500 for scholarships for RBG staff, \$6,000 for general purpose and \$5,000 for the purchase of artworks for the State Botanical Collection. In addition, The Friends paid \$2,120 from the Whirlies for the Acacia Project Research.

The Friends were able to host face to face events, talks and walks, while maintaining some online talks to enable a broader audience. The very popular biannual Botanic Art Exhibition was held in Domain House and art classes continued to be held successfully over the year. The spring and autumn plant sales were well attended and raised \$56,000 with 38 new members joining during the sales. The Growing Friends maintained steady sales on Fridays when their nursery is open to the public. The biannual Second-hand Book Sale held in Mueller Hall made \$1,800. The Plant Craft Cottage hosted craft groups and workshops specialising in crafts that utilise natural materials and attracted many local, interstate and international visitors.

Lynsey Poore
President

Cranbourne Friends, Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria Inc.

We were delighted to combine our in-person Annual General Meeting in November 2022, with a farewell function for two longstanding, much-treasured members of RBGV staff — Warren Worboys and Jill Burness.

A second highlight, in 2023, was the recognition of volunteers, by the Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens. Rodger and Gwen Elliot, and the Growing Friends group, were recognised for their exceptional contributions to RBG Cranbourne, with prestigious Handbury Awards.

Gradually, post COVID-19, we are returning to normal, groups are active and fundraising through Growing Friends Plant Sales and events are positive. Our Friends in the Gardens group continues to assist staff in the gardens and have increased their commitment to bi-monthly.

During the year we funded RBGV staff participation in the BGCI/BGANZ 7th Global Botanic Gardens Congress and also assisted our Garden Ambassadors in their attendance at the 17th Australasian Botanic Guides Conference.

As the year came to a close, the Friends were able to contribute over \$100,000 in funds to two significant RBG Cranbourne projects — the completion of the Dry Riverbed Landscape and a contribution towards protection of the Grass Trees in the Stringybark Garden. A further campaign to raise money to set up an improved plant-naming system is in progress.

Erin Cosgriff
President

Research Partners

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria acknowledges the following organisations and individuals for supporting or collaborating with the activities of Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria's Science Division in 2022–23: Alpine Garden Society Victorian Group, Atlas of Living Australia (CSIRO), Austin Health, Australasian Native Orchid Society, Australasian Systematic Botany Society, Australian Biological Resources Study, The Australian National University, Australian Network for Plant Conservation, Australian Pacific Science Foundation, Australian Research Council, Australian Seed Bank Partnership, Biodiversity Information Standards (TDWG), BioPlatforms Australia, Botanic Gardens & State Herbarium of South Australia, State Key Laboratory of Mycology — Institute of Microbiology — Chinese Academy of Sciences, Council of Heads of Australasian Herbaria (CHAH), Curtin University, Cybec Foundation, Deakin University, Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (Victorian Government), Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (Victorian Government), Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (Australian Government), Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne Inc., Global Partnerships, Seedcorn Fund, Griffith University, Herbarium Information Standards Committee (HISCOM), Hermon Slade Foundation, Hugh D.T. Williamson Foundation, The Ian Potter Foundation, International Carnivorous Plant Society, Inc. (USA), International Commission on the Taxonomy of Fungi, James Cook University, Joint Genome Institute (United States Department of Energy), J.T Reid Charitable Trusts, La Trobe University, Local Land Services Murray, The Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich (Germany), Managers of Australasian Herbarium Collections (MAHC), Maud Gibson Trust, The Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation (USA), National Gallery of Victoria, Nell and Hermon Slade Trust, Nillumbik Shire, Office of Environment and Heritage (NSW Government), Phillip Island Nature Parks, Project Platypus Association Inc., Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria Foundation, Specify Collections Consortium,

Taxonomy Australia, The Foundation for Australia's Most Endangered Species, The University of Melbourne, University of New South Wales, University of the Ryukyus (Japan), Wimmera Catchment Management Authority, and Zoos Victoria.

Volunteers and Associates

Volunteers and Honorary Associates worked across Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria in a variety of roles at Cranbourne Gardens, Melbourne Gardens, the National Herbarium of Victoria and the Engagement and Impact Division. Working in partnership with staff, they welcomed visitors, guided tourists, supported science, planted and propagated, and provided important knowledge and skills. Over the year, volunteers and associates contributed almost 13,329 hours to Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, adding significant value to the organisation.

Science Division Volunteer Programs

Science Division volunteers contributed more than 5,536 hours of work and continued to support staff with the curation and documentation of the State Botanical Collection; assisted with the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria Library; assisted with the cleaning, testing and imaging of seed for the Victorian Conservation Seedbank; and supported conservation research programs.

Orchid Conservation Program

Our wonderful eight orchid conservation program volunteers this year have undertaken a fantastic 1,620 hours of seed cleaning and storage, seed viability counting, seedling flasking, deflasking and repotting the *ex-situ* orchid conservation collection. The volunteer work helping conserve our rare and threatened orchids is invaluable. We wish to thank those volunteers: Eve Almond, Lynda Entwisle, Brian Lawrence, Charles Young, Jenny Raven and Neil Freestone.

Victorian Conservation Seedbank

The support of volunteers has always been critical to the operations of the donor-funded Victorian Conservation Seedbank. Our seven volunteers have provided valuable assistance with the cleaning, sorting and databasing of seed. In some cases, they have also supported seed viability and germination testing work, and photographing seed for inclusion in VicFlora, our online flora platform documenting all the wild plants in Victoria. Our volunteers have contributed an impressive 1,180 hours to the Seedbank this financial year. We wish to thank those volunteers: Bob Hare, Lyle Lawrence, Nicoletta Centofanti, Hongxiang Zhang, Candice Farrugia-Roberts, Kate Kearne and David van Veldhuisen.

Collections Branch

Fifty-five volunteers provided 4,146 hours for: mounting vascular plants, preparing and sorting specimens, physically curating specimen material, data cleaning and cataloguing specimens into the State Botanical Collection. We would like to thank all the volunteers including: Alison Foster, Allan Davey, Ann Walsham, Anna Stephens, Bec Korossy-Horwood, Beck Morgan, Berys Dixon-Scheirich, Biriam Merry, Bob Thomas, Bud Batrouney, Candice Farrugia-Roberts, Caroline Xavier, Cathy Mann, Cathy Taylor, Cathy Trinca, Clie Tan, Diana Papras, Dianne Sekeres, Elisabeth Groves, Emma Phillips, Eve Recht, Fran Faul, Hannah Nichols, Ian Cullen, Janne Lade, Jannie Lay, Jayne Anderson, Jenny Ross, Judy Ryan, Kate Nakashima, Lib Howcroft, Lorraine Box, Luke Lynam, Lynsey Poore, Maddy Keser, Margaret Brookes, Marina Albert, Melinda Rochford, Nicoletta Centofanti, Pembe Ata, Robyn Brownscombe, Ros Savio, Rosemary Spencer, Ruth Ault, Sally Bufe, Sandra Cumbari, Shair Barak, Sophie Thompson, Stella Hinrichsen, Stephanie Everett, Vicki Jaeger, Wendy Hopkins, Wey Yao Wong.

(*There are 54 names listed as one volunteer does not want their name listed in the annual report).

Library

Until the library volunteer program was paused in August 2022 (due to reduced staffing capacity), volunteers Anna Long, David Sambrooks and Jenny Williams contributed a total of 40 hours of work and assisted with a variety of projects including digitisation of artworks, slide scanning, cataloguing and reshelving.

Honorary Associates

Honorary Associates are appointed on the recommendation of the Director and Chief Executive for a fixed term of up to three years, with the option of reappointment by mutual agreement. They are individuals with expertise in areas that supplement or complement Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria employees. They have contributed greatly to the achievements of the organisation through their research on various angiosperm plant families, as well as bryophytes, fungi, lichens, and algae, or by curating the specimens held in the State Botanical Collection. Others contributed to the State Botanical Collection by collecting specimens, including undescribed plants and fungi, from areas that employees are unable to survey. The library also benefits from the input of several Honorary Associates to the Mueller Correspondence Project. The Gardens acknowledges these Honorary Associates: Dr Michael Amor, Dr Bronwyn Ayre, Mrs Margaret Brookes, Dr Austin Brown, Dr Michelle Casanova, Mr Ian Clarke, Dr Thomas Darragh, Dr Marinus de Jager, Dr Rachel Fowler, Professor David Guest, Dr Bee Gunn, Professor Rod Home, Dr Gerry Kraft, Dr Teresa Lebel, Dr Graeme Lorimer, Dr Sara Maroske, Ms Peta McDonald, Mr John Miller, Dr Josephine Milne, Ms Mali Moir, Dr Ryan Phillips, Mr Kevin Rule, Dr Roger Spencer, Mr Ray Thomas and Mr Neville Walsh.



Engagement and Impact Volunteers

Volunteers at Melbourne Gardens (5,154) and Cranbourne Gardens (1,707) contributed a combined 6,851 hours supporting the visitor experience.

Learning Partners

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria gratefully acknowledges its funding partners in support of learning and participation programs for primary and secondary school students in Victoria. For specific grants and collaborations, the Gardens acknowledges: DEECA, Department of Education, Catholic Education Commission of Victoria and The Marian & E.H. Flack Trust.

The Ian Potter Foundation Children’s Garden Volunteers

The Gardens thanks these volunteers for their contributions: Mary Becker, Moira Bainbridge, Anne Ada, Marion Mclean, Wendy Hopkins, Lorraine Brock, Lesley H Blow, Jennifer Eaton, Sue Smith, Regina Pike, Jan Brown, Susan Moloney, Julie Troschke, Leanora Levy, Dianne Allen, Billie De Bondi, Deborah Boyd, Merienne Shortridge.

Gardens Ambassadors (Melbourne)

The Gardens thanks these ambassadors for their contributions: Veronica Harrison, Claire McGoldrick, David Plant, Rose Davey, Libby Tronson, Dianne Costelloe, Christine Stott, Susanne Clarke, Judy Cain, Berys Dixon, Emily Sale, Ann Scott, Jadzia Rae, Bud Batrouney, Rosemary Cotter, Marie Banic, Judith Hughes, Dennis Manz, Helen Pyman, Carmel Bateman, Judy MacWilliams, Suzannah Goodwin–Dorning, Angela Herd, Leanora Levy, Dianne Allen, Billie De Bondi, Deborah Boyd, Merienne Shortridge.



Gardens Ambassadors (Cranbourne Gardens)

The Gardens thanks these ambassadors for their contributions: Anne Adams, Margaret Barnes, Pamela Binks, Lorraine Borthwick, Barb Bullen, Brian Cole, Erin Cosgriff, Peter Cowley, Johan de Bree, Ron Deane, Mack Fenwick, Barrie Gallacher, Phil Jackson, Christine Kenyon, Eva Kowal, Linda Lee, Nancy Leonard, Peter McGrath, Lauris McInerney, Mark Nelson, Sue Spicer, Sharon Start, John Stewart, Sue Tatton, Ray Turner, Jean Wallis, Roger Watts.

Voluntary Guides (Melbourne Gardens)

The Gardens thanks these voluntary guides for their work in enriching visitor experience: Doris Berry, Cathy Trinca, Jenny Happell, Liz Cooper, Robin Viney, Mary Ward, Pamela Carter, Lynsey Poore, Anne Peterson, Kathryn Pile, Jill Bartlett, Maggie Richards, Sue Broadbent, Georgine Mountford, David Plant, Margaret Kerr, David Forbes, Donna Osbourne, Carol Spillane, Rosemary O'Brien, Chris Wallis, Sandia Rose, Louise Sexton, Julianne Lewis, Virginia Heywood, Marli Wilson, Julie Troschke, Bud Batrouney, Rosemary Cotter, Marie Banic and the late Ross Harris.

Volunteers in Training (Melbourne Gardens)

Billy Atkin, Joan Zheng, Geraldine Callister, Arlene Mou, Paul Taylor, Carol Drysdale, Karlene Lang, Angela Nasso, Sue O'Brien, Vanessa Tomé Silva, Archana ETTY, Tess Holderness, Stephen Grover, Yi-An Chen.

Melbourne Gardens Volunteers

Horticulture Volunteers

The Gardens thanks volunteer Meg Bentley who contributed 175 hours during the reporting period.

Mapping of Living Collection Assets

One person contributed 70 hours helping map our living collection assets.

Horticulture Internship Program

The Horticulture Internship Program was successfully reopened with the first intake since 2019 to begin in July 2023. The program will start with two interns for an eight-week period from July through August. The interns will join the Horticulture team and experience an immersive practical program based on the daily operations of a large botanic garden.

Cranbourne Gardens Volunteers

Nursery Volunteers

The Gardens thanks these volunteers who contributed approximately 1,106 hours over the reporting period: Tess Holderness, Gillian Jervis, Aly Wynn, Amanda Ford, Pam Binks, Peter McGrath, Nancy Leonard, Eva Campi.

Landscape Volunteers

The Gardens thanks these volunteers (called Friends in the Gardens: FIGs) for their contributions:

Christine Kenyon, Susan Spicer, Barrie Gallacher, Tony Anderson, Bill Jones, Sue Gilbert, Susan Delaney, Linda Jones, Leanne Ganey, Jennifer Raven, Wendy Herauville and Jean Wallis.

Natural Areas Volunteers

Twelve volunteers provided 1,374 hours of service undertaking various tasks in the area of conservation and land management. We sincerely thank our volunteers for their service.

Financial overview



Revenue Generation and Budgetary Objectives

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria's income is primarily annual recurrent and project specific funding from the Victorian Government, supplemented by income generated through grants, donations, fund generating programs, business operations and investment. The annual recurrent budget is allocated to salaries, operating costs and minor capital works.

The 2022–23 deliverables reflected a continuation of work already commenced and the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria carefully balanced our priorities against our budget capacity and commitment to being financially responsible and sustainable.

The main budgetary objectives of the organisation in 2022–23 were to:

- Maintain and improve both RBG Melbourne and RBG Cranbourne
- Pursue scientific research on Australian flora and improve the curation and storage of the State Botanical Collection
- Interpret and use the living collections and State Botanical Collection to advance the understanding and appreciation of plants
- Continue to expand our digital offering to increase audience engagement and accessibility on site and online
- Curate and deliver successful partnership programs to maximise sector and industry engagement with RBGV
- Deliver a range of impactful RBGV-led nature engagement programs and projects for visitors of all ages
- Deliver on externally funded capital works projects at Melbourne Gardens and Cranbourne Gardens, including implementation of the Wayfinding Signage and Interpretation project, invest in landscapes, built form and interpretation improvements to support increased visitation and positive visitor experience
- Commence preparation of a new business case to safeguard the State Botanical Collection
- Commence delivery on the 2022–23 State Budget funding commitment to remediate the National Herbarium buildings
- Maintain and improve delivery of information through online floras (VicFlora, HortFlora) so that they remain the authoritative resources for information and identification of the flora of Victoria
- Commence implementation of the Science Strategy
- Successfully host and manage the 7th Global Botanic Gardens Congress (7GBGC) in September 2022.

Income from Government

During 2022–23, annual funding provided by the Parks and Reserves Trust Account (PRTA) was applied to achieve the Board's main strategic objectives as outlined in the Annual Business Plan 2022–23. It was also used to support delivery of priority elements of the Melbourne and Cranbourne gardens master plans and enable repair or replacement of critical infrastructure including maintenance of garden paths and kerbs.

Financial results for 2022–23

	2022–23	2021–22	Change
	\$	\$	\$
Government and other grants			
Parks and reserves trust account grants	21,869,000	21,668,000	201,000
Other Victorian government grants	7,350,072	4,432,859	2,917,213
Commonwealth Government grants	227,550	200,000	27,550
Other grants	314,375	698,612	(384,237)
Philanthropic and other donations	2,882,476	9,245,835	(6,363,359)
Other income	8,650,498	3,454,022	5,196,476
Total Expenses	(37,107,797)	(35,206,676)	(1,901,121)
Net result	4,186,174	4,492,652	(306,478)

Comparison of Financial Performance and Position

The RBGV Board's net result for the financial year ended 30 June 2023 finished in surplus, a reduction when compared to the prior years surplus, mainly reflecting a decrease in Philanthropic and other donations and increased expenditure by improvements in Other income due to the full resumption of all commercial activities following prior years COVID related restrictions. The previous year's Philanthropic and other donations included a once-off \$5 million philanthropic request. Other Victorian government grants increased by \$1.7 million due to the timing of recognising funding aligned to project deliverables under the DEECA funding and Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) Eco-Tourism funds.

Specifically, the major movements in the organisation's revenue and expenses included:

- Increased revenue from income generating activities including education, programming and events and retail sales following full easement of COVID-19 restrictions.
- Increased tenancy revenue with a number of tenants achieving turnover rental income following improved visitation and associated sales.

- Increased grant revenue recognition with the continued delivery and completion of Victorian Government funding relating to the Eco-Tourism initiative

- Increased operating expenses predominately relating to delivery of increase building and maintenance costs relating to deliverables under the Eco-Tourism initiative including fence and gate works.

The major movements in the organisation's financial position include:

- The revaluation of the State Botanical Collection following managerial assessment which has increased the value of the collection by \$74 million to \$414 million
- Decrease in total liabilities due to the reduction in contract liabilities following delivery of works funded from the Eco-Tourism initiative, reducing the funds outstanding to be recognised associated with delivery.

There were no events occurring after the balance date which may significantly affect the Royal Botanic Gardens Board Victoria's operations in subsequent reporting periods.

Five-year comparison of financial results

	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Income from government	29,760,997	26,999,471	23,775,808	30,981,428	22,242,712
Total revenue and income from transactions	41,293,971	39,699,328	37,029,370	29,724,710	31,816,019
Total expenses from transactions	(37,107,797)	(35,206,676)	(33,239,113)	(30,870,478)	(25,690,106)
Net result from transactions	4,186,174	4,492,652	3,790,257	(1,145,768)	6,125,913
Net result	4,196,531	2,002,832	3,837,415	(963,977)	6,142,740
Net cash flow from operating activities	3,194,808	5,860,405	4,180,506	6,786,419	4,426,989
Total assets	1,038,278,887	964,101,089	683,291,101	677,842,060	676,485,904
Total liabilities	9,886,645	14,105,320	8,587,253	6,485,683	6,477,550

Financial statements



ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS BOARD FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

How this report is structured

The Royal Botanic Gardens Board (the Board) has presented its audited general-purpose financial statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2023 in the following structure to provide users with information about the Board's stewardship of the resources entrusted to it.

Financial statements	Comprehensive operating statement	50
	Balance sheet	51
	Cash flow statement	52
	Statement of changes in equity	53
Notes to the financial statements	1. About this report	54
	The basis on which the financial statements have been prepared and compliance with reporting regulations	
	2. Funding delivery of our services	55
	Income and revenue recognised from grants, sales of goods and services and other sources	
	2.1 Summary of revenue and income that funds the delivery of our services	55
	2.2 Income and revenue from transactions	55
	3. The cost of delivering services	58
	Operating expenses of the Board	
	3.1 Expenses incurred in delivery of services	58
	3.2 Other operating expenses	61
	4. Key assets available to support output delivery	62
	Land, property and cultural assets	
	4.1 Total property, plant and equipment	62
	5. Other assets and liabilities	65
	Working capital balances, and other key assets and liabilities	
	5.1 Receivables	65
	5.2 Payables	65
	5.3 Contract liabilities	66
	5.4 Inventories	67
	5.5 Other non-financial assets	67
	6. How we financed our operations	68
	Borrowings, cash flow information, leases and commitments for expenditure	
6.1 Borrowings	68	
6.2 Leases	69	
6.3 Cash flow information and balances	70	
6.4 Commitments for expenditure	71	
7. Risks, contingencies and valuation judgements	72	
Financial risk management, contingent assets and liabilities as well as fair value determination		
7.1 Financial instruments specific disclosures	72	
7.2 Fair value determination	76	
7.3 Contingent assets and contingent liabilities	80	

8.	Other disclosures	81
8.1	Ex gratia expenses	81
8.2	Other economic flows included in net result	81
8.3	Reserves	82
8.4	Responsible persons	82
8.5	Remuneration of executives	82
8.6	Related parties	83
8.7	Remuneration of auditors	84
8.8	Subsequent events	84
8.9	Other accounting policies	84
8.10	Australian Accounting Standards issued that are not yet effective	84
8.11	Glossary of technical terms	86
8.12	Style conventions	88

DECLARATION IN THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The attached financial statements for the Royal Botanic Gardens Board (the Board) have been prepared in accordance with Direction 5.2 of the Standing Directions of the Assistant Treasurer under the *Financial Management Act 1994*, applicable Financial Reporting Directions, Australian Accounting Standards including interpretations, and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.

We further state that, in our opinion, the information set out in the comprehensive operating statement, balance sheet, statement of changes in equity, cash flow statement and accompanying notes, presents fairly the financial transactions during the year ended 30 June 2023 and financial position of the Board at 30 June 2023.

At the time of signing, we are not aware of any circumstance which would render any particulars included in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate.

We authorise the attached financial statements for issue on 14 September 2023.



Chris Trotman
Chair
Royal Botanic Gardens Board

Melbourne
14 September 2023



David Harland
Director and Chief Executive
Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria

Melbourne
14 September 2023



Simon van der Oord
Chief Finance Officer
Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria

Melbourne
14 September 2023

Comprehensive operating statement ^(a)

For the financial year ended 30 June 2023

	Notes	2023 \$	2022 \$
Revenue and income from transactions			
Grants	2.2.1	29,760,997	26,999,471
Donations	2.2.2	2,882,476	9,245,835
Sale of goods and services	2.2.3	2,021,191	1,295,931
Fair value of assets and services received free of charge or for nominal consideration	2.2.4	1,562,258	760,487
Interest	2.2.5	883,182	86,051
Other income	2.2.6	4,183,867	1,311,553
Total revenue and income from transactions		41,293,971	39,699,328
Expenses from transactions			
Employee benefit expenses	3.1.1	(21,915,323)	(22,015,493)
Depreciation	4.1.1	(3,470,404)	(3,461,426)
Interest expense	6.1	(1,942)	(7,555)
Other operating expenses	3.2	(11,720,128)	(9,722,202)
Total expenses from transactions		(37,107,797)	(35,206,676)
Net result from transactions (net operating balance)		4,186,174	4,492,652
Other economic flows included in net result			
Net gain/(loss) on non-financial assets ^(b)	8.2	25,398	(2,277,914)
Other loss from economic flows ^(c)	8.2	(15,041)	(211,906)
Total other economic flows included in net result		10,357	(2,489,820)
Net result		4,196,531	2,002,832
Other economic flows - other comprehensive income:			
Items that will not be reclassified to net result			
Changes in physical asset revaluation surplus	8.3	73,233,942	(18,340)
Total other economic flows - other comprehensive income		73,233,942	(18,340)
Comprehensive result		77,430,473	1,984,492

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Notes:

(a) This format is aligned to AASB 1049 Whole of Government and General Government Sector Financial Reporting.

(b) 'Net gain/(loss) on non-financial assets' includes disposals of all physical assets.

(c) Other loss from economic flows due to changes in bond rates for leave provisions.

Balance sheet ^(a)

As at 30 June 2023

	Notes	2023 \$	2022 \$
Assets			
Financial assets			
Cash and deposits	6.3	20,928,615	21,489,700
Receivables	5.1	291,101	453,299
Total financial assets		21,219,716	21,942,999
Non-financial assets			
Inventories	5.4	116,351	132,834
Non-financial physical assets classified as held for sale		-	38,860
Other non-financial assets	5.5	186,720	230,048
Property, plant and equipment	4.1	1,016,756,100	941,756,348
Total non-financial assets		1,017,059,171	942,158,090
Total assets		1,038,278,887	964,101,089
Liabilities			
Payables	5.2	1,737,725	580,178
Contract liabilities	5.3	3,142,620	8,306,098
Borrowings	6.1	355,516	458,465
Employee related provisions	3.1.2	4,650,784	4,760,579
Total liabilities		9,886,645	14,105,320
Net assets		1,028,392,242	949,995,769
Equity			
Accumulated surplus		26,136,239	21,939,708
Physical asset revaluation surplus	8.3	910,362,034	837,128,092
Contributed capital		91,893,969	90,927,969
Net worth		1,028,392,242	949,995,769

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Note:

(a) This format is aligned to AASB 1049 Whole of Government and General Government Sector Financial Reporting.

Cash flow statement ^(a)

For the financial year ended 30 June 2023

	Notes	2023 \$	2022 \$
Cash flows from operating activities			
Receipts			
Receipts from government		24,571,331	26,998,946
Receipts from other entities		8,058,756	10,389,283
Goods and Services Tax received from the ATO ^(b)		682,238	906,633
Interest received		883,182	86,051
Total receipts		34,195,507	38,380,913
Payments			
Payments to suppliers and employees		(30,956,187)	(32,497,334)
Interest and other costs of finance paid		(44,512)	(23,174)
Total payments		(31,000,699)	(32,520,508)
Net cash flows from/(used in) operating activities	6.3.1	3,194,808	5,860,405
Cash flows from investing activities			
Sale of non-financial assets		55,829	42,800
Purchases of non-financial assets		(4,674,773)	(3,123,435)
Net cash flows from/(used in) investing activities		(4,618,944)	(3,080,635)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Owner contributions by State Government – appropriation for capital expenditure purposes		966,000	-
Repayment of borrowings and principal portion of lease liabilities ^(c)		(102,949)	115,178
Net cash flows from/(used in) financing activities		863,051	115,178
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		(561,085)	2,894,948
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of financial year		21,489,700	18,594,752
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of financial year	6.3	20,928,615	21,489,700

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Notes:

(a) This format is aligned to AASB 1049 Whole of Government and General Government Sector Financial Reporting.

(b) Goods and Services Tax received from the ATO is presented on a net basis.

(c) The Board has recognised cash payments for the principal portion of lease payments as financing activities; cash payments for the interest portion as operating activities consistent with the presentation of interest payments for leases and low-value assets as operating activities.

Statement of changes in equity ^(a)

For the financial year ended 30 June 2023

	Physical asset revaluation surplus	Accumulated surplus	Contributed capital	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2021	837,146,432	19,936,876	90,927,969	948,011,277
Net result for the year	-	2,002,832	-	2,002,832
Other comprehensive income for the year	(18,340)	-	-	(18,340)
Balance at 30 June 2022	837,128,092	21,939,708	90,927,969	949,995,769
Net result for the year	-	4,196,531	-	4,196,531
Other comprehensive income for the year	73,233,942	-	-	73,233,942
Capital contributions	-	-	966,000	966,000
Balance at 30 June 2023	910,362,034	26,136,239	91,893,969	1,028,392,242

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Notes:

(a) This format is aligned to AASB 1049 Whole of Government and General Government Sector Financial Reporting.

1. ABOUT THIS REPORT

The Royal Botanic Gardens Board (the Board) is a Statutory Authority of the State of Victoria, established pursuant to the *Royal Botanic Gardens Act 1991*.

Its principal address is:

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria
Birdwood Avenue
Melbourne VIC 3004

A description of the nature of its operations and its principal activities is included in the Report of operations, which does not form part of these financial statements.

Basis of preparation

These financial statements are in Australian dollars and the historical cost convention is used unless a different measurement basis is specifically disclosed in the note associated with the item measured on a different basis.

The accrual basis of accounting has been applied in preparing these financial statements whereby assets, liabilities, equity, income and expenses are recognised in the reporting period to which they relate, regardless of when cash is received or paid.

Consistent with the requirements of AASB 1004 Contributions, contributions by owners (that is, contributed capital and its repayment) are treated as equity transactions and, therefore, do not form part of the income and expenses of the Board.

Additions to net assets which have been designated as contributions by owners are recognised as contributed capital. Other transfers that are in the nature of contributions to or distributions by owners have also been designated as contributions by owners.

Judgements, estimates and assumptions are required to be made about financial information being presented. The significant judgements made in the preparation of these financial statements are disclosed in the notes where amounts affected by those judgements are disclosed. Estimates and associated assumptions are based on professional judgements derived from historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and also in future periods that are affected by the revision. Judgements and assumptions made by management in applying AAS that have significant effects on the financial statements and estimates are disclosed in the notes under the heading 'Significant judgements or estimates'.

The financial statements cover the Board as an individual reporting entity which administers the operations of the Melbourne Gardens and the Cranbourne Gardens.

All amounts in the financial statements have been rounded to the nearest dollar, unless otherwise stated.

Compliance Information

These general purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the FMA and applicable Australian Accounting Standards (AASs) which include Interpretations, issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB). In particular, they are presented in a manner consistent with the requirements of AASB 1049 *Whole of Government and General Government Sector Financial Reporting*.

Where appropriate, those AAS's paragraphs applicable to not-for-profit entities have been applied. Accounting policies selected and applied in these financial statements ensure that the resulting financial information satisfies the concepts of relevance and reliability, thereby ensuring that the substance of the underlying transactions or other events is reported.

2. FUNDING DELIVERY OF OUR SERVICES

Introduction

The Board's overall objective is to nurture an understanding of the scientific, environmental, social, economic, cultural and spiritual importance of plants to our existence, and provide our community with opportunities to prosper from a deep connection with plants.

To enable the Board to fulfil its objective, it receives income from the Parks and Reserves Trust Account, supplemented by income generated through grants, donations, programs, business operations and investment.

Significant judgement : Grants revenue

The Board has made judgement on the recognition of grant revenue as income of not-for-profit entities where they do not contain sufficiently specific performance obligations. Income from grants that are enforceable and with sufficiently specific performance obligations and accounted for as revenue from contracts with customers is recognised when the Board satisfies the performance obligation. Income from grants without specific performance obligations are recognised progressively as the project is completed or when the Board gains control of the funds.

Structure

2.1 Summary of revenue and income that funds the delivery of our services.....	55
2.2 Income and revenue from transactions.....	55

2.1 Summary of revenue and income that funds the delivery of our services

	Notes	2023 \$	2022 \$
Grants	2.2.1	29,760,997	26,999,471
Donations	2.2.2	2,882,476	9,245,835
Sale of goods and services	2.2.3	2,021,191	1,295,931
Fair value of assets and services received free of charge or for nominal consideration	2.2.4	1,562,258	760,487
Interest	2.2.5	883,182	86,051
Other income	2.2.6	4,183,867	1,311,553
Total revenue and income from transactions		41,293,971	39,699,328

Revenue and income that fund delivery of the Board's services are accounted for consistently with the requirement of the relevant accounting standards disclosed in the following notes.

2.2 Income and revenue from transactions

2.2.1 Grants

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Income recognised as income of not-for-profit entities		
Parks and Reserves Trust Account grants	21,869,000	21,668,000
Other specific purpose grants ^(a)	6,179,666	1,771,336
Income recognised as revenue from contracts with customers		
Other specific purpose grants ^(a)	1,712,331	3,560,135
Total grants	29,760,997	26,999,471

Note:

- (a) Prior year figures for other specific purpose grants have been reclassified to separately recognise income from not-for-profit entities and income from contracts with customers. A total of \$1,771,336 has been reclassified to recognise capital grants recognised under AASB1058. This reclassification results in other specific purpose grants under AASB15 reducing by the equivalent \$1,771,336. There is no impact to the total grants amount previously reported.

Parks and Reserves Trust Account Grant. The annual Parks and Reserves Trust Account grant received from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action is recognised as income of not-for-profit entities in accordance with AASB1058. As there are not any specific performance obligations, the income is therefore recognised when the Board gains control over the funds. The Parks and Reserves Trust Account derives its funding from the rate levied on metropolitan properties under the provisions of the *Water Industry Act 1994* and is provided to the Board for the purposes of conservation, recreation, leisure and tourism within the metropolitan area.

Income from grants that are enforceable and with sufficiently specific performance obligations are accounted for as revenue from contracts with customers in accordance with AASB15. Revenue is recognised when the Board satisfies the performance obligation by providing the relevant services. This is recognised based on the consideration specified in the funding agreement and to the extent that it is highly probable a significant reversal of the revenue will not occur. Consideration received in advance of recognising the associated revenue from the customer is recorded as a contract liability (Note 5.3). Where the performance obligations is satisfied but not yet billed, a contract asset is recorded. The Board does not have any contract assets.

Income from grants to construct the capital items are recognised progressively as the asset is constructed. This aligns with the Board's obligation to construct the asset. The progressive percentage costs incurred is used to recognise income because this most closely reflects the construction progress as costs are incurred as the works are done.

2.2.2 Donations

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Donations ^(a)	2,882,476	9,245,835
Total donations	2,882,476	9,245,835

The Board is deemed to have control when the funds are received from the provider.

Note:

- (a) Prior year donations included once-off support to Royal Botanic Gardens Board for infrastructure related projects.

2.2.3 Sale of goods and services

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Sale of goods	1,173,748	826,527
Rendering of services	847,443	469,404
Total sale of goods and services	2,021,191	1,295,931

The sale of goods and services are transactions that the Board has determined to be classified as revenue from contracts with customers in accordance with AASB 15.

Performance obligations and revenue recognition policies

Revenue from the rendering of services is recognised at a point in time when the performance obligation is satisfied when the service is completed and over time when the customer simultaneously received and consumes the services at it is provided. Revenue is measured based on the consideration specified in the contract with the customer.

Sale of goods are recognised as revenue at a point in time when the goods are delivered and have been accepted by the customer.

Consideration received in advance of recognising the associated revenue from the customer is recorded as a contract liability (Note 5.3). Where the performance obligations is satisfied but not yet billed, a contract asset is recorded. The Board does not have any contract assets.

2.2.4 Fair value of assets and services received free of charge or for nominal consideration recognised as income

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Building improvements at fair value	616,231	-
Voluntary Services	946,027	760,487
Total fair value of assets and services received free of charge or for nominal consideration recognised as income	1,562,258	760,487

In accordance with AASB 1058, contributions of resources provided for free of charge or for nominal consideration are recognised at their fair value when the recipient obtains control over the resources, irrespective of whether restrictions or conditions are imposed over the use of the contributions.

Voluntary services: Contributions in the form of services are only recognised when a fair value can be reliably determined and the services would have been purchased if not donated.

Volunteers mainly relate to guides, science research and collection of species.

2.2.5 Interest income

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Interest from financial assets not at fair value through profit and loss		
Interest on bank deposits	883,182	86,051
Total interest	883,182	86,051

Interest income includes interest received on bank term deposits and other investments. Interest income is recognised using the effective interest method, which allocates the interest over the relevant period.

2.2.6 Other income

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Events	2,291,562	-
Rental income	1,442,776	804,555
Royalties	87,681	116,472
Other	361,848	390,526
Total other income	4,183,867	1,311,553

Royalties are recognised when received or receivable in accordance with the substance of the licensing agreement.

Rental income in relation to leasing of the Board's assets i.e. café spaces is recognised when received or receivable under the terms of the lease agreement.

Leases mainly relate to the provision of event management, catering and functions in the Gardens, with lease terms generally of 5 years and an option to extend for a further 5 years.

All lease agreements of 5 years and option to extend for a further 5 years contain market review clauses in the event that the Board or lessee exercises its option to renew. The lessees do not have an option to purchase the leased asset at the expiry of the lease period.

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Non-cancellable lease receivables		
Not longer than one year	957,341	450,135
Longer than one year and not longer than five years	1,227,121	745,730
Total	2,184,462	1,195,865

3. THE COST OF DELIVERING SERVICES

Introduction

This section provides an account of the expenses incurred by the Board in delivering services. In Section 2, the funds that enable the provision of services were disclosed and in this note the costs associated with provision of services are recorded.

Structure

3.1 Expenses incurred in delivery of services.....	58
3.2 Other operating expenses.....	61

3.1 Expenses incurred in delivery of services

	Notes	2023 \$	2022 \$
Employee benefit expenses	3.1.1	21,915,323	22,015,493
Other operating expenses	3.2	11,720,128	9,722,202
Total expenses incurred in delivery of services		33,635,451	31,737,695

3.1.1 Employee benefits in the Comprehensive operating statement

		2023 \$	2022 \$
Salaries and wages		16,656,627	17,020,915
Superannuation	3.1.3	1,896,595	1,848,732
Annual and long service leave		2,016,831	1,725,798
Termination benefits		82,856	91,414
Other on-costs		1,262,414	1,328,634
Total employee expenses		21,915,323	22,015,493

Employee expenses include all costs related to employment including wages and salaries, fringe benefits tax, leave entitlements, termination payments and WorkCover premiums.

The amount recognised in the Comprehensive operating statement in relation to superannuation is employer contributions for members of both defined benefit and defined contribution superannuation plans that are paid or payable during the reporting period. The Board does not recognise any defined benefit liabilities because it has no legal or constructive obligation to pay future benefits relating to its employees. Instead, the Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) discloses in its annual financial statements the net defined benefit cost related to the members of these plans as an administered liability (on behalf of the State as sponsoring employer).

Termination benefits are payable when employment is terminated before normal retirement date, or when an employee accepts an offer of benefits in exchange for the termination of employment. Termination benefits are recognised when the Board is demonstrably committed to terminating the employment of current employees according to a detailed formal plan without possibility of withdrawal or providing termination benefits as a result of an offer made to encourage voluntary redundancy.

3.1.2 Employee benefits in the balance sheet

Provision is made for benefits accruing to employees in respect of wages and salaries, annual leave and long service leave (LSL) for services rendered to the reporting date and recorded as an expense during the period the services are delivered.

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Current provisions		
Annual Leave		
Unconditional and expected to be settled within 12 months	1,444,301	1,307,900
Unconditional and expected to be settled after 12 months	109,483	216,554
Long service leave		
Unconditional and expected to be settled within 12 months	340,399	364,497
Unconditional and expected to be settled after 12 months	1,609,762	1,767,022
Provision for on-costs		
Unconditional and expected to be settled within 12 months	326,760	284,844
Unconditional and expected to be settled after 12 months	302,976	337,845
Total current provisions for employee benefits	4,133,681	4,278,662
Non-current provisions		
Employee benefits	439,848	411,782
On-costs	77,255	70,135
Total non-current provisions for employee benefits	517,103	481,917
Total provisions for employee benefits	4,650,784	4,760,579

Reconciliation of movement in on-cost provision

	2023 \$
Opening balance	692,824
Additional provision recognised	327,265
Reductions arising from payments / other sacrifice of future economic benefits	(315,341)
Unwind of discount and effect of changes in the discount rate	2,243
Closing balance	706,991
Current	629,736
Non-current	77,255

Wages and salaries, annual leave and sick leave: Liabilities for wages and salaries (including non-monetary benefits, annual leave and on-costs) are recognised as part of the employee benefit provision as current liabilities, because the Board does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement of these liabilities.

The liability for salaries and wages is recognised in the balance sheet at remuneration rates which are current at the reporting date. As the Board expects the liabilities to be wholly settled within 12 months of reporting date, they are measured at undiscounted amounts.

The annual leave liability is classified as a current liability and measured at the undiscounted amount expected to be paid, as the Board does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability for at least 12 months after the end of the reporting period.

No provision has been made for sick leave as all sick leave is non-vesting and it is not considered probable that the average sick leave taken in the future will be greater than the benefits accrued in the future. As sick leave is non-vesting, an expense is recognised in the Comprehensive operating statement as it is taken.

Employment on-costs such as payroll tax and workers compensation are not employee benefits. They are disclosed separately as a component of the provision for employee benefits when the employment to which they relate has occurred.

Unconditional LSL is disclosed as a current liability, even where the Board does not expect to settle the liability within 12 months, because it will not have the unconditional right to defer the settlement of the entitlement should an employee take leave within 12 months.

The components of this current LSL liability are measured at:

- undiscounted value – if the Board expects to wholly settle within 12 months; or
- present value – if the Board does not expect to wholly settle within 12 months.

Conditional LSL is disclosed as a non-current liability. There is a conditional right to defer the settlement of the entitlement until the employee has completed the requisite years of service. This non-current LSL is measured at present value.

Any gain or loss following revaluation of the present value of non-current LSL liability is recognised as a transaction, except to the extent that a gain or loss arises due to changes in bond interest rates for which it is then recognised as an 'other economic flow' in the net result.

3.1.3 Superannuation contributions

Employees of the Board are entitled to receive superannuation benefits and the Board contributes to both defined benefit and defined contribution plans. The defined benefit plan(s) provides benefits based on years of service and final average salary.

However, superannuation contributions paid or payable for the reporting period are included as part of employee benefits in the Comprehensive operating statement of the Board.

	Paid Contribution for the year 2023 \$	Paid Contribution for the year 2022 \$	Contribution outstanding at year-end 2023 \$	Contribution outstanding at year-end 2022 \$
Defined benefit plans ^(a)				
State Superannuation Fund	85,651	112,819	3,622	-
Defined contribution plans				
Aware Super ^(b)	714,011	774,969	30,792	-
Australian Super	191,655	188,336	8,276	-
UniSuper	114,851	122,663	4,348	-
Other	710,129	649,945	33,260	-
Total	1,816,297	1,848,732	80,298	-

Note:
(a) The basis for determining the level of contributions is determined by the various actuaries of the defined benefit superannuation plans.

(b) VicSuper merged with First State Super on 1 July 2020 to become Aware Super. The VicSuper name was retired on 1 May 2023 and all staff associated with VicSuper were rolled over to Aware Super.

3.2 Other operating expenses

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
Supplies and services		
Contract costs	1,844,227	2,134,736
Garden and office equipment and supplies	1,092,878	818,787
Non-financial assets hire, maintenance and operational costs	2,750,078	1,624,673
Consultancies and professional services	1,466,658	1,228,701
Cleaning and waste disposal costs	762,096	657,103
Water charges	398,420	496,962
Advertising and promotion	334,696	326,349
Motor vehicle expenses	176,177	129,549
Computer expenses	572,077	507,017
Travel expenses	144,577	84,694
Staff training and development	228,442	140,482
Insurance costs	253,138	224,085
Postage and communication expenses	80,393	76,616
Books, periodicals and subscriptions	144,417	161,038
Legal costs	62,062	26,051
Security	193,797	152,093
Catering costs	116,095	96,693
Other	521,880	440,101
	11,142,108	9,325,730
Cost of goods sold	560,494	375,534
Lease rental expenses (low value assets)	17,526	20,938
Total other operating expenses	11,720,128	9,722,202

Other operating expenses generally represent the day-to-day running costs incurred in normal operations.

Supplies and services are recognised as an expense in the reporting period in which they are incurred.

The following lease payments are recognised on a straight-line basis:

- Short-term leases – leases with a term less than 12 months; and
- Low value leases – leases with the underlying asset's fair value (when new, regardless of the age of the asset being leased) is no more than \$10,000 and are listed in Note 6.2.

Variable lease payments that are not included in the measurement of the lease liability (i.e. variable lease payments that do not depend on an index or a rate and which are not, in substance fixed) such as those based on performance or usage of the underlying asset, are recognised in the Comprehensive operating statement (except for payments which has been included in the carrying amount of another asset) in the period in which the event or condition that triggers those payments occur.

Operating rental expenses payments are recognised on a straight line basis over the lease term, except where another systematic basis is more representative of the time pattern of the benefits derived from the use of the leased asset.

Cost of goods sold: When inventories are sold, the carrying amount of those inventories shall be recognised as an expense in the period in which the related income is recognised. The amount of any write down of inventories to net realisable value and all losses of inventories are recognised as an expense in the period the write down or loss occurs.

The amount of any reversal of any write down of inventories, arising from an increase in net realisable value, shall be recognised as a reduction in the amount of inventories recognised as an expense in the period in which the reversal occurs.

4. KEY ASSETS AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT SERVICE DELIVERY

Introduction

The Board controls infrastructure, property, plant and equipment that are utilised in fulfilling its objectives and conducting its activities. They represent the resources that have been entrusted to the Board to be utilised for delivery of those services.

Structure

4.1 Total property, plant and equipment..... 62

4.1 Total property, plant and equipment

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Land at fair value	491,100,000	491,100,000
Buildings at fair value	40,025,767	38,318,801
Less accumulated depreciation	(1,947,123)	(947,015)
Infrastructure at fair value	71,379,859	68,587,590
Less accumulated depreciation	(3,495,761)	(1,740,065)
Plant, equipment and vehicles at fair value	9,877,838	10,433,483
Less accumulated depreciation	(5,649,939)	(6,490,596)
Cultural assets at fair value	414,276,832	341,030,840
Assets under construction at cost	1,188,627	1,463,310
Total property, plant and equipment	1,016,756,100	941,756,348

The following tables are subsets of plant and equipment by right-of-use assets

4.1.(a) Total right-of-use assets: vehicles

	Gross carrying amount	Accumulated depreciation	Net carrying amount	Gross carrying amount	Accumulated depreciation	Net carrying amount
	2023 \$	2023 \$	2023 \$	2022 \$	2022 \$	2022 \$
Vehicles	817,075	(314,501)	502,574	838,503	(394,630)	443,873
Net carrying amount	817,075	(314,501)	502,574	838,503	(394,630)	443,873

	Gross carrying amount	Accumulated depreciation	Net carrying amount
	2023 \$	2023 \$	2023 \$
Opening balance - 1 July 2022	838,503	(394,630)	443,873
Additions	89,800		89,800
Disposals	(111,229)	84,845	(26,384)
Depreciation		(4,715)	(4,715)
Closing balance - 30 June 2023	817,074	(314,500)	502,574

Initial recognition: Items of property, plant and equipment are measured initially at cost and subsequently revalued at fair value less accumulated depreciation and impairment. Where an asset is acquired for no or nominal cost, the cost is its fair value at the date of acquisition.

The cost of constructed non-financial physical assets includes the cost of all material used in construction, direct labour on the project and an appropriate proportion of variable and fixed overheads.

Right-of-use asset acquired by lessees - Initial measurement

The Board recognises a right-of-use asset and a lease liability at the lease commencement date. The right-of-use asset is initially measured at cost which comprises the initial amount of the lease liability adjusted for:

- any lease payments made at or before the commencement date less any lease incentive received; plus
- any initial direct costs incurred, and
- an estimate of costs to dismantle and remove the underlying asset or to restore the underlying asset or the site on which it is located.

Subsequent measurement: Property, plant and equipment (PPE) as well as right-of-use assets under leases are subsequently measured at fair value less accumulated depreciation and impairment. Fair value is determined with regard to the asset's highest and best use (considering legal or physical restrictions imposed on the asset, public announcements or commitments made in relation to the intended use of the asset) and is summarised on the following page by asset category.

Right-of-use asset – Subsequent measurement

The Board depreciates the right-of-use assets on a straight-line basis from the lease commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the right-of-use asset or the end of the lease term. The right-of-use assets are also subject to revaluation.

In addition, the right-of-use asset is periodically reduced by impairment losses, if any and adjusted for certain remeasurements of the lease liability.

Specialised land and specialised buildings: The market approach is also used for specialised land, although is adjusted for the community service obligation (CSO) to reflect the specialised nature of the land being valued.

The CSO adjustment reflects the valuer's assessment of the impact of restrictions associated with an asset to the extent that the CSO adjustment is also equally applicable to market participants.

For the majority of the Board's specialised buildings, the current replacement cost method is used, adjusting for the associated depreciation.

Infrastructure are valued using the current replacement cost method. This cost generally represents the replacement cost of the building/component after applying depreciation rates on a useful life basis. However, for some heritage and iconic assets, the cost may be the reproduction cost rather than the replacement cost if those assets' service potential could only be replaced by reproducing them with the same materials.

Infrastructure mainly relates to various buildings, pavilions, workshops, iron picket fencings and gates.

Cultural assets are valued using the market approach, whereby assets are compared to recent comparable sales or sales of comparable assets that are considered to have nominal value. The State Botanical Collection is valued using a direct replacement cost approach.

Cultural assets mainly relates to the State Botanical Collection which is the collection of botanical specimens; paintings, photographs and drawings and other artistic material; and documents of all kinds located at the National Herbarium of Victoria.

Vehicles are valued using the current replacement cost method. The Board acquires new vehicles and at times disposes of them before the end of their economic life. The process of acquisition, use and disposal in the market is managed by experienced fleet managers in the Board who set relevant depreciation rates during use to reflect the utilisation of the vehicles.

Plant and equipment are valued at fair value and are specialised in use (such that it is rarely sold other than as part of a going concern) is determined using the current replacement cost method.

Refer to Note 7.2 for additional information on fair value determination of property, plant and equipment.

Impairment of Property, Plant and Equipment

The recoverable amount of primarily non-cash-generating assets of not-for-profit entities, which are typically specialised in nature and held for continuing use of their service capacity, is expected to be materially the same as fair value determined under *AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement*, with the consequence that AASB 136 does not apply to such assets that are regularly revalued.

4.1.1 Depreciation

Charge for the period

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Buildings	1,000,108	946,874
Infrastructure	1,755,696	1,719,242
Plant, equipment and vehicles	709,885	674,502
Vehicles - right-of-use assets	4,715	120,808
Total depreciation	3,470,404	3,461,426

All infrastructure assets, buildings and plant and equipment that have finite useful lives, are depreciated. The exceptions to this rule include items such as assets held for sale, land and cultural assets.

Depreciation is generally calculated on a straight line basis, at rates that allocate the asset's value, less any estimated residual value, over its estimated useful life. Typical estimated useful lives for the different asset classes for current and prior years are included in the table below:

Asset	Useful Life years
Buildings	5 to 100
Infrastructure	10 to 50
Plant, equipment and vehicles	4 to 50
Vehicles - right-of-use assets	3 to 5

The estimated useful lives, residual values and depreciation method are reviewed at the end of each annual reporting period, and adjustments made where appropriate.

Right-of-use assets are generally depreciated over the shorter of the asset's useful life and the lease term. Where the Board obtains ownership of the underlying leased asset or if the cost of the right-of-use asset reflects that the entity will exercise a purchase option, the entity depreciates the right-of-use asset over its useful life.

Indefinite life assets: Land and core cultural assets, which are considered to have an indefinite life, are not depreciated. Depreciation is not recognised in respect of these assets because their service potential has not, in any material sense, been consumed during the reporting period.

4.1.2 Reconciliation of movements in carrying amount of property, plant and equipment ^(a)

2023	Land	Buildings	Infrastructure	Plant, equipment and vehicles	Cultural assets	Assets under construction	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Opening balance	491,100,000	37,371,787	66,847,525	3,942,886	341,030,840	1,463,310	941,756,348
Additions	-	1,156,309	542,192	557,325	12,050	3,023,128	5,291,004
Disposals	-	-	-	(32,100)	-	(22,690)	(54,790)
Revaluations	-	-	-	-	73,233,942	-	73,233,942
Transfers ^(b)	-	550,656	2,250,077	474,388	-	(3,275,121)	-
Depreciation	-	(1,000,108)	(1,755,696)	(714,600)	-	-	(3,470,404)
Closing balance	491,100,000	38,078,644	67,884,098	4,227,899	414,276,832	1,188,627	1,016,756,100

Note:

(a) Fair value assessments have been performed for all classes of assets in this purpose group and the decision was made movements were material (greater than or equal to 10 per cent) for a full revaluation relating to Cultural assets, specifically relating to the State Botanical Collection. The next scheduled full revaluation for this purpose group will be conducted in 2026.

(b) Transfers balances represent amounts transferred between asset classes.

2022	Land	Buildings	Infrastructure	Plant, equipment and vehicles	Cultural assets	Assets under construction	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Opening balance	491,100,000	35,782,773	68,135,428	4,025,179	341,044,480	4,429,031	944,516,891
Additions	-	-	-	806,350	4,700	2,312,385	3,123,435
Disposals	-	-	-	(54,473)	-	(2,310,879)	(2,365,352)
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	(18,340)	-	(18,340)
Transfers ^(b)	-	2,535,888	431,339	-	-	(2,967,227)	-
Transfer to disposal group held for sale	-	-	-	(38,860)	-	-	(38,860)
Depreciation	-	(946,874)	(1,719,242)	(795,310)	-	-	(3,461,426)
Closing balance	491,100,000	37,371,787	66,847,525	3,942,886	341,030,840	1,463,310	941,756,348

Note:

(a) Fair value assessments have been performed for all classes of assets in this purpose group and the decision was made that movements were not material (less than or equal to 10 per cent) for a full revaluation. The next scheduled full revaluation for this purpose group will be conducted in 2026.

(b) Transfers balances represent amounts transferred between asset classes.

5. OTHER ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Introduction

This section sets out those assets and liabilities that arose from the Board's operations.

Structure

5.1 Receivables	65
5.2 Payables.....	65
5.3 Contract liabilities.....	66
5.4 Inventories.....	67
5.5 Other non-financial assets.....	67

5.1 Receivables

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Contractual		
Sales of goods and services	110,895	209,323
Accrued donations income	24,574	112,199
	135,469	321,522
Statutory		
Net GST input tax credit recoverable	155,632	131,777
	155,632	131,777
Total receivables	291,101	453,299
<i>Represented by</i>		
Current receivables	291,101	453,299

Contractual receivables are classified as financial instruments and categorised as 'financial assets at amortised costs'. They are initially recognised at fair value plus any directly attributable transaction costs. The Board holds the contractual receivables with the objective to collect the contractual cash flows and therefore subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less any impairment.

Statutory receivables do not arise from contracts and are recognised and measured similarly to contractual receivables (except for impairment), but are not classified as financial instruments for disclosure purposes. The Board applies AASB 9 for initial measurement of the statutory receivables and as a result, statutory receivables are initially recognised at fair value plus any directly attributable transaction cost.

Details about the Board's impairment policies, the Board's exposure to credit risk, and the calculation of the loss allowance are set out in Note 7.1.3.

5.2 Payables

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Contractual		
Supplies and services	1,580,871	415,363
Other payables	26,775	29,797
	1,607,646	445,160
Statutory		
Taxes payable	130,079	135,018
	130,079	135,018
Total payables	1,737,725	580,178
<i>Represented by</i>		
Current payables	1,737,725	580,178

Payables consist of:

- **contractual payables**, classified as financial instruments and measured at amortised cost. Accounts payable represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the Board prior to the end of the financial year that are unpaid,
- **statutory payables**, that are recognised and measured similarly to contractual payables, but are not classified as financial instruments and not included in the category of financial liabilities at amortised cost, because they do not arise from contracts.

Payables for supplies and services have an average credit period of 30 days.

Maturity analysis of contractual payables ^(a)

2023	Carrying amount	Nominal amount	Maturity dates				
			Less than 1 month	1- 3 months	3 months - 1 year	1 - 5 years	More than 5 years
			\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Supplies and services	1,580,871	1,580,871	1,580,676	(11)	-	206	-
Other payables	26,775	26,775	26,000	775	-	-	-
Total	1,607,646	1,607,646	1,606,676	764	-	206	-

2022	Carrying amount	Nominal amount	Maturity dates				
			Less than 1 month	1- 3 months	3 months - 1 year	1 - 5 years	More than 5 years
			\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Supplies and services	415,363	415,363	415,321	(164)	206	-	-
Other payables	29,797	29,797	28,950	847	-	-	-
Total	445,160	445,160	444,271	683	206	-	-

Note:

(a) Maturity analysis is presented using the contractual undiscounted cash flows.

5.3 Contract liabilities

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
Contract liabilities		
Opening balance brought forward	8,306,098	8,598,366
Add: Grant consideration received in the reporting period for performance obligations yet to be completed	990,000	2,200,000
Less: Grant revenue recognised for performance obligations completed in the reporting period	(6,179,666)	(2,510,031)
Other contract liabilities	26,188	17,763
Total contract liabilities	3,142,620	8,306,098
<i>Represented by</i>		
Current contract liabilities ^(a)	3,142,620	8,306,098

Contract liabilities include consideration received in advance by the Board completing performance obligations within the specific grant agreements. Revenue is recognised as the obligations are completed.

Note:

(a) Current contract liabilities includes capital grants though they have been recognised in line with AASB 1058.

5.4 Inventories

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Current inventories		
Inventories held for sale:		
At cost	116,351	132,834
Total inventories	116,351	132,834

Inventories include goods held for sale in the ordinary course of business operations and are measured at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

5.5 Other non-financial assets

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Current other assets		
Prepayments	186,720	230,048
Total other assets	186,720	230,048

Other non-financial assets include prepayments which represent payments made in advance of receipt of goods or services or the payments made for services covering a term extending beyond that financial accounting period.

6. HOW WE FINANCED OUR OPERATIONS

Introduction

This section provides information on the sources of finance utilised by the Board during its operations, along with interest expenses (the cost of borrowings) and other information related to the financing activities of the Board.

This section includes disclosures of balances that are financial instruments (such as borrowings and cash balances). Notes 7.1 and 7.2 provide additional, specific financial instrument disclosures.

Structure

6.1 Borrowings.....	68
6.2 Leases.....	69
6.3 Cash flow information and balances.....	70
6.4 Commitments for expenditure.....	71

6.1 Borrowings

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Current borrowings		
Lease liabilities ^(a)	106,210	229,414
Total current borrowings	106,210	229,414
Non-current borrowings		
Lease liabilities ^(a)	249,306	229,051
Total non-current borrowings	249,306	229,051
Total borrowings	355,516	458,465

Note

(a) Secured by the assets leased. Leases liabilities are effectively secured as the rights to the leased assets revert to the lessor in the event of default.

Borrowings refer to interest bearing liabilities which are lease liabilities that relate to motor vehicles leased through the VicFleet.

Borrowings are classified as financial instruments. The Board classifies its interest bearing liabilities as financial liabilities at amortised cost subsequent to initial recognition.

During the current and prior year, there were no defaults and breaches.

The maturity analysis of borrowings

2023	Carrying amount \$	Nominal amount \$	Maturity dates				
			Less than 1 month \$	1 - 3 months \$	3 months - 1 year \$	1 - 5 years \$	More than 5 years \$
Lease liabilities	355,516	364,495	52,696	10,733	48,300	252,766	-
Total	355,516	364,495	52,696	10,733	48,300	252,766	-

2022	Carrying amount \$	Nominal amount \$	Maturity dates				
			Less than 1 month \$	1 - 3 months \$	3 months - 1 year \$	1 - 5 years \$	More than 5 years \$
Lease liabilities	458,465	471,992	10,152	39,508	187,550	234,781	-
Total	458,465	471,992	10,152	39,508	187,550	234,781	-

Interest expense

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Interest on lease liabilities	(1,942)	(7,555)
Total interest expense	(1,942)	(7,555)

'Interest expense' includes costs incurred in connection with the borrowing of funds and includes the interest component of finance lease repayments.

Interest expense is recognised in the period in which it is incurred.

The Board recognises borrowing costs immediately as an expense, even where it is directly attributable to the acquisition, construction or production of a qualifying asset.

6.2 Leases

Information about leases for which the Board is a lessee is presented below.

The Board leasing activities

The Board leases motor vehicles with terms generally of 3 - 5 years. Additionally, the Board leases office equipment which are low value assets that have not been included in lease liabilities.

6.2.1 Right-of-use Assets

Right of use assets are presented in note 4.1(a).

6.2.2 Amounts recognised in the Comprehensive operating statement

The following amounts are recognised in the Comprehensive operating statement relating to leases:

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Interest expense on lease liabilities	1,942	7,555
Expenses relating to leases of low-value assets	17,526	20,938
Total amount recognised in the comprehensive operating statement	19,468	28,493

6.2.3 Amounts recognised in the Cash flow statement

The following amounts are recognised in the Cash flow statement for the year ending 30 June 2023 relating to leases:

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Total cash (inflow)/outflow for leases	102,949	(115,178)

For any new contracts entered into, the Board considers whether a contract is, or contains a lease. A lease is defined as 'a contract, or part of a contract, that conveys the right to use an asset (the underlying asset) for a period of time in exchange for consideration'. To apply this definition the Board assesses whether the contract meets three key evaluations.

- Whether the contract contains an identified asset, which is either explicitly identified in the contract or implicitly specified by being identified at the time the asset is made available to the Board and for which the supplier does not have substantive substitution rights;
- Whether the Board has the right to obtain substantially all of the economic benefits from use of the identified asset throughout the period of use, considering its rights within the defined scope of the contract and the Board has the right to direct the use of the identified asset throughout the period of use; and
- Whether the Board has the right to take decisions in respect of 'how and for what purpose' the asset is used throughout the period of use.

This policy is applied to contracts entered into or changed, on or after 1 July 2019.

Separation of lease and non-lease components

At inception or on reassessment of a contract that contains a lease component, the lessee is required to separate out and account separately for non-lease components within a lease contract and exclude these amounts when determining the lease liability and right-of-use asset amount.

Recognition and measurement of leases as a lessee

Lease Liability - initial measurement

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments unpaid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease if that rate is readily determinable or the Board incremental borrowing rate.

Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability comprise the following:

- fixed payments (including in-substance fixed payments) less any lease incentive receivable;
- variable payments based on an index or rate, initially measured using the index or rate as at the commencement date;
- amounts expected to be payable under a residual value guarantee; and
- payments arising from purchase and termination options reasonably certain to be exercised.

Lease Liability - subsequent measurement

Subsequent to initial measurement, the liability will be reduced for payments made and increased for interest. It is remeasured to reflect any reassessment or modification, or if there are changes in-substance fixed payments.

When the lease liability is remeasured, the corresponding adjustment is reflected in the right-of-use asset, or profit and loss if the right-of-use asset is already reduced to zero.

Short-term leases and leases of low-value assets

The Board has elected to account for short-term leases and leases of low-value assets using the practical expedients. Instead of recognising a right-of-use asset and lease liability, the payments in relation to these are recognised as an expense in profit or loss on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Below market / Peppercorn lease

Right-of-use assets under leases at significantly below-market terms and conditions that are entered into principally to enable the Board to further its objectives, are initially and subsequently measured at cost.

These right-of-use assets are depreciated on a straight-line basis over the shorter of the lease term and the estimated useful lives of the assets.

Presentation of right-of-use assets and lease liabilities

The Board presents right-of-use assets as 'property plant and equipment' unless they meet the definition of investment property, in which case they are disclosed as 'investment property' in the balance sheet. Lease liabilities are presented as 'borrowings' in the balance sheet.

6.3 Cash flow information and balances

Cash and deposits, including cash equivalents, comprise cash on hand and cash at bank, deposits at call and those highly liquid investments with an original maturity of three months or less, which are held for the purpose of meeting short-term cash commitments rather than for investment purposes, and which are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value.

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
Total cash and deposits disclosed in the balance sheet	20,928,615	21,489,700
Balance as per cash flow statement	20,928,615	21,489,700

6.3.1 Reconciliation of the net result for the period to net cash flows from operating activities

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Net result for the period	4,196,531	2,002,832
Non-cash movements		
(Gain)/loss on sale or disposal of non-current assets	(25,398)	2,277,914
Depreciation of non-current assets	3,470,404	3,461,426
Building improvements received free of charge	(616,231)	-
Other non-cash movements	63,219	44,638
Movements in assets and liabilities		
Decrease/(increase) in receivables	162,198	(68,038)
Decrease/(increase) in inventories	16,483	38,054
Decrease/(increase) in other non-financial assets	43,328	(162,359)
Increase/(decrease) in payables	1,157,547	(1,009,254)
Increase/(decrease) in contract liabilities	(5,163,478)	(292,268)
Increase/(decrease) in provisions	(109,795)	(432,540)
Net cash flows from/(used in) operating activities	3,194,808	5,860,405

6.4 Commitments for expenditure

Commitments for future expenditure include operating and capital commitments arising from contracts. These commitments are recorded below at their nominal value and inclusive of GST. Where it is considered appropriate and provides additional relevant information to users, the net present values of significant individual projects are stated. These future expenditures cease to be disclosed as commitments once the related liabilities are recognised in the Balance sheet.

6.4.1 Total commitments payable

Nominal amounts 2023	Less than 1 year \$	1-5 Years \$	5+ Years \$	Total \$
Capital expenditure commitments payable	248,322	-	-	248,322
Other commitments payable	2,697,675	168,093	-	2,865,768
Less GST recoverable	-	-	-	(283,099)
Total commitments (exclusive of GST)	2,945,997	168,093	-	2,830,991
Nominal amounts 2022	Less than 1 year \$	1-5 Years \$	5+ Years \$	Total \$
Capital expenditure commitments payable	466,350	52,341	-	518,691
Other commitments payable	1,422,520	2,117,874	-	3,540,394
Less GST recoverable	-	-	-	(369,008)
Total commitments (exclusive of GST)	1,888,870	2,170,215	-	3,690,077

7. RISKS, CONTINGENCIES AND VALUATION JUDGEMENTS

Introduction

The Board is exposed to risk from its activities and outside factors. In addition, it is often necessary to make judgements and estimates associated with recognition and measurement of items in the financial statements. This section sets out financial instrument specific information (including exposures to financial risks), as well as those items that are contingent in nature or require a higher level of judgement to be applied, which for the Board relates mainly to fair value determination.

Structure

7.1 Financial instruments specific disclosures.....	72
7.2 Fair value determination.....	76
7.3 Contingent assets and contingent liabilities.....	80

7.1 Financial instruments specific disclosures

Introduction

Financial instruments arise out of contractual agreements that give rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity. Due to the nature of the Board's activities, certain financial assets and financial liabilities arise under statute rather than a contract (for example taxes). Such assets and liabilities do not meet the definition of financial instruments in AASB 132 *Financial Instruments: Presentation*.

Categories of financial assets

Financial assets at amortised cost

Financial assets are measured at amortised costs if both of the following criteria are met and the assets are not designated as fair value through net results:

- the assets are held by the Board to collect the contractual cash flows; and
- the assets' contractual terms give rise to cash flows that are solely payments of principal and interest.

These assets are initially recognised at fair value plus any directly attributable transaction costs and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method less any impairment.

The Board recognises the following assets in this category:

- cash and deposits; and
- receivables (excluding statutory receivables).

Financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income

These assets are initially recognised at fair value with subsequent change in fair value in other comprehensive income.

Categories of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities at amortised cost are initially recognised on the date they are originated. They are initially measured at fair value plus any directly attributable transaction costs. Subsequent to initial recognition, these financial instruments are measured at amortised cost with any difference between the initial recognised amount and the redemption value being recognised in profit and loss over the period of the interest bearing liability, using the effective interest rate method. The Board recognises the following liabilities in this category:

- payables (excluding statutory payables); and
- borrowings (including lease liabilities).

Derecognition of financial assets: A financial asset (or, where applicable, a part of a financial asset or part of a group of similar financial assets) is derecognised when:

- the rights to receive cash flows from the asset have expired; or
- the Board has transferred the rights to receive cash flows from the asset and either:
 - has transferred substantially all the risks and rewards of the asset; or
 - has neither transferred nor retained substantially all the risks and rewards of the asset, but has transferred control of the asset.

Where the Board has neither transferred nor retained substantially all the risks and rewards or transferred control, the asset is recognised to the extent of the Board's continuing involvement in the asset.

Derecognition of financial liabilities: A financial liability is derecognised when the obligation under the liability is discharged, cancelled or expires.

When an existing financial liability is replaced by another from the same lender on substantially different terms, or the terms of an existing liability are substantially modified, such an exchange or modification is treated as a derecognition of the original liability and the recognition of a new liability. The difference in the respective carrying amounts is recognised as an 'other economic flow' in the comprehensive operating statement.

7.1.1 Financial instruments: Categorisation

	Cash and deposits	Financial assets at amortised cost	Financial liabilities at amortised cost	Cash and deposits	Financial assets at amortised cost	Financial liabilities at amortised cost
	2023	2023	2023	2022	2022	2022
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Contractual financial assets						
Cash and deposits	20,928,615	-	-	21,489,700	-	-
Receivables at amortised cost						
Sale of goods and services	-	110,895	-	-	209,323	-
Accrued donations income	-	24,574	-	-	112,199	-
Total ^(a)	20,928,615	135,469	-	21,489,700	321,522	-
Contractual financial liabilities						
Supplies and services payables	-	-	1,580,871	-	-	415,363
Other payables	-	-	26,775	-	-	29,797
Lease liabilities	-	-	355,516	-	-	458,465
Total ^(a)	-	-	1,963,162	-	-	903,625

Note:

(a) The total amounts disclosed here exclude statutory receivables (i.e. GST input tax credit recoverable and taxes payable).

7.1.2 Net holding gain/(loss) on financial instruments

	Interest income/(expense)	
	2023	2022
	\$	\$
Contractual financial assets		
Financial assets at amortised cost	883,182	86,051
Total contractual financial assets	883,182	86,051
Contractual financial liabilities		
Financial liabilities at amortised cost	(1,942)	(7,555)
Total contractual financial liabilities	(1,942)	(7,555)

The net holding gains or losses disclosed above are determined as follows:

- for cash and cash equivalents and financial assets at amortised cost, the net gain or loss is calculated by taking the movement in interest income minus any impairment recognised in the net result.
- for financial liabilities measured at amortised cost, the net gain or loss is equal to the interest expense incurred during the reporting period.

7.1.3 Financial risk management objectives and policies

As a whole, the Board's financial risk management program seeks to manage these risks and the associated volatility of its financial performance. Details of the significant accounting policies and methods adopted, including the criteria for recognition, the basis of measurement and the basis on which income and expenses are recognised, with respect to each class of financial asset and financial liability, are disclosed in Note 7.2 to the financial statements.

The main purpose in holding financial instruments is to prudentially manage the Board's financial risks within the requirements of the *Royal Botanic Gardens Act 1991* and the government's policy parameters.

The Board's main financial risks include credit risk, liquidity risk and interest rate risk. The Board manages these financial risks in accordance with its financial risk management policy.

The Board uses different methods to measure and manage the different risks to which it is exposed. Primary responsibility for the identification and management of financial risks rests with the Audit and Risk Committee of the Board.

Financial instruments - credit risk

Credit risk refers to the possibility that a borrower will default on its financial obligations as and when they fall due. The Board's exposure to credit risk arises from the potential default of a counter party on their contractual obligations resulting in financial loss to the Board. Credit risk is measured at fair value and is monitored on a regular basis.

Credit risk associated with the Board's contractual financial assets is minimal, especially in relation to its sale of goods and services receivables due to the adoption of stringent credit establishment and collection policies and procedures. In addition, the Board does not engage in hedging for its contractual financial assets and mainly obtains contractual financial assets that are on fixed interest, except for cash and deposits, which are mainly cash at bank. As with the policy for debtors, the Board's policy is to only deal with banks with high credit ratings.

Provision of impairment for contractual financial assets is recognised when there is objective evidence that the Board will not be able to collect a receivable. Objective evidence includes financial difficulties of the debtor, default payments, debts which are more than 60 days overdue, and changes in debtor credit ratings.

Contract financial assets are written off against the carrying amount when there is no reasonable expectation of recovery. Bad debt written off by mutual consent is classified as a transaction expense. Bad debt written off following a unilateral decision is recognised as other economic flows in the net result.

The carrying amount of contractual financial assets recorded in the financial statements represents the Board's maximum exposure to credit risk without taking account of the value of any collateral obtained.

There has been no material change to the Board's credit risk profile in 2022-23.

Contractual receivables at amortised cost

The Board applies AASB 9 simplified approach for all contractual receivables to measure expected credit losses using a lifetime expected loss allowance based on the assumptions about risk of default and expected loss rates. The Board has grouped contractual receivables on shared credit risk characteristics and days past due and selected the expected credit loss rate based on the Board's past history and existing market conditions, as well as forward looking estimates at the end of the financial year.

On this basis, the Board determines the closing loss allowance at end of the financial year as follows:

2023	Current	Less than 1 month	1 - 3 months	3 months - 1 year	1 - 5 years	Total
Expected loss rate (%)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Gross carrying amount of contracted receivables	118,570	2,358	13,853	688	-	135,469
Loss allowance	-	-	-	-	-	-

2022	Current	Less than 1 month	1 - 3 months	3 months - 1 year	1 - 5 years	Total
Expected loss rate (%)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Gross carrying amount of contracted receivables	308,822	12,700	-	-	-	321,522
Loss allowance	-	-	-	-	-	-

Contractual receivables are written off when there is no reasonable expectation of recovery and impairment losses are classified as a transaction expense. Subsequent recoveries of amounts previously written off are credited against the same line item.

In prior years, a provision for doubtful debts is recognised when there is objective evidence that the debts may not be collected and bad debts are written off when identified. A provision is made for estimated irrecoverable amounts from the sale of goods when there is objective evidence that an individual receivable is impaired. Bad debts are considered as written off by mutual consent.

Statutory receivables at amortised cost

The Board's non-contractual receivables arising from statutory requirements are not financial instruments. However, they are nevertheless recognised and measured in accordance with AASB 9 requirements as if those receivables are financial instruments.

The Board's statutory receivables are considered to have low credit risk, taking into account the counterparty's credit rating, risk of default and capacity to meet contractual cash flow obligations in the near term. As a result, the loss allowance recognised for these financial assets during the period was limited to 12 months' expected losses. No loss allowance has been recognised.

Financial instruments - liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Board would be unable to meet its financial obligations as and when they fall due. The Board's maximum exposure to liquidity risk is the carrying amounts of financial liabilities as disclosed in the face of the balance sheet. The Board continuously manages risk through monitoring future cash flows and maturities planning to ensure adequate holding of high quality liquid assets and dealing in highly liquid markets.

The Board's exposure to liquidity risk is deemed insignificant based on prior periods' data and current assessment of risk. Cash for unexpected events is generally sourced from its cash and deposits balance.

Financial instruments - market risk

The Board's exposures to market risk are primarily through interest rate risk.

The Board's sensitivity to market risk is determined based on past performance, future expectations and economic forecasts and, accordingly, the Board believes that a movement of 100 basis points is reasonably possible over the next 12 months.

Financial instruments - interest rate risk

Fair value interest rate risk is the risk that the fair value of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates. The Board does not hold any interest bearing financial instruments that are measured at fair value and therefore has no exposure to fair value interest rate risk.

Cash flow interest rate risk is the risk that the future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates.

The Board has minimal exposure to cash flow interest rate risk through its cash and deposits and finance lease liabilities that are at a floating rate.

The Board manages this risk by mainly undertaking fixed rate or non-interest bearing financial instruments with relatively even maturity profiles, with only insignificant amounts of financial instruments at a floating rate. Management has concluded for cash at bank, as financial assets can be left at floating rate without necessarily exposing the Board to significant bad risk. Movements in interest rates are monitored on a daily basis by Management.

The carrying amounts of financial assets and financial liabilities that are exposed to interest rates are as follows:

2023	Weighted average effective interest rate %	Carrying amount ^(a) \$	Interest rate exposure		
			Fixed interest rate \$	Variable interest rate \$	Non-interest bearing \$
Financial assets					
Cash and deposits	3.08	20,928,615	-	20,899,143	29,472
Sale of goods and services receivable	-	110,895	-	-	110,895
Accrued donations income receivable	-	24,574	-	-	24,574
		21,064,084	-	20,899,143	164,941
Financial liabilities					
Supplies and services payables	-	1,580,871	-	-	1,580,871
Other payables	-	26,775	-	-	26,775
Lease liabilities	2.85	355,516	355,516	-	-
		1,963,162	355,516	-	1,607,646

2022	Weighted average effective interest rate %	Carrying amount ^(a) \$	Interest rate exposure		
			Fixed interest rate \$	Variable interest rate \$	Non-interest bearing \$
Financial assets					
Cash and deposits	0.32	21,489,700	-	21,460,654	29,046
Sale of goods and services receivable	-	209,323	-	-	209,323
Accrued donations income receivable	-	112,199	-	-	112,199
		21,811,222	-	21,460,654	350,568
Financial liabilities					
Supplies and services payables	-	415,363	-	-	415,363
Other payables	-	29,797	-	-	29,797
Lease liabilities	3.12	458,465	458,465	-	-
		903,625	458,465	-	445,160

Note:

(a) The carrying amounts disclosed here exclude statutory amounts (e.g. GST input tax credit recoverable and GST payable).

The Board's sensitivity to possible movements in interest rates is as follows:

	Carrying amount		+100 basis points		-100 basis points	
	2023 \$	2022 \$	Net result		Net result	
			2023 \$	2022 \$	2023 \$	2022 \$
Contractual financial assets						
Cash and deposits ^(a)	20,928,615	21,489,700	208,991	214,607	(208,991)	(214,607)
	20,928,615	21,489,700	208,991	214,607	(208,991)	(214,607)
Contractual financial liabilities						
Borrowings ^(b)	355,516	458,465	3,555	4,585	(3,555)	(4,585)
	355,516	458,465	3,555	4,585	(3,555)	(4,585)

Notes:

(a) Cash and deposits include a deposit of \$20,899,143 (2022: \$21,460,654) that is exposed to floating rates movements. Sensitivities to these movements are calculated as follows:

- 2023: $\$20,899,143 \times 0.01 = \$208,991$ and $\$20,899,143 \times 0.01 = \$208,991$; and
- 2022: $\$21,460,654 \times 0.01 = \$214,607$ and $\$21,460,654 \times 0.01 = \$214,607$.

(b) Borrowings include finance lease liabilities that are exposed to movements in interest rates. Sensitivities to these movements are calculated as follows:

- 2023: $\$355,516 \times 0.01 = \$3,555$ and $\$355,516 \times 0.01 = \$3,555$; and
- 2022: $\$458,465 \times 0.01 = \$4,585$ and $\$458,465 \times 0.01 = \$4,585$

7.2 Fair value determination

This section sets out information on how the Board determined fair value for financial reporting purposes. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date.

The following assets and liabilities are carried at fair value:

- financial assets and liabilities at fair value through operating results;
- available for sale financial assets; and
- land, buildings, plant and equipment.

The Board determines the policies and procedures for determining fair values for both financial and non-financial assets and liabilities as required.

Fair value hierarchy

In determining fair values a number of inputs are used. To increase consistency and comparability in the financial statements, these inputs are categorised into three levels, also known as the fair value hierarchy. The levels are as follows:

- Level 1 - quoted (unadjusted) market prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities;
- Level 2 - valuation technique for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is directly or indirectly observable; and
- Level 3 - valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is unobservable.

The Board determines whether transfers have occurred between levels in the hierarchy by reassessing categorisation (based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement as a whole) at the end of each reporting period.

The Valuer-General Victoria (VGV) is the Board's independent valuation agency and monitors changes in the fair value of each asset and liability through relevant data sources to determine whether revaluation is required.

How this section is structured

For those assets and liabilities for which fair values are determined, the following disclosures are provided:

- carrying amount and the fair value (which would be the same for those assets measured at fair value);
- which level of the fair value hierarchy was used to determine the fair value; and
- in respect of those assets and liabilities subject to fair value determination using Level 3 inputs:
 - a reconciliation of the movements in fair values from the beginning of the year to the end; and
 - details of significant unobservable inputs used in the fair value determination.

This section is divided between disclosures in connection with fair value determination for financial instruments (refer to Note 7.2.1) and non-financial physical assets (refer to Note 7.2.2).

7.2.1 Fair value determination of financial assets and liabilities

The fair values and net fair values of financial assets and liabilities are determined as follows:

- Level 1 – the fair value of financial instruments with standard terms and conditions and traded in active liquid markets are determined with reference to quoted market prices.
- Level 2 – the fair value is determined using inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the financial asset or liability, either directly or indirectly.
- Level 3 – the fair value is determined in accordance with generally accepted pricing models based on discounted cash flow analysis using unobservable market inputs.

The Board currently holds a range of financial instruments that are recorded in the financial statements where the carrying amounts approximate of fair value, due to their short term nature or with the expectation that they will be paid in full by the end of the 2022-23 reporting period.

These financial instruments include:

Financial assets	Financial liabilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cash and deposits • Receivables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sale of goods and services - Accrued donations income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supplies and services - Other payables • Lease liabilities

Where the fair value of the financial instruments is different from the carrying amounts, the following information has been included to disclose the difference.

	Carrying amount	Fair value	Carrying amount	Fair value
	2023	2023	2022	2022
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Financial liabilities				
Lease liabilities	355,516	355,516	458,465	458,465
	355,516	355,516	458,465	458,465

7.2.2 Fair value determination of non-financial physical assets

The fair value measurement hierarchy for assets at the end of the reporting period is as follows:

	Carrying amount		Fair value measurement using: ^(a)			
			Level 2		Level 3	
	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022
	\$	\$	\$		\$	\$
Land						
Specialised land	491,100,000	491,100,000	-	-	491,100,000	491,100,000
	491,100,000	491,100,000	-	-	491,100,000	491,100,000
Buildings						
Specialised buildings	20,448,175	19,815,873	-	-	20,448,175	19,815,873
Heritage assets	17,630,469	17,555,913	-	-	17,630,469	17,555,913
	38,078,644	37,371,786	-	-	38,078,644	37,371,786
Infrastructure						
Specialised infrastructure	66,277,969	65,914,722	-	-	66,277,969	65,914,722
Heritage assets	1,606,129	932,803	-	-	1,606,129	932,803
	67,884,098	66,847,525	-	-	67,884,098	66,847,525
Plant, equipment and vehicles						
Plant and equipment	3,250,398	2,941,641	-	-	3,250,398	2,941,641
Vehicles ^(b)	977,501	1,001,246	-	-	977,501	1,001,246
	4,227,899	3,942,887	-	-	4,227,899	3,942,887
Cultural assets						
Antiques and artwork	12,970,251	12,958,201	12,970,251	12,958,201	-	-
Specialised cultural assets	401,306,581	328,072,639	-	-	401,306,581	328,072,639
	414,276,832	341,030,840	12,970,251	12,958,201	401,306,581	328,072,639

Notes:

(a) Classified in accordance with the fair value hierarchy. The Board does not hold any assets classified as Level 1 assets for the reporting periods ended 30 June 2023 and 30 June 2022.

(b) Vehicles are categorised as Level 3 assets as fair value of the vehicles is estimated based on the current replacement cost.

There have been no transfers between levels during the period.

Non-specialised antiques and artworks

Non-specialised antiques and artworks are valued using the market approach. Under this valuation method, valuation of the assets is determined by a comparison to similar examples of the artist's work in existence throughout Australia and research on prices paid for similar examples offered at auction or through art galleries in recent years. An independent valuation of antiques and artwork was undertaken by the Valuer-General Victoria to determine their fair value at 30 June 2021.

Specialised land and buildings

The market approach is also used for specialised land, although it is adjusted for the community service obligation (CSO) to reflect the specialised nature of the land being valued.

The CSO adjustment reflects the valuer's assessment of the impact of restrictions associated with an asset to the extent that is also equally applicable to market participants. This approach is in light of the highest and best use consideration required for fair value measurement, and takes into account the use of the asset that is physically possible, legally permissible, and financially feasible. As adjustments of CSO are considered as significant unobservable inputs, specialised land is classified as a Level 3 asset.

For the majority of the Board's specialised land and buildings, the current replacement cost method is used, adjusting for the associated depreciations. As depreciation adjustments are considered significant unobservable inputs in nature, specialised buildings are classified as Level 3 fair value measurements.

An independent valuation of the Board's specialised buildings was performed by the Valuer-General Victoria. The effective date of the valuation was 30 June 2021.

Specialised cultural assets

Specialised cultural assets, including the State Botanical Collection, are valued using replacement cost method. Replacement costs are costs to replace the current service capacity of the asset. The method used calculates a unit cost per sample unit that is then scaled up to each collection.

An independent valuation of the Board's specialised cultural assets was performed by the Valuer-General Victoria. The valuation was performed using the replacement cost approach. The effective date of the valuation was 30 June 2021.

An management revaluation of the Board's specialised cultural assets was performed as the movement exceeded 10%. The effective date of the revaluation was 30 June 2023.

Infrastructure assets

Infrastructure assets are valued using the current replacement cost method. This cost represents the replacement cost of the building/component after applying depreciation rates on a useful life basis. Replacement costs are costs to replace the current service capacity of the asset.

Where it has not been possible to examine hidden works such as structural frames and floors, the use of reasonable materials and methods of construction have been assumed, bearing in mind the age and nature of the building. The estimated cost of reconstruction, including structural services and finishes, also factors in any heritage classifications as applicable.

An independent valuation of the Board's infrastructure assets was performed by the Valuer-General Victoria. The valuation was performed based on the current replacement cost of the assets. The effective date of the valuation was 30 June 2021.

Vehicles

Vehicles are valued using the current replacement cost method. The Board acquires new vehicles and at times disposes of them before the end of their economic life. The process of acquisition, use and disposal in the market is managed under finance leasing arrangements with DTF and Westpac Bank. Depreciation rates used reflect the utilisation of the vehicles.

Right-of-use assets

Right-of-use assets are revalued according to FRD 103 *Non-financial physical assets*. The Board applies the revaluation model to right-of-use assets. After initial recognition the right-of-use asset is carried at revalued amount, being its fair value at the date of revaluation less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and impairment losses. The fair value of right-of-use assets are linked to the lease payments. The Board assesses the current lease payments under the lease contract to approximate current market rentals in comparison to equivalent properties that would be paid in the current market. The fair value of the leased assets are determined with reference to the amounts that will have to be paid to replace the current service capacity of the asset.

Plant and equipment

Plant and equipment is held at fair value. When plant and equipment is specialised in use, such that it is rarely sold other than as part of a going concern, fair value is determined using the current replacement cost method.

There were no changes in valuation techniques throughout the period to 30 June 2023.

For all assets measured at fair value, the current use is considered the highest and best use.

Significant valuation uncertainty

The Board's assets relating to property, plant and equipment were independently valued by the Valuer General Victoria (VGV) as at 30 June 2021. At this date, significant valuation uncertainty exists due to the on going impact the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and government response is having on markets used to value the Board's assets. This means the value of assets assessed at the balance date, may change significantly and unexpectedly over a relatively short period of time.

The reconciliation of Level 3 fair value is as follows:

2023	Specialised land \$	Buildings \$	Vehicles \$	Plant and equipment \$	Infrastructure \$	Specialised Cultural \$
Opening balance	491,100,000	37,371,786	1,001,246	2,941,641	66,847,525	328,072,639
Purchases/(sales)	-	1,706,966	86,116	913,496	2,792,269	-
<i>Gains or losses recognised in net result:</i>						
Depreciation	-	(1,000,108)	(109,861)	(604,739)	(1,755,696)	-
<i>Gains or losses recognised in other economic flows - other comprehensive income:</i>						
Revaluations	-	-	-	-	-	73,233,942
Closing balance	491,100,000	38,078,644	977,501	3,250,398	67,884,098	401,306,581

2022	Specialised land \$	Buildings \$	Vehicles \$	Plant and equipment \$	Infrastructure \$	Specialised Cultural \$
Opening balance	491,100,000	35,782,773	967,987	3,057,192	68,135,428	328,072,639
Purchases/(sales)	-	2,535,887	253,118	459,900	431,339	-
<i>Gains or losses recognised in net result:</i>						
Depreciation	-	(946,874)	(219,859)	(575,451)	(1,719,242)	-
<i>Gains or losses recognised in other economic flows - other comprehensive income:</i>						
Revaluations	-	-	-	-	-	-
Closing balance	491,100,000	37,371,786	1,001,246	2,941,641	66,847,525	328,072,639

A description of significant unobservable inputs to Level 3 valuations is as follows:

Asset Category	Valuation technique	Significant unobservable inputs	Range (weighted average)	Sensitivity of fair value measurement to changes in significant unobservable inputs
Specialised Land	• Market approach	Community Service Obligation (CSO) adjustment	70% ^(a)	A significant increase or decrease in the CSO adjustment would result in a significantly lower (higher) fair value.
Buildings (specialised and heritage)	• Current Replacement Cost	Useful life, remaining useful life and depreciation rate	\$5,300 - \$10,000,000 per unit (\$448,000 per unit)	A significant increase or decrease in direct cost per square metre adjustment would result in a significantly higher or lower fair value
		Useful life of buildings	5-100 years (33 years)	A significant increase or decrease in the estimated useful life of the asset would result in a significantly higher or lower valuation.
Vehicles	• Current Replacement Cost	Cost per unit	\$500 - \$194,000 per unit (\$32,000 per unit)	A significant increase or decrease in direct cost per square metre adjustment would result in a significantly higher or lower fair value
		Useful life of vehicles	5 - 8 years (7 years)	A significant increase or decrease in the estimated useful life of the asset would result in a significantly higher or lower valuation.
Plant and Equipment	• Current Replacement Cost	Cost per unit	\$250 - \$339,000 per unit (\$7,400 per unit)	A significant increase or decrease in the estimated useful life of the asset would result in a significantly higher or lower valuation.
		Useful life of plant and equipment	4 - 50 years (6 years)	A significant increase or decrease in the estimated useful life of the asset would result in a significantly higher or lower valuation.
Infrastructure (specialised and heritage)	• Current Replacement Cost ^(b)	Cost per unit	\$1,400 - \$4,600,000 per unit (\$331,000 per unit)	A significant increase or decrease in the estimated useful life of the asset would result in a significantly higher or lower valuation.
		Useful life of infrastructure assets	10 to 50 years (39 years)	A significant increase or decrease in the estimated useful life of the asset would result in a significantly higher or lower valuation.
Specialised Cultural Assets	• Current Replacement Cost ^(b)	Costs of reinstating the collection per unit	\$0 - \$1,755 per unit	A significant increase or decrease in the costs of replacement would result in a significantly higher or lower valuation.
		Size of collections	1,500,000 - 1,600,000	A significant increase or decrease in the size of the collection would result in a significantly higher or lower valuation.
Right-of-use assets	• Current Replacement Cost	Cost per unit	\$16,000 - \$84,000 per unit (\$45,000 per unit)	A significant increase or decrease in the estimated useful life of the asset would result in a significantly higher or lower valuation.
		Useful life of right-of-use assets	3 - 5 years (4 years)	A significant increase or decrease in the estimated useful life of the asset would result in a significantly higher or lower valuation.

Notes:

(a) CSO adjustment of 70 per cent were applied to reduce the market approach value for the Royal Botanic Gardens specialised land.

(b) For some infrastructure heritage assets and specialised cultural assets, cost may be the reproduction cost of the asset rather than the replacement cost if their service potential could only be replaced by reproducing them with the same materials.

Significant unobservable inputs have remained unchanged since June 2021.

7.3 Contingent assets and contingent liabilities

Contingent assets and contingent liabilities are not recognised in the balance sheet but are disclosed and, if quantifiable, are measured at nominal value.

Contingent assets

Contingent assets are possible assets that arise from past events, whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the entity.

The Board has nil contingent assets at June 2023 (nil: June 2022)

Contingent liabilities

Contingent Liabilities are:

- possible obligations that arise from past events, whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the entity: or
- present obligations that arise from past events but are not recognised because:
 - it is probably that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits will be required to settle the obligations; or
 - the amount of the obligations cannot be measured with sufficient reliability.

Contingent liabilities are not recognised in the balance sheet and are classified as either quantifiable or non-quantifiable. If quantifiable, contingent liabilities are measured at nominal value inclusive of GST payable.

The Board has nil contingent liabilities at June 2023 (nil: June 2022)

8. OTHER DISCLOSURES

Introduction

This section includes additional material disclosures required by accounting standards or otherwise, for the understanding of this financial report.

Structure

8.1 Ex gratia expenses	81
8.2 Other economic flows included in net result	81
8.3 Reserves.....	82
8.4 Responsible persons.....	82
8.5 Remuneration of executives.....	82
8.6 Related parties.....	83
8.7 Remuneration of auditors.....	84
8.8 Subsequent events.....	84
8.9 Other accounting policies.....	84
8.10 Australian Accounting Standards issued that are not yet effective.....	84
8.11 Glossary of technical terms.....	86
8.12 Style conventions.....	88

8.1 Ex gratia expenses

Ex gratia expenses are the voluntary payments of money or other non-monetary benefit (e.g. a write off) that are not made either to acquire goods, services or other benefits for the entity or to meet a legal liability, or to settle or resolve a possible legal liability of or claim against the entity.

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Deed of release ex gratia payment ^(a)	70,925	8,878
Total ex gratia expenses ^(b)	70,925	8,878

Notes:

- (a) The total for ex gratia expenses is also presented in salaries and wages expenses of Note 3.1.1 Employee benefits in the comprehensive operating statement.
- (b) Includes ex gratia expense for an individual item that is greater than \$5,000.

8.2 Other economic flows included in net result

Other economic flows are changes in the volume or value of an asset or liability that do not result from transactions.

Other gains/(losses) from other economic flows include the gains or losses from:

- the revaluation of the present value of the long service leave liability due to changes in the bond interest rates
- write down of inventory.

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Net gain/(loss) on non-financial assets		
Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, plant and equipment ^(a)	27,188	(2,223,466)
Write down of inventory	(1,790)	(1,475)
Total net gain/(loss) on non-financial assets	25,398	(2,224,941)
Other gains/(losses) from other economic flows		
Net gain/(loss) arising from revaluation of long service leave liability ^(b)	(15,041)	(211,906)
Total other gains/(losses) from other economic flows	(15,041)	(211,906)

Notes:

- (a) Prior year included loss on disposal of property, plant and equipment due to the write-off of funds held in Assets under construction relating to preliminary investigative works into the Nature and Science Precinct Project. At the time of recognition there was a high probability of future economic benefits relating to the project to be received by Royal Botanic Gardens Board. Recent budget outcomes from the Victorian Government has given direction on a different approach to this project, resulting in these funds no longer being required to be reported.
- (b) Revaluation gain/(loss) due to changes in bond rates.

8.3 Reserves

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Physical asset revaluation surplus ^(a)		
Balance at beginning of financial year	837,128,092	837,146,432
Revaluation increments/(decrements)	73,233,942	(18,340)
Balance at end of financial year	910,362,034	837,128,092
Net change in reserves	73,233,942	(18,340)

Note:

(a) The physical asset revaluation surplus arises on the revaluation of cultural assets, infrastructure, land and buildings.

8.4 Responsible persons

In accordance with the Ministerial Directions issued by the Assistant Treasurer under the *Financial Management Act 1994 (FMA)*, the following disclosures are made regarding responsible persons for the reporting period:

Names

The persons who held the positions of Minister, Governing Board and Accountable Officer of the Royal Botanic Gardens Board are as follows:

Minister

Minister for Environment	The Hon Ingrid Stitt MP	5 December 2022 to 30 June 2023
Minister for Environment and Climate Action	The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP	1 July 2022 to 4 December 2022

Governing Board

Chair	Ms Chris Trotman	1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023
Deputy Chair	Mrs Penny Fowler	1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023
Member	Professor Antony Bacic	1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023
Member	Ms Gillian Hund OAM	1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023
Member	Mr Tim Jacobs	1 July 2022 to 11 April 2023
Member	Ms Susanne Williamson	1 July 2022 to 28 April 2023
Member	Ms Christine Wyatt	1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023

Accountable Officer ^(a)

Director and Chief Executive	Professor Tim Entwisle	1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023
------------------------------	------------------------	-----------------------------

Responsible person

	2023 No.	2022 No.
\$0-\$9,999	6	6
\$10,000-\$19,999	1	1
	7	7

Remuneration received or receivable by the Director and Chief Executive in connection with the management of the Board during the reporting period was in the range of \$330,000 - \$339,999 (2022: \$330,000 - \$339,999).

Note:

(a) David Harland commences as Director and Chief Executive on 12 September 2023

8.5 Remuneration of executives

The number of executive officers, other than Ministers and accountable officers, and their total remuneration during the reporting period are shown in the table below. Total annualised employee equivalents provides a measure of full-time equivalent executive officers over the reporting period.

Remuneration comprises employee benefits (as defined in AASB 119 *Employee Benefits*) in all forms of consideration paid, payable or provided by the entity, or on behalf of the entity, in exchange for services rendered. Accordingly, remuneration is determined on an accrual basis and is disclosed in the following categories.

Short-term employee benefits include amounts such as wages, salaries, annual leave or sick leave that are usually paid or payable on a regular basis, as well as non-monetary benefits such as allowances and free or subsidised goods or services.

Post-employment benefits include pensions and other retirement benefits paid or payable on a discrete basis when employment is ceased.

Other long-term benefits include long service leave, other long service benefits or deferred compensation.

Termination benefits include termination of employment payments, such as severance packages.

Remuneration was paid to executives during the reporting period as follows:

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
Short-term employee benefits	853,831	1,033,671
Post-employment benefits	86,549	96,040
Other long-term benefits	49,367	18,183
Termination benefits	70,925	-
Total remuneration	1,060,672	1,147,894
Total number of executives	5	5
Total annualised employee equivalents ^(a)	4.5	5.0

Note (a): Annualised employee equivalent is based on the time fraction worked over the reporting period.

8.6 Related parties

The Board is a wholly owned and controlled entity of the State of Victoria.

Related parties of the Board include:

- all key management personnel and their close family members and personal business interests (controlled entities, joint ventures and entities they have significant influence over);
- all Cabinet Ministers and their close family members; and
- all Departments and public sector entities that are controlled and consolidated into the whole of state consolidated financial statements.

All related party transactions have been entered into on an arm's-length basis.

Significant transactions with government-related entities

The Board received grant funding from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action of \$29.0 million (2022 - \$26.0 million) and the Department of Education and Training Victoria \$0.1 million (2022 - \$0.1 million) during the reporting period.

Key management personnel (KMP) of the Board include the Portfolio Ministers, the Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP (until 31 December 2022) and the Hon Ingrid Stitt MP (from 1 January 2023), the members of the governing board and the Director and Chief Executive.

Remuneration of key management personnel

The compensation detailed below excludes the salaries and benefits the Portfolio Minister receives. The Minister's remuneration and allowances are set by the *Parliamentary Salaries and Superannuation Act 1968* and reported within the State's Annual Financial Report.

	2023	2022
		\$
Short-term employee benefits	1,206,585	1,396,238
Post-employment benefits	118,157	125,356
Other long-term benefits	56,292	25,032
Termination benefits	70,925	-
Total	1,451,959	1,546,626

Transactions and balances with key management personnel and other related parties

Given the breadth and depth of State government activities, related parties transact with the Victorian public sector in a manner consistent with other members of the public, e.g. stamp duty and other government fees and charges. Further employment of processes within the Victorian public sector occur on terms and conditions consistent with the *Public Administration Act 2004* and Codes of Conduct and Standards issued by the Victorian Public Sector Commission. Procurement processes occur on terms and conditions consistent with the Victorian Government Procurement Board requirements.

Outside of normal citizen type transactions with the Board, there were no related party transactions that involved key management personnel, their close family members and their personal business interests. No provision has been required, nor any expense recognised, for impairment of receivables from related parties.

8.7 Remuneration of auditors

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
Victorian Auditor-General's Office		
Audit of the financial statements ^(a)	32,000	32,000
Total remuneration of auditors	32,000	32,000

Note:

(a): The Victorian Auditor-General's Office is prohibited from providing non-audit services.

8.8 Subsequent Events

There were no significant events occurring after the balance date which will have a material impact on the information disclosed in the financial statements.

8.9 Other accounting policies

Contribution by owners

Consistent with the requirements of AASB 1004 *Contributions*, contributions by owners (that is, contributed capital and its repayment) are treated as equity transactions and, therefore, do not form part of the income and expenses of the Board.

Additions to net assets that have been designated as contributions by owners are recognised as contributed capital. Other transfers that are in the nature of contributions to or distributions by owners have also been designated as contributions by owners.

8.10 Australian Accounting Standards issued that are not yet effective

Certain new and revised accounting standards have been issued but are not effective for the 2022-23 reporting period. These accounting standards have not been applied to the Financial Statements. The Board is reviewing its existing policies and assessing the potential implications of these accounting standards which includes:

- **AASB 2022-10 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Fair Value Measurement of Non-Financial Assets of Not-for-Profit Public Sector Entities**

This Standard amends AASB 13 *Fair Value Measurement* by adding authoritative implementation guidance and illustrative examples for fair value measurements of non-financial assets of not-for-profit public sector entities not held primarily for their ability to generate net cash inflows.

The Standard specifies that an entity needs to consider whether an asset's highest and best use differs from its current use only when it is held for sale or held for distributions to owners under AASB 5 *Non-current Assets Held for Sale and Discontinued Operations* or if it is highly probable that it will be used for an alternative purpose.

This Standard clarifies that an asset's use is 'financially feasible' if market participants would be willing to invest in the asset's service capacity, considering both the capacity to provide needed goods or services and the resulting costs of those goods and services.

The Standard also specifies that if both market selling price and some market participant data required to fair value the asset are not observable, an entity needs to start with its own assumptions and adjust them to the extent that reasonably available information indicates that other market participants would use different data, and provides guidance on the application of the cost approach to fair value, including the nature of costs to be included in a reference asset and identification of economic obsolescence.

These amendments are applicable for annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2024.

The Board is in the process of analysing the impacts of this Standard. However, it is not anticipated to have a material impact.

- **AASB 17 Insurance Contracts**

This Standard replaces AASB 4 *Insurance Contracts*, AASB 1023 *General Insurance Contracts* and AASB 1038 *Life Insurance Contracts* for not-for-profit public sector entities for annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 July 2026.

The Board is in the process of analysing the impacts of this Standard. However, it is not anticipated to have a material impact.

- **AASB 2022-8 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Insurance Contracts: Consequential Amendments**

AASB 2022-8 makes consequential amendments to other Australian Accounting Standards so that public sector entities are permitted to continue to apply AASB 4 and AASB 1023 to annual periods before 1 July 2026.

- **AASB 2022-9 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Insurance Contracts in the Public Sector**

This Standard amends AASB 17 to make public sector-related modifications (for example, it specifies the pre-requisites, indicators and other considerations in identifying arrangements that fall within the scope of AASB 17 in a public sector context). This Standard applies for annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 July 2026.

- **AASB 2020-1 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Classification of Liabilities as Current or Non-Current; and AASB 2022-6 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Non-current Liabilities with Covenants**

This Standard amends AASB 101 *Presentation of Financial Statements* to clarify requirements for the presentation of liabilities in the statement of financial position as current or non-current and was applicable to annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2022.

AASB 2020-6 subsequently amended AASB 2020-1, deferring the mandatory effective date of AASB 2020-1 from 1 January 2022 to 1 January 2023. AASB 2022-6 was applicable for annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2022.

This Standard amends and clarifies the requirements contained in AASB 2020-1. Among other things, it clarifies that only those covenants that an entity must comply with at or before the reporting date affect a liability's classification as current or non-current; and requires additional disclosures for non-current liabilities that are subject to an entity complying with covenants within twelve months after the reporting date.

This Standard applies to annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2023.

The Board is in the process of analysing the impacts of this Standard. However, it is not anticipated to have a material impact.

- **AASB 2022-5 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Lease Liability in a Sale and Leaseback**

This Standard amends AASB 16 *Leases* to add subsequent measurement requirements for sale and leaseback transactions that satisfy the requirements for sale in AASB 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers*.

The amendments ensure that a seller lessee subsequently remeasures lease liabilities arising from a leaseback in a way that does not recognise any amount of gain or loss that related to the right of use it retains.

This Standard applies to annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2024.

The Board is in the process of analysing the impacts of this Standard. However, it is not anticipated to have a material impact.

- Several other amending standards have been issued that apply to future reporting periods, but are considered to have limited impact on the Board's reporting.

8.11 Glossary of technical terms

The following is a summary of the major technical terms used in this report.

Borrowings refers to interest-bearing liabilities mainly from public borrowings raised through finance leases.

Commitments include those operating, capital and other outsourcing commitments arising from non-cancellable contractual or statutory sources.

Comprehensive result is the amount included in the operating statement representing total change in net worth other than transactions with owners as owners.

Depreciation is an expense that arises from the consumption through wear or time of a produced physical asset. This expense is classified as a 'transaction' and so reduces the 'net result from transaction'.

Effective interest method is the method used to calculate the amortised cost of a financial asset and of allocating interest income over the relevant period. The effective interest rate is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash receipts through the expected useful life of the financial asset or, where appropriate, a shorter period.

Employee benefits expenses include all costs related to employment including wages and salaries, fringe benefits tax, leave entitlements, redundancy payments and defined benefit superannuation plans and defined contribution superannuation plans.

Finance lease is a lease that transfers substantially all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership of an underlying asset.

Ex gratia expenses mean the voluntary payment of money or other non-monetary benefit (e.g. a write off) that is not made either to acquire goods, services or other benefits for the entity or to meet a legal liability, or to settle or resolve a possible legal liability or claim against the entity.

Financial asset is any asset that is:

- cash;
- an equity instrument of another entity;
- a contractual right:
 - to receive cash or another financial asset from another entity; or
 - to exchange financial assets or financial liabilities with another entity under conditions that are potentially favourable to the entity; or
- a contract that will or may be settled in the entity's own equity instruments and is:
 - a non-derivative for which the entity is or may be obliged to receive a variable number of the entity's own equity instruments; or
 - a derivative that will or may be settled other than by the exchange of a fixed amount of cash or another financial asset for a fixed number of the entity's own equity instruments.

Financial instrument is any contract that gives rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity.

Financial liability is any liability that is:

(a) a contractual obligation:

- to deliver cash or another financial asset to another entity; or
- to exchange financial assets or financial liabilities with another entity under conditions that are potentially unfavourable to the entity.

(b) a contract that will or may be settled in the entity's own equity instruments and is:

- a non-derivative for which the entity is or may be obliged to deliver a variable number of the entity's own equity instruments; or
- a derivative that will or may be settled other than by the exchange of a fixed amount of cash or another financial asset for a fixed number of the entity's own equity instruments. For this purpose, the entity's own equity instruments do not include instruments that are themselves contracts for the future receipt or delivery of the entity's own equity instruments.

Financial statements comprises:

- a balance sheet as at the end of the period;
- a comprehensive operating statement for the period;
- a statement of changes in equity for the period;
- a cash flow statement for the period;
- notes, comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information;
- comparative information in respect of the preceding period as specified in paragraph 38 of AASB 101 *Presentation of Financial Statements*; and

- a statement of financial position as at the beginning of the preceding period when an entity applies an accounting policy retrospectively or makes a retrospective restatement of items in its financial statements, or when it reclassifies items in its financial statements in accordance with paragraph 41 of AASB 101.

General government sector comprises all government Boards, offices and other bodies engaged in providing services free of charge or at prices significantly below their cost of production. General government services include those that are mainly non-market in nature, those that are largely for collective consumption by the community and those that involve the transfer or redistribution of income. These services are financed mainly through taxes, or other compulsory levies and user charges.

Infrastructure systems provide essential services used in the delivery of final services or products. They are generally a complex interconnected network of individual assets and mainly include sewage systems and water storage and supply systems.

Interest expense represents costs incurred in connection with borrowings. It includes interest on loans and interest components of finance lease repayments.

Interest income includes interest received on bank term deposits and other investments.

Leases are rights conveyed in a contract, or part of a contract, the right to use an asset (the underlying asset) for a period of time in exchange for consideration.

Net acquisition of non-financial assets (from transactions) are purchases (and other acquisitions) of non-financial assets less sales (or disposals) of non-financial assets less depreciation plus changes in inventories and other movements in non-financial assets. Includes only those increases or decreases in non-financial assets resulting from transactions and therefore excludes write-offs, impairment write-downs and revaluations.

Net financial worth is equal to financial assets minus liabilities. It is a broader measure than net debt as it incorporates provisions made (such as superannuation, but excluding depreciation and bad debts) as well as holdings of equity. Net financial worth includes all classes of financial assets and liabilities, only some of which are included in net debt.

Net operating balance or net result from transactions is a key fiscal aggregate and is revenue from transactions minus expenses from transactions. It is a summary measure of the ongoing sustainability of operations. It excludes gains and losses resulting from changes in price levels and other changes in the volume of assets. It is the component of the change in net worth that is due to transactions and can be attributed directly to government policies.

Net result is a measure of financial performance of the operations for the period. It is the net result of items of revenue, gains and expenses (including losses) recognised for the period, excluding those classified as 'other non-owner movements in equity'.

Net worth is calculated as assets less liabilities, which is an economic measure of wealth.

Non-financial assets are all assets that are not financial assets. It includes inventories, land, buildings, infrastructure, plant and equipment, and cultural and heritage assets.

Operating result is a measure of financial performance of the operations for the period. It is the net result of items of revenue, gains and expenses (including losses) recognised for the period, excluding those that are classified as 'other non-owner movements in equity'. Refer also to 'net result'.

Other economic flows included in net result are changes in the volume or value of an asset or liability that do not result from transactions. In simple terms, other economic flows are changes arising from market re-measurements. They include gains and losses from disposals, revaluations and impairments of non-current physical and intangible assets; fair value changes of financial instruments and agricultural assets; and depletion of natural assets (non-produced) from their use or removal.

Other economic flows – other comprehensive income comprises items (including reclassification adjustments) that are not recognised in net result as required or permitted by other Australian Accounting Standards. They include changes in physical asset revaluation surplus.

Payables includes short and long-term trade debt and accounts payable, grants, taxes and interest payable.

Receivables include amounts owing from short and long-term trade credit and accounts receivable and interest receivable.

Sale of goods and services refers to income from the direct provision of goods and services and includes fees and charges for services rendered and sales of goods and services.

Supplies and services generally represent cost of goods sold and the day-to-day running costs, including maintenance costs, incurred in the normal operations of the Board.

Transactions are those economic flows that are considered to arise as a result of policy decisions, usually an interaction between two entities by mutual agreement. They also include flows within an entity such as depreciation where the owner is simultaneously acting as the owner of the depreciating asset and as the consumer of the service provided by the asset. Taxation is regarded as mutually agreed interactions between the government and taxpayers. Transactions can be in kind (e.g. assets provided/given free of charge or for nominal consideration) or where the final consideration is cash. In simple terms, transactions arise from the policy decisions of the Government.

8.12 Style conventions

Figures in the tables and in the text have been rounded. Discrepancies in tables between totals and sums of components reflect rounding. Percentage variations in all tables are based on the underlying unrounded amounts.

The notation used in the tables is as follows:

-	zero, or
(xxx)	negative
200x	year
200x-0x	year period.

The financial statements and notes are presented based on the illustration in the 2022-23 Model Report for Victorian Government Boards. The presentation of other disclosures is generally consistent with the other disclosures made in earlier publications of the Board's annual reports.

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Board of the Royal Botanic Gardens Board

<p>Opinion</p>	<p>I have audited the financial report of the Royal Botanic Gardens Board (the authority) which comprises the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • balance sheet as at 30 June 2023 • comprehensive operating statement for the year then ended • statement of changes in equity for the year then ended • cash flow statement for the year then ended • notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies • declaration in the financial statements. <p>In my opinion, the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the authority as at 30 June 2023 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of Part 7 of the <i>Financial Management Act 1994</i> and applicable Australian Accounting Standards.</p>
<p>Basis for Opinion</p>	<p>I have conducted my audit in accordance with the <i>Audit Act 1994</i> which incorporates the Australian Auditing Standards. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the <i>Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report</i> section of my report.</p> <p>My independence is established by the <i>Constitution Act 1975</i>. My staff and I are independent of the authority in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's <i>APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants</i> (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Victoria. My staff and I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.</p> <p>I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.</p>
<p>Board's responsibilities for the financial report</p>	<p>The Board of the authority is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the <i>Financial Management Act 1994</i>, and for such internal control as the Board determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.</p> <p>In preparing the financial report, the Board is responsible for assessing the authority's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless it is inappropriate to do so.</p>

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report

As required by the *Audit Act 1994*, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on the audit. My objectives for the audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the authority's internal control
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Board
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Board's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the authority's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the authority to cease to continue as a going concern.
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Board regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.



MELBOURNE
18 September 2023

Paul Martin
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria



Our people



Public Sector Values and Employment Principles

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria adopts policies and practices that are consistent with the *Public Administration Act 2004*. The organisation is committed to applying merit and equity principles when appointing employees. The Gardens' policies and practices are consistent with the Victorian Public Sector Commission's (VPSC) employment standards and provide for fair treatment, career opportunities and the early resolution of workplace issues. The organisation has trained its employees about how to avoid conflicts of interest, how to respond to offers of gifts, benefits and hospitality, how to manage misconduct and information regarding Public Interest Disclosures. Employees also receive training in workplace behaviour which focuses on supporting a workplace free from discrimination, harassment and bullying along with the VPSC Code of Conduct and expectations of being a Public Sector Employee. Line managers have also received training on obligations of Positive Duty under the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*.

Strategy and Direction

RBGV actively engages with staff and stakeholders to develop a robust and contemporary platform for the wellbeing of staff and volunteers. We commit to best practice for wellbeing, inclusion and recognising diversity through the following:

- Development of the Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)
- Ongoing commitment as a Child Safe organisation
- Implementation of initiatives in the Gender Equality Action Plan 2022
- Promoting and implementing RBGV's Mental Health and Wellbeing Charter
- Roll out of the Occupational Violence and Aggression Framework
- Implementing our Occupational Health and Safety Strategy 2022–2024
- A consultative approach to development of the 2022–23 Business Plan.

Leadership skills and behaviours

- Mental Health and Wellbeing training delivered for leaders to better understand mental health and explore their obligations and responsibilities.
- Positive Duty Training for managers to highlight the legislative requirement to take preventative strategic action to identify and prevent as well as eliminate both potential and existing inappropriate workplace and work-related behaviour.
- Ongoing Executive Performance Planning processes to reflect the Gardens' commitment to leadership.
- Development of an in-house Leadership Development Training course for frontline managers to enhance their line management capabilities.

Comparative Workforce Data

Summary of employment levels, as at June 2021 – 22 and June 2022 – 23

Employees have been correctly classified in the workforce data collections.

	Ongoing Employees				Fixed term, Fixed task and Casual		
	Total Headcount (includes Ongoing, Fixed term, Fixed task and Casual)	Number (Headcount)	Full-time (Headcount)	Part-time (Headcount)	FTE	Headcount	FTE
June 2021–22	244	174	125	49	156.01	70	47.70
June 2022–23	234	164	118	46	147.40	70	49.27

Details of employment levels re: gender, age and classification

	June 2023			June 2022		
	Total Headcount (includes Ongoing, Fixed term, Fixed task and Casual)	Ongoing	Fixed term, fixed task and casual	Total Headcount (Includes Ongoing, Fixed term, Fixed task and Casual)	Ongoing Number (Headcount)	Fixed term, Fixed Task and Casual Headcount
	234			244		
Gender						
Man	93	71	22	95	76	19
Women	138	91	47	146	98	48
Self-Described	3	2	1	3	0	3
Age						
Under 25	8	2	6	4	2	2
25–34	43	22	21	47	20	27
35–44	55	35	20	61	43	18
45–54	70	57	13	72	58	14
55–64	46	40	6	48	42	6
Over 64	12	8	4	12	9	3
Classification						
Staff	177	115	62	185	123	62
Line Manager	37	34	3	38	36	2
Branch Manager	15	15	0	15	15	0
Executives	5	0	5	6	0	6

Notes:

- All figures reflect employment levels and FTE count during the last full pay period in June of each year.
- Excluded are those employees on leave without pay or absent on secondment, or casuals who were not paid in the final pay period.
- Ongoing employees include people engaged on an open-ended contract of employment.
- FTE means Full-time staff equivalent.
- Classification is based on previous years reporting and is as follows:
 - Staff includes all employees other than those who have line management responsibilities.
- Line manager refers to an employee who supervises staff but does not manage a Branch function.
- Branch Manager is responsible for a function within an organisational division.
- Executives are employed under the VPSC PEER policy.

Executive Officer Data

Responsible persons

In accordance with the Ministerial Directions issued by the Assistant Treasurer under the *Financial Management Act 1994 (FMA)*, the following disclosures are made regarding responsible persons for the reporting period:

Names

The persons who held the positions of Minister, Governing Board and Accountable Officer of the Royal Botanic Gardens Board Victoria are as follows:

Minister		
Minister for Environment and Climate Action	The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP	1 July 2022 to 4 December 2022
Minister for Environment	The Hon Ingrid Stitt MP	5 December 2022 to 30 June 2023
Governing Board		
Chairperson	Ms Chris Trotman	1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023
Deputy Chairperson	Mrs Penny Fowler	1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023
Member	Professor Antony Bacic	1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023
Member	Ms Gillian Hund OAM	1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023
Member	Mr Tim Jacobs	1 July 2022 to 11 April 2023
Member	Ms Susanne Williamson	1 July 2022 to 28 April 2023
Member	Ms Christine Wyatt	30 Nov 2022 to 30 June 2023
Accountable Officer		
Director and Chief Executive	Professor Tim Entwisle	1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023

An executive is defined as a person employed as an executive under Part 3 of the PAA or a person to whom the Victorian Government's *Public Entity Executive Remuneration Policy* applies. All figures reflect employment levels at the last full pay period in June of the current and corresponding previous reporting year.

The definition of SES does not include a statutory office holder or an Accountable Officer.

The following table discloses the SES of the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria for 30 June 2023 broken down by gender.

Total number of SES for Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, broken down into gender

Class	All		Women		Men		Self-described	
	No.	Var.	No.	Var.	No.	Var.	No.	Var.
SES3	0	0	0	0	0	0	n	n
SES2	1	0	0	0	1	0	n	n
SES1	4	0	1	0	3	0	n	n
Total	5	0	1	0	4	0	n	n

The number of executives in the report of operations is based on the number of executive positions that are occupied at the end of the financial year.

Workforce Inclusion Policy

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria has policies and procedures in place and activities underway to meet its obligations and support a diverse and inclusive workplace. Our *Gender Equality Action Plan 2022* continued to be rolled out with the support of employees and the union and seeks to remove barriers for employees

of all genders and intersectional disadvantage to achieve equality in all aspects of employment. As part of this plan, RBGV had committed to reviewing our Family and Domestic Violence Supports and improving communication on these across the organisation by 30 June 2023. This table outlines RBGV's actual progress against this measure during 22/23:

Gender Equality Action Plan Measure	Target	Actual Progress 2022–23
Expand the current Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) contact officer program to incorporate Family Violence support.	Completed by 30 June 2023	Contact Officers provided with updated training in EEO and Family and Domestic Violence.
Review Family Violence Leave Policy and process and address any barriers to taking this leave.	Completed by 30 June 2023	Policy developed in consultation with employees and the union. FAQ document created to address common queries and along with the policy and information regarding the updated Contact Officer Program, rolled out via information sessions to all employees.

Reconciliation Action Plan

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria's *Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2021 – 22* was finalised in November 2022. From the 43 deliverables outlined in this plan, 36 have been met, three deliverables require reassessment, and four deliverables are to be carried forward to the development of the next RAP.

Since this plan's completion, the following actions have been achieved:

- Formation of a new Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2024–26 Working Group, development of the first draft of our Innovate RAP and resources allocated to meet deliverables, with the aim of launching the Innovate RAP 2024–26 in February 2024.
- First Cultural Competency eLearning module undertaken by all staff.
- Various cultural NAIDOC events run throughout the week at Cranbourne Gardens with and for the local Aboriginal community, and all-staff bushfood morning teas at both sites.

- All-staff National Reconciliation Week (NRW) activities across both sites that engaged numerous First Peoples contractors and businesses and increased staff's understanding of First Peoples' histories, culture and achievements, as well as the ongoing impacts of colonisation. During NRW, staff were also invited to contribute their ideas and aspirations to Gardens' vision for reconciliation.

Child Safety

Child safety continued to be a priority at the Gardens. At end June 2023, 97.3% of staff and volunteers had completed all elements of the RBGV Child Safe Program. All incidents relating to the safety or wellbeing of children and young people were overseen and managed through the Child Safety incident reporting mechanisms and this led to ongoing improvements throughout the year. No formal investigation was required or launched during this year.

Occupational Health and Safety

During the reporting period, Melbourne Gardens was the venue for the first *Lightscape* event from June to August 2022. The second event commenced in June 2023. A thorough Hazard and Risk Management Assessment process was conducted by RBGV to ensure the route of the event was safe for attendees. Potential hazards were identified and reported. Controls were put in place and, where required, repairs were made. Several sections of the organisation were involved in preparing the site for the installation of lights and equipment for the event, including Arboriculture, Horticulture, Infrastructure and Facilities, Visitor Experience Access and Tourism and People and Culture (OHS).

The total number of incidents reported at RBGV sites for FY22/23 was 252 compared to 231 for the previous financial year. The total incidents for FY22/23 included 35 incidents that were recorded during the *Lightscape* events (23 incidents from July to August 2022 and 12 in June 2023).

Of the total incidents reported, 68 (27%) related to employees, with 36 (53%) of these being injuries sustained by employees. This was an increase in reported injuries sustained compared with previous financial years, with 31 injuries in FY21/22 and 33 injuries in FY 20/21. The remainder of employee related incidents were for near misses, property/equipment damage and report only incidents.

There were five Lost Time Injuries reported in FY22/23 compared to three in the previous financial year. Lost time injuries included two categorised as abrasion / bruise and three as strain and sprain. Line managers have actively provided support to injured employees and worked with medical allied services on employee rehabilitation to return them to work safely and back to pre-injury employment capacity.

There were two Medical Time Injuries reported in FY22/23 compared to one in the previous reporting period. One was a lower back strain and one was for scratches near the eye. In both cases, the employee attended a medical centre and was provided first aid and advised to return to work.

There were 28 First Aid Injuries relating to employees reported in FY22/23 compared to 27 in the previous financial year.

There was one Workplace Mental Health incident reported in FY22/23 compared to nil reported last financial year.

The number of Worker Injury Claims for FY22/23 was three compared to three claims in FY21/22, however a reduction in total incurred claims costs was seen across the same periods.

(Summary of table provided is up to the end of May 2023. Source: RBGV WorkSafe Agent, Xchanging Pty Ltd)

Claim Year	Total Claims	Total Incurred Cost	Average Incurred Cost	Time Lost Claims	Time Lost Claims Incurred Cost	Time Lost Claims Average Incurred Cost
2017/18	4	\$73,364.04	\$18,341.01	4	\$73,364.04	\$18,341.01
2018/19	5	\$10,864.57	\$2,172.91	4	\$8,132.14	\$2,033.04
2019/20	2	\$12,120.32	\$6,060.16	1	\$7,136.54	\$7,136.54
2020/21	11	\$60,564.63	\$5,505.88	7	\$43,913.39	\$6,273.34
2021/22	3	\$18,188.87	\$6,062.96	1	\$8,466.27	\$8,466.27
2022/23	7	\$15,303.98	\$2,186.28	6	\$15,112.29	\$2,518.72

Please note: Any claims received or changed from minor to standard in the previous three months will not have an SCE calculated, therefore incurred costs may be understated.

Standard claim still open = one (1)	Minor claim still open = two (2)
-------------------------------------	----------------------------------

There was a total of three WorkSafe Victoria notifiable incidents reported in FY2022/23 compared to eight reported in FY2021/22. All three were reported in Melbourne Gardens and involved visitors to the Gardens.

All notifiable incidents were reported to WorkSafe within the required period for reporting. All notifiable incidents have been closed with no further investigations required by WorkSafe Victoria.

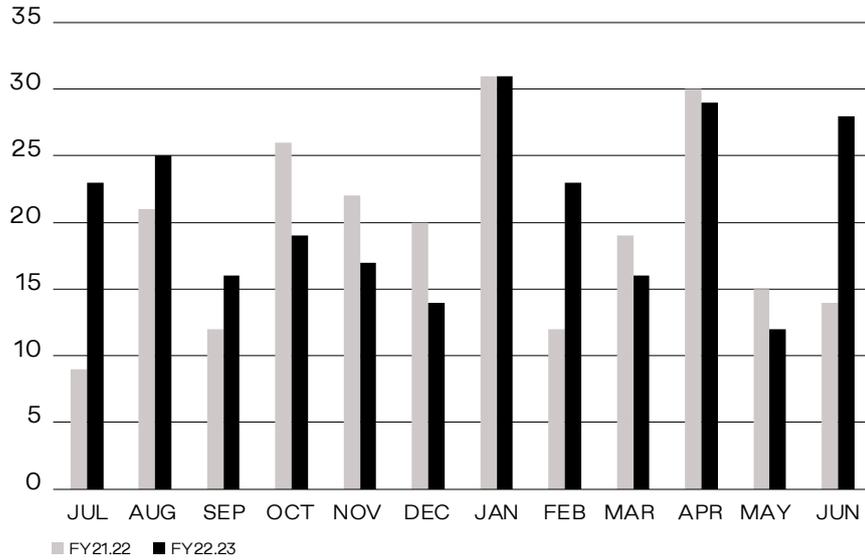
Hazard hunts continued at Melbourne and Cranbourne Gardens. An improvement in the scheduling process and documentation has been implemented. Line managers schedule hazard hunts using the intranet Microsoft Teams systems. This increased the visibility and communications of the hazard hunts.

All First Aid Officer certifications were kept current and up to date. First Aid Officers who left the organisation were replaced with new first aiders.

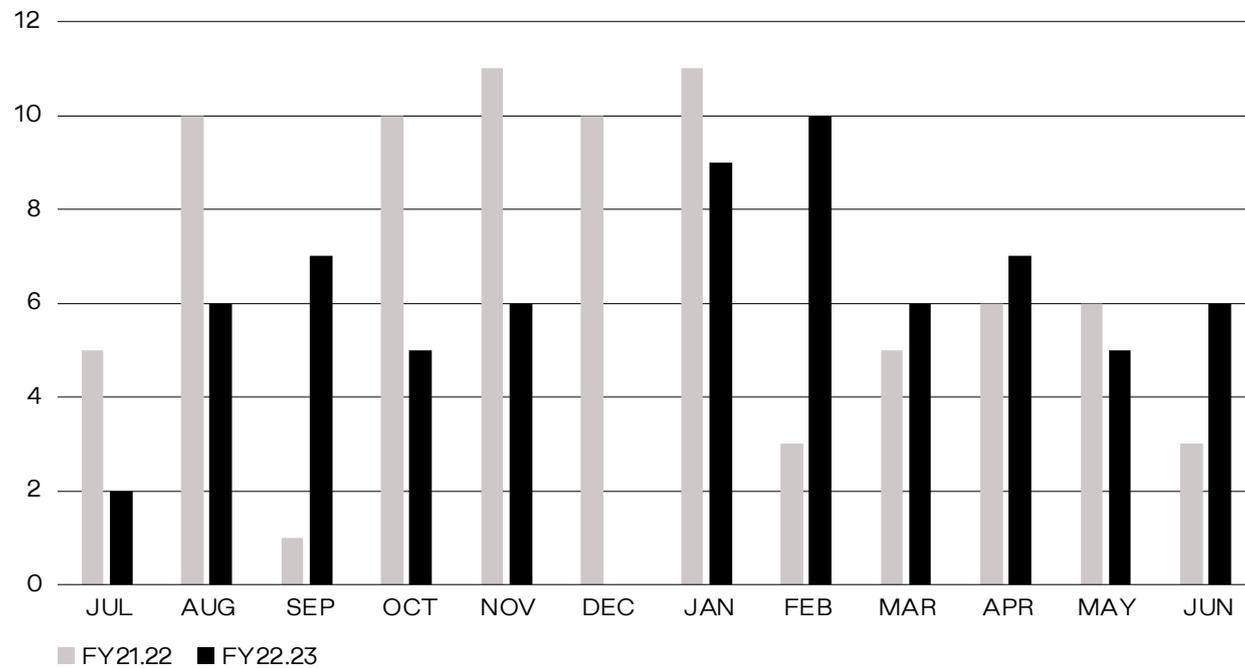
We had one new Health and Safety Representative (HSR), replacing one who had resigned from their voluntary duties. As there was more than one person nominated, an election was

held online using Microsoft Forms, available on the intranet. The new HSR is now completing the 5-day HSR training.

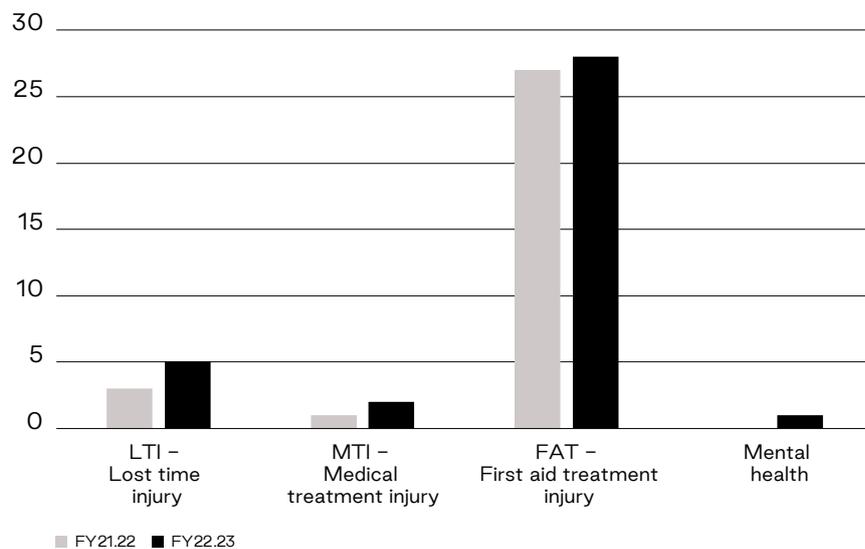
Total (all) incidents reported last 2 financial years



Total employee only incidents reported last 2 financial years



Employee injury by category – full year totals last 2 FY



Definitions

Lost Time Injuries (LTI)

A lost-time injury is defined as an occurrence that resulted in a fatality, permanent disability or time lost from work of one day/shift or more (SafeWork Australia)

Medical Time Injuries (MTI)

Medical Time Injury is work related injury or illness which results in the worker seeking medical attention from a health professional (e.g. doctor) without losing time off work for the whole day.

First Aid Treatment Injury (FAT)

A First Aid Treatment Injury (FAT) is an injury that requires a single first aid treatment involving only minor injuries, for example minor scratches, burns, cuts and so forth, which do not ordinarily require medical care

Lost Time Injuries (more significant injury)

FY2022/23 total

Lost Time Injuries (LTI's)

An injury that results in one day/shift or more taken off from work.

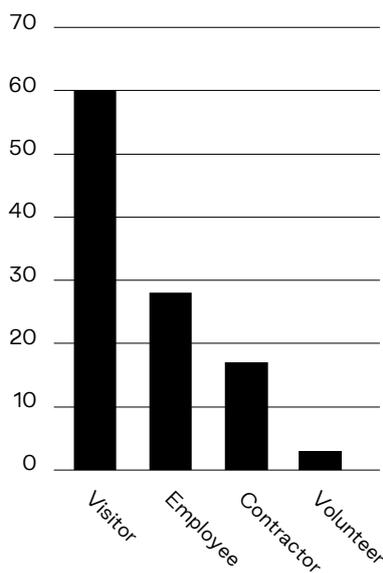
5

Lost Time Injury Frequency Rate (LTIFR)

Represents the number of lost time injuries per million hours worked during the reporting period. The LTIFR is used to benchmark against other like organisations as an indicator of our safety/injury prevention performance. Exposure times taken from employees' total work hours

17.07

First aid injury totals FY2022/23 by groups



Employee injury and compensation submission in the FY2022/23

Areas of injury submitted with Worker Injury Claims includes strains and sprains to hand/finger, shoulder, lower back and Workplace Mental Health.

2 claims for lower back strain.

1 claim for shoulder strain.

2 claims for hand/finger strain.

1 claim for ankle abrasion / bruised.

1 claim for Workplace Mental Health.

FY 22/23 WorkCover Claims (by body location)

Head/Eye = 0

Neck = 0

Shoulder = 2

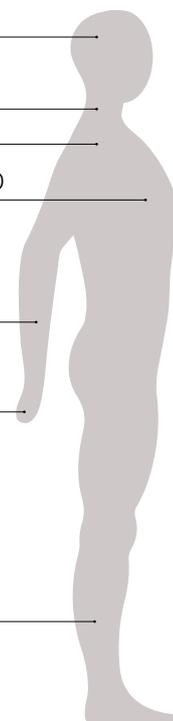
Chest / abdomen = 0

Back = 1

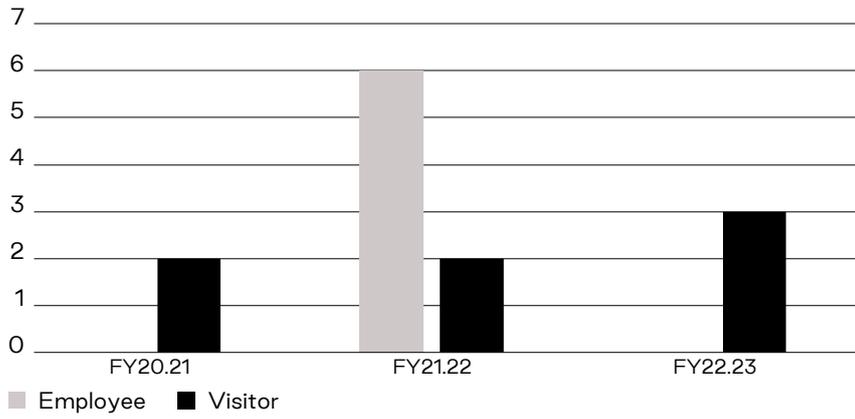
Hand = 2

Lower limbs = 1

Psychological = 1



**Total notifiable incidents
FY2020/21 to FY2022/23**



Lead Indicators		
Planning and Consultation (FY2021/22)	Planned	Held
OHS Committee meetings	4	4
OHS Working Group (management) meetings	8	8



Other disclosures



Government Advertising Expenditure

Nil reports

Consultancy Expenditure

In 2022–23 there were five consultancies where the total fees payable to the consultants were \$10,000 or greater. The total expenditure incurred during 2022–23 in relation to these consultancies was \$101,548 (excl. GST).

Details of Individual consultancies:

In 2022–23 no consultants were engaged where the total fees payable to individual consultants were less than \$10,000.

Consultant	Purpose of Consultancy	Start Date	End Date	Total Approved Fee (exc. GST)	Expenditure 2022–23 (excl. GST)	Future Expenditure (excl. GST)
Future Foods	Development of a Food and Event Strategy	15-03-22	16-11-22	29,000	20,300	
Future Foods	Delivery of an Expression of Interest for a new tenant to operate a Food and Event Licence at Melbourne	12-08-22	19-10-22	8,700	8,700	
Future Foods	Delivery of an Expression of Interest for a new tenant to operate a Food and Event Licence at Cranbourne Gardens	22-12-22	19-04-23	29,900	29,900	
Greenshoot Consulting	Cultural and Historical Mapping and Traditional Owner Consulting	01-04-22	31-08-22	90,480	9,048	
Terra Firma	Business Analyst Services in Support of Business Systems Review	08-05-23	12-09-23	89,250	33,600	55,650
Total				247,330	101,548	55,650

Information and Communication Technology Expenditure

For the 2022–23 reporting period, Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria had a total ICT Expenditure of \$2,028,000

All operational ICT expenditure	ICT expenditure related to projects to create or enhance ICT capabilities		
Business as Usual (BAU) ICT expenditure	Non-Business as Usual (non-BAU) ICT expenditure	Operational Expenditure	Capital Expenditure
(Total)	(Total = Operational expenditure and capital expenditure)		
\$2,028,000	\$153,000	\$1,797,000	\$78,000

Major Contracts

During 2022–23, RBGV did not enter into any contracts valued at over \$10 million.

Local Jobs First – Victorian Industry Participation Policy statement

The *Local Jobs First Act 2003* introduced in August 2018 brings together the Victorian Industry Participation Policy (VIPPP) and Major Project Skills Guarantee (MPSG) policy which were previously administered separately.

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria is required to apply the Local Jobs first policy in all projects valued at \$3 million or more in Metropolitan Melbourne or for statewide projects, or \$1 million or more for projects in regional Victoria.

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria had no projects valued at \$3 million or more in Metropolitan Melbourne or for statewide projects, or \$1 million or more for projects in regional Victoria during the reporting period.

Establishing Legislation

The *Royal Botanic Gardens Act 1991* was not amended in 2022–23.

Legislative Compliance

Financial Management Act 1994

Full details of the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria's compliance with the *Financial Management Act 1994* are outlined in the section 'Financial Management' and in the Disclosure Index.

Freedom of Information

The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (the FOI Act) allows the public a right of access to documents held by Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria (RBGV).

The purpose of the FOI Act is to extend as far as possible the right of the community to access information held by government departments, local councils, Ministers and other bodies subject to the FOI Act.

An applicant has a right to apply for access to documents held by RBGV. This comprises documents both created by RBGV or supplied to RBGV by an external organisation or individual, and may also include maps, films, microfiche, photographs, computer printouts, computer discs, tape recordings and videotapes.

The Act allows a department to refuse access, either fully or partially, to certain documents or information. Examples of documents that may not be accessed include cabinet documents; some internal working documents; law enforcement documents; documents covered by legal professional privilege, such as legal advice; personal information about other people; and information provided to a department in confidence and information that is confidential under another Act.

Under the Act, the FOI processing time for requests received is 30 days. However, when external consultation is required under ss29, 29A, 31, 31A, 33, 34 or 35, the processing time is 45 days. Processing time may also be extended by periods of 30 days, in consultation with the applicant. With the applicant's agreement this may occur any number of times. However, obtaining an applicant's agreement for an extension cannot occur after the expiry of the timeframe for deciding a request.

If an applicant is not satisfied by a decision made by RBGV, under section 49A of the FOI Act, they have the right to seek a review by the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC) within 28 days of receiving a decision letter.

Making a request

FOI requests can be made through a written request to the Agency's Freedom of Information team, as detailed in s17 of the FOI Act.

When making an FOI request, applicants should ensure requests are in writing, and clearly identify what types of material/documents are being sought. An application fee of \$31.80 applies. Access charges may also be payable if the document pool is large and the search for material time consuming.

Requests for documents in the possession of should be addressed to:

Freedom of Information Officer
Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria
Private Bag 2000
South Yarra VIC 3141

[Email: foi@rbg.vic.gov.au](mailto:foi@rbg.vic.gov.au)

FOI statistics/timeliness

During 2022 – 23, RBGV received zero FOI applications.

Competitive Neutrality Policy

Competitive neutrality requires government businesses to remove any advantage arising solely from their government ownership if it is not in the public interest where services compete, or potentially compete with the private sector. Government businesses are required to cost and price these services as if they were privately owned.

Competitive neutrality policy supports fair competition between public and private businesses and provides government businesses with a tool to enhance decisions on resource allocation. This policy does not override other policy objectives of government and focuses on efficiency in the provision of service. Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria continues to comply with the requirements of the Competitive Neutrality Policy.

DataVic Access Policy

Consistent with the DataVic Access Policy issued by the Victorian Government in 2012, Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria will make available relevant data sets at www.data.vic.gov.au in electronic readable format.

Compliance with the Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012

The *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* protects people who report improper conduct and corruption in the Victorian public sector (whistle-blowers). Those protections include keeping the identity of the person reporting improper conduct confidential and protecting them from reprisals including bullying, harassment or legal action.

What is a 'Public Interest Disclosure'?

A public interest disclosure is a complaint or allegation made about corrupt conduct, improper conduct or detrimental action by a public officer or a public body. Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria is a public body for the purposes of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* (PID Act).

What are 'Improper or Corrupt Conduct and Detrimental Action'?

Improper conduct is defined in the PID Act to mean:

Corrupt conduct

Conduct of a public officer or body that constitutes:

- a criminal offence
- Serious professional misconduct
- Dishonest performance of public functions
- Intentional or reckless breach of public trust
- Intentional or reckless misuse of information
- Substantial mismanagement of public resources
- Substantial risk to the health or safety of one or more persons, or
- Substantial risk to the environment.

The conduct of any person that:

- adversely affects the honest performance by a public officer or public body of their functions; or
- is intended to adversely affect the effective performance by a public officer or public body of their functions for the benefit of themselves or another person (for example resulting in the person obtaining a licence, permit or approval, appointment, financial benefit or other direct or indirect monetary or proprietary gain).

The conduct must be a serious breach of an established professional code of conduct and/or other serious departures from the person's professional responsibilities. Less serious or trivial conduct is excluded from the definition of improper conduct.

Corrupt conduct is dishonest activity in which an employee or Board member acts contrary to the interest of that body and abuses their position of trust in order to achieve personal gain or advantage for themselves or for another person or entity.

Corrupt conduct can include:

- taking or offering bribes
- dishonesty using influence
- committing fraud, theft or embezzlement
- misusing information or material acquired at work
- or attempting to engage in the above corrupt activity.

Corruption can occur through:

- improper or unlawful actions by public officers or public bodies
- failure of public officers or public bodies to act
- actions of private individuals who try to improperly influence public sector functions or decisions.

Detrimental action or reprisal means action taken against a person who has made a Public Interest Disclosure, including action causing injury, loss or damage, intimidation or harassment, or discrimination, disadvantage or adverse treatment in relation to a person's employment, career, profession, trade or business. It includes the taking of disciplinary action.

How do I make a 'Public Interest Disclosure'?

RBGV is not permitted to receive disclosures made under the Act. Therefore, if you wish to make a disclosure about RBGV, its employees or Board members, you will need to make that disclosure directly to the Independent Broad-Based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC) via the contact details provided on this page. The Royal Botanic Gardens Board Victoria, or any of its officers are not able to receive public interest disclosures.

How can I access the Royal Botanic Gardens Board Victoria's procedures for the protection of persons from detrimental action?

The Royal Botanic Gardens Board Victoria has established procedures for the protection of persons from detrimental action in reprisal for making a public interest disclosure about the Royal Botanic Gardens Board Victoria or its employees. Access the Royal Botanic Gardens Board Victoria's procedures at its website www.rbg.vic.gov.au/privacy/

Contacts

Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator,
Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria

Sarah Boswell
Chief Information Officer
Royal Botanic Gardens
Birdwood Avenue
Private Bag 2000
South Yarra VIC 3141
Phone: (03) 9252 2367
E-mail: sarah.boswell@rbg.vic.gov.au

Independent Broad-Based Anti-corruption Commission

Address: Level 1, North Tower
459 Collins Street,
Melbourne Victoria 3000
Mail: IBAC GPO Box 24234
Melbourne Victoria 3001
Internet: www.ibac.vic.gov.au
Phone: 1300 735 135

Email: please see the website above for the secure email disclosure process, which also provides for anonymous disclosures.

Compliance with Other Legislation

Social Procurement Framework

RBGV recognises that it plays a key role in advancing social and sustainable outcomes for Victorians and is fully committed to supporting the Government's directions under the Social Procurement Framework. During 2022–23, Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria developed its first *Social Procurement Strategy 2023–26* (SPS). This Strategy was completed during the reporting period and provides an organisation wide approach to how we deliver social and sustainable outcomes.

RBGV has prioritised four social and sustainable objectives of the Social Procurement Framework for the term of our initial SPS:

1. Opportunities for Victorian Aboriginal people
 - Purchasing from Victorian Aboriginal businesses
 - Employment of Victorian Aboriginal people by suppliers to the Victorian Government
2. Environmentally sustainable outputs
 - Project-specific requirements to use sustainable resources and to manage waste and pollution.
 - Use of recycled content in construction
3. Environmentally sustainable business practices
 - Adoption of sustainable business practices by suppliers to the Victorian Government.
4. Implementation of the Climate Change Policy Objectives
 - Project-specific requirements to minimise greenhouse gas emissions.
 - Procurement of outputs that are resilient against the impacts of climate change.

Achievements

This year's reporting focuses on the first identified priority objective set out in its SPS. Over the term of the Strategy, future reporting will expand to all four objectives.

Objective 1: Opportunities for Victorian Aboriginal people

- Total number of Victorian Aboriginal people employed by Victorian Government suppliers on Victorian Government contracts: 38
- Number of Victorian Aboriginal businesses engaged: 29
- Total expenditure with Victorian Aboriginal businesses (excl. GST): \$298,986.86

Additional achievements include:

- On-going employment of three Aboriginal staff.
- Development of two Cultural Heritage Management Plans at Cranbourne Gardens that engaged Traditional Owners throughout the project to the value of \$78,428.
- Sales of First Nations products at RBGV shops increased by 40% from \$49,000 in 2021–22 to \$70,000 in 2022–23.
- Commissioning of five Victorian and one interstate Aboriginal artist for artwork and music production featured in the presentation of *Lightscape 2023*.

Office Based Environmental Impacts Environmental Sustainability Reporting Context

RBGV is committed to play its role in the state-wide transition to net-zero emissions and climate resilience by 2050, better manage exposure to climate-related risk and meet responsibilities in reducing its environmental impacts. This commitment is reflected by the way in which we continue to report beyond our required disclosure under Financial Reporting Directive FRD24E, previously FRD24D, on our ongoing performance in managing and reducing the environmental impacts of our activities. By continuing to improve on our environmental reporting methodologies we are also able to continue to improve in our environmental sustainability practices.

Reporting updates

This year being the first to report against the updated FRD24E requirements, means that the number and type of indicators have changed, as have the description and category of the sub-indicators and units of measurement to previous years (e.g., MW instead of kW). The calculation method of electricity emissions has also changed. Despite this, data collated from 2021–22 and 2020–21 was able to be converted to latest standards for consistency and accurate comparison over a three-year period.

Other key updates this year include no longer needing to report on paper consumption, but an option to report on additional two new indicator, notably (i) sustainable building and infrastructure and (ii) sustainable procurement. The Garden's is not reporting on these additional indicators due to limited internal data collation capacity. However, RBGV is reporting on the seven of the nine new FRD24E indicators, some in more depth than others. As we continue to evolve our internal processes, so too will our data collation methodology and analysis evolve.

Climate-related risk disclosure statement

As of February 2023, climate-related risk has been added to the Strategic Risk Register. This requires half-yearly reporting to Board on organisational actions taken towards building resilience to climate impacts. The Board has also endorsed a high-level staged approach and set of actions towards the development of an environmental sustainability and climate-related risk framework. One of the most immediate actions has been the engagement of a consultant to undertake an environmental energy building audit. It is anticipated that the findings from this audit will assist the Gardens to prioritise actions on how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and costs associated with the running of our sites and increase our resilience to climate related shock and stresses.

Environmental Performance Report

Greenhouse gas emission

The Garden's scope 1 greenhouse gas emissions reduced by 14 per cent from 2021–22 but remained higher by 30 per cent from the COVID-19 impacted 2020–21 figures. This year's reduced scope 1 greenhouse gas emission can be attributed to a decrease in LPG use at Cranbourne Gardens.

Total scope 2 greenhouse gas emissions remains similar to last year, up by 4 per cent.

Scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions have decreased this year by 24 per cent to 2021–22 figures, though are still relatively higher to 2020–21 figures. The high fluctuation from 2020–21 figures to 2021–22 figures can be attributed to an increase in air travel and waste production, straight after extended remote work periods. The recent introduction of a new travel booking system which may have not captured all data fully, together with a reduction of funding for staff to travel can be attributed to the decline in this year's scope 3 figures.

Total net greenhouse gas emissions this year had decreased by five percent compared to 2021–22 figures, and by six per cent from 2020–21 figures. The Gardens is aiming to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions through a combination of different initiatives, from increased use of GreenPower and solar power, to smart meter installation and 100 per cent LED light installation.

Indicator	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21
G1 Total scope one (direct) greenhouse gas emissions [tonnes CO ₂ -e]	362.94	420.07	322.35
G2 Total scope two (indirect electricity) greenhouse gas emissions [tonnes CO ₂ -e]	927.97	891.18	1,142.92
G3 Total scope three (other indirect) greenhouse gas emissions [tonnes CO ₂ -e]	864.17	744.27	614.11
GreenPower offset [MWh]	-211.67	-	-
G(Opt) Net greenhouse gas emissions [tonnes CO ₂ -e]	1,952.94	2,055.52	2,079.38

Electricity production and consumption

Though total electricity consumption was higher this year by 16 per cent from 2021–22 figures, the total on site electricity generated by solar power, was over double the amount this year compared to previous years, generating 124.70 [MWh] compared to 56.93 [MWh] in 2021–22 and 66.12 [MWh] in 2020–21. This is due to the relatively new recycled water plant at Cranbourne Gardens drawing on more power generated by solar in its first fully functioning year of operation.

This year the Gardens' have actively contributed to the significant increase in electricity offset figures by purchasing 211.67MWh of GreenPower. This is due to a

significant new annual art installation Red Energy project 'Lightscape' at Melbourne Gardens being 100 per cent powered by GreenPower. GreenPower consumption has been calculated from 1 July 2022 to 7 August 2022 in its first year of operation, and between 16 June 2023 to 30 June 2023 during its second year of operation. The additional power generated for the 2023 season after 30 June 2023, will be included in the next financial year reporting.

The Garden also continues to implement a range of energy efficiency initiatives to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions in other ways, such as installation of LED lighting with each new light replacement and establishing the hibernate feature in laptops and desktop monitors as the default setting to reduce power consumption.

Indicator	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21
EL1 Total electricity consumption [MWh]	1,474.96	1,269.67	1,531.39
Purchased	1,350.86	1,220.39	1,465.49
Self-generated	124.10	49.29	65.91
EL2 On site-electricity generated [MWh]	124.70	56.93	66.12
Total Consumption behind-the-meter [MWh] – Solar Electricity	124.10	49.29	65.91
Total Electricity exported [MWh] – Solar Electricity	0.60	7.65	0.22
EL3 On-site installed generation capacity [MW] – Solar System	0.14	0.14	0.14
EL4 Total electricity offsets [MWh]	465.63	226.87	277.42
GreenPower	211.67	-	-
RPP (Renewable Power Percentage in the grid)	253.96	226.87	277.42

Stationary fuel use

Despite the increase in the consumption of electricity use, this year's greenhouse gas emissions from stationary energy fuel consumption were down by 17 per cent compared to 2021–22 figures and 13 per cent compared to 2020–21 figures. This can be attributed to LPG not being used for close to two months at Cranbourne's nursery while diesel was used instead.

The Gardens have recently engaged an environmental sustainability building auditor to assess priority what, where and how we can reduce greenhouse gas emissions from stationary fuels over time, as part of a larger energy assessment.

	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21
F1 Total fuels used in buildings [MJ]	5,411,606.40	6,500,428.50	6,179,529.30
Natural gas	5,143,659.70	6,137,341.80	5,747,517.40
LPG	231,269.00	363,086.70	432,011.90
Diesel	36,677.70	-	-
F2 Greenhouse gas emissions from stationary fuel consumption [Tonnes CO2-e]	281.64	338.26	322.35
Natural gas	265.05	316.26	296.17
LPG	14.01	22.00	26.18
Diesel	2.57	-	-

Transportation

Vehicle fleet for both sites comprises a total of 60 vehicles, for on-road (31) and off-road (29) use. Three per cent of these are hybrid, 25 per cent electric, 45 per cent diesel and 27 per cent petrol. Since 2021-22, two diesel and one petrol vehicle were replaced with one hybrid and three electric vehicles.

Energy used in transport fuels and associated greenhouse gas emissions remained relatively similar to previous year, with a minor total decrease of 0.7 per cent compared to 2021-22 figures. Data for vehicle kms travelled was only collated for the first time this year, and only for the Melbourne Gardens site, resulting in a relatively low figure of greenhouse gas emissions from vehicle fleet. Commercial air travelled decreased significantly this year by 36 per cent. This can be attributed to a new travel booking system being introduced part way through the year, resulting in some potential data gaps, as well as fewer flights due to recent budgetary restrictions.

RBGV is committed to replacing shared passenger vehicle fleet to 100 per cent zero emission vehicles over time, and currently undertake this every time an old vehicle requires to be replaced.

Indicator	2022-23	%	2021-22	%	2020-21	%
Number and proportion of vehicles Indicator T2	60	100	59	100	-	-
On-Road Vehicles	31	52	33	56	-	-
Electric	8	26	8	24	-	-
Hybrid	2	6	1	3	-	-
Diesel	16	52	18	55	-	-
Petrol	5	16	6	18	-	-
Off-Road Vehicles	29	48	26	44	-	-
Electric	7	24	4	15	-	-
Hybrid	-	-	-	-	-	-
Diesel	11	38	11	42	-	-
Petrol	11	38	11	42	-	-

Indicator	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21
Petrol	224,813.00	245,545.30	-
Diesel	938,721.10	926,041.40	-
T1 Total energy used in transportation (vehicle fleet) [MJ]	1,163,534.10	1,171,586.70	-
Petrol	15.20	16.60	-
Diesel	66.10	65.20	-
T3 Total Greenhouse gas emissions from transportation (vehicle fleet) [tonnes CO₂-e]	81.30	81.80	-
T4 Total distance travelled by commercial air travel (passenger km travelled for business)	100,668.06	156,462.00	-
T(opt 1) Total vehicle travel associated with entity operations [1,000km]	77.47	-	-
T(opt2) Greenhouse gas emissions from vehicle fleet [tonnes CO₂-e per 1,000kms]	1.05	-	-

Environmentally Sustainable Design in new buildings and infrastructure

Nil reports (Indicator B3)

Total energy use

Total energy used by the Gardens has decreased by 16.7 per cent from 2021—22 to 2022—23 driven by a decrease in stationary fuels, with transport fuel only down by a fraction 0.7 per cent. While the Garden's total energy usage from electricity has increased by 16.2 per cent, largely driven by the 16.4 per cent increase in the energy use per unit of visitor from

last year's figures. The Garden's use of renewable energy has increased by 36.9 per cent since 2021—22 while our non-renewable energy use has decreased by 6.88 per cent during the same period. The Gardens is currently undertaking an internal assessment as to key areas in which it can reduce its total energy use.

	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21
E1 Total energy usage from fuels, including stationary fuels (F1) and transport fuels (T1) [MJ]	6,575,140.50	7,672,015.20	6,179,529.30
E2 Total energy usage from electricity [MJ]	5,309,843.64	4,570,823.34	5,513,021.22
E3 Total energy usage segmented by renewable and non-renewable sources [MJ]			
Renewable	2,123,023.81	994,161.63	1,235,965.44
Non-renewable (E1 + E2 – E3 Renewable)	9,761,960.33	11,248,676.91	10,456,585.08
E4 Units of Stationary Energy used normalised: (F1+E2)/normaliser			
Energy per unit of FRD FTE [MJ/FRD FTE]	54,512.15	54,270.84	55,586.17
Energy per unit of floor space [MJ/m ²]	721.10	744.62	838.26
Energy per unit of Visitors [MJ/Visitors]	5.36	6.24	8.01

Water use

Water quality and water conservation continue to be a high priority across both sites. The total units of water consumed decreased by 13 per cent from 2021–22 figures. This can be attributed to the increase in the use of reused water generated from Cranbourne Gardens water recycling plant with total recycled water use up by 240 percent and potable water use down by 14 per cent. Due to a major blue–green algae outbreak in the lake at Melbourne Gardens this year, alternative supply water consumption from lake water was down by 50 per cent compared to 2021–22 figures and portable water used instead. The use of stormwater for landscape irrigation remained consistent.

At Melbourne Gardens in 2021–22 52,234 million litres (54,234KL) of stormwater used for landscape irrigation provided a 41 per cent offset and \$186,061 direct savings in potable–sourced (municipal) water. At Cranbourne Gardens, the recycled water irrigation project has been running for over a year, allowing the system to run at fully capacity with 65 per cent of water used being recycled, compared to only 20 per cent in early 2022 when first installed.

	2022–23	2021–22	2020–21
W1 Total units of metered water consumed by water source (kl)			
Potable water [kL]	112,670.92	130,323.52	97,770.16
Alternate supply consumption [kL]	26,902.00	54,234.00	52,603.00
Reused water [kL]	29,000.00	8,537.00	-
Total units of water consumed [kL]	168,572.92	193,094.52	150,373.16
W2 Units of metered water consumed normalised by FTE, headcount or other			
Water per unit of FRD FTE [kL/FRD]	857.09	946.54	714.87
Water per unit of floor space [kL/m ²]	11.34	12.99	10.78
Water per unit of Visitors [kL/Visitors]	0.08	0.11	0.10

Waste and Recycling

General waste figures increased by 38 per cent compared to 2021–22 figures in total. This can be attributed to major works in the Dry Riverbed area at Cranbourne Gardes, which required disposal of a significant amount of soil materials to landfill that could not be recycled. This increased Cranbourne Gardens' general waste figures by 46 per cent from 2021–22 figures. Melbourne Gardens general

waste figures were down by 18 per cent compared to 2021–22.

Green waste converted to mulch is also up this year by 47 per cent compared to 2021–22 in total. This increase is due to the additional green waste that needed to be converted to mulch at the Melbourne site, as green waste to mulch machinery was in-part out of order in 2021–22.

Cranbourne Gardens continues to have a public 'take your rubbish home' policy, with only public bins provided in the public toilets and café. Staff kitchen minimum waste, composting and recycling continues across both sites, as does recycling of RBGV uniforms, toner cartridge, e-waste and batteries. Efforts to eliminate single use plastic also continue.

	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21
WR1 Total units of waste disposed of by waste stream and disposal method [kg]			
Landfill (total)	305,545.00	221,978.00	185,650.00
General Waste	260,975.00	161,138.00	156,850.00
Public Waste to Landfill	44,570.00	60,840.00	28,800.00
Recycling/recovery (disposal)	1,132,255.00	712,759.60	731,780.00
Cardboard and Paper	8,950.00	17,213.20	5,320.00
Commingled Recycling	5,544.00	57,429.20	12,660.00
Green Waste converted to mulch	1,092,621.00	472,697.20	581,800.00
Soil	25,140.00	165,420.00	132,000.00
Total units of waste disposed [kg]	1,437,800.00	934,737.60	917,430.00
WR1 Total units of waste disposed of by waste stream and disposal method %			
General waste	18.15%	17.24%	20.24%
Recycling/recovery (disposal)			
Cardboard and Paper	0.62%	1.84%	0.58%
Commingled Recycling	0.39%	6.14%	1.38%
Green Waste converted to mulch	75.99%	50.57%	63.42%
Soil	1.75%	17.70%	14.39%

**Royal Botanic Gardens Board Financial Management Compliance Attestation
Statement**

I, Chris Trotman, on behalf of the Responsible Body, certify that the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria has no Material Compliance Deficiency with respect to the applicable Standing Directions under the *Financial Management Act* 1994 and Instructions.



Chris Trotman
Chairperson
Royal Botanic Gardens Board

14 September 2023

Compliance with the Building Act 1993

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria (RBGV) owns and maintains more than 50 buildings and shelters across its two sites and is therefore required to include a statement on its compliance with provisions of the *Building Act 1993*.

RBGV has the following mechanisms in place to ensure conformity with building standards:

- A Building Surveyor is appointed to assess any works that involve alterations, additions, or structural repair to a building and a Building Permit issued where deemed necessary.
- All consultants and contractors engaged to work on RBGV buildings are vetted to ensure that they hold the appropriate licenses and registration.

The following mechanisms are in place for inspection, reporting, scheduling, and carrying out rectification works on existing buildings:

- Routine and scheduled maintenance audits and reporting
- Ongoing routine and responsive servicing and repair
- All essential safety measure inspections undertaken by a registered Building Surveyor with compliance issues being responded to and progressed as required.

Major works (greater than \$50,000) conducted at Melbourne Gardens:

- Major building restoration works were completed on the Terrace and E-Gate Lodge.
- A new Changing Places Facility was constructed within the Melbourne Observatory Building.
- Major restorations were completed on the Perimeter Fence and five entry gates.
- The Tecoma Gate entrance was upgraded with a new gate, artwork, and landscaping.
- New wayfinding signage has been installed throughout the Gardens.
- Pedestrian paths were upgraded and improved at various locations across the site.
- Security cameras were installed across the site.

Major works (greater than \$50,000) conducted at Cranbourne Gardens as follows:

- Major interior refurbishment was completed at the Visitor Centre.
- A new lift and associated building structure were constructed outside the Visitor Centre.
- New wildlife protection fencing and road underpass tunnels were installed along Philip Moors Drive, and paving upgrades conducted in the Australian Garden.
- Major landscape renewals were completed for the Dry Riverbed and Arid Garden.
- A new nature-based playground was constructed in the conservation area.

Maintenance Works

The following infrastructure and facilities management practices were carried out at both Melbourne Gardens and Cranbourne Gardens:

- Routine and scheduled maintenance audits and reporting
- Ongoing routine responsiveness servicing and repair
- All essential safety measure inspections undertaken by a registered Building Surveyor with compliance being responded to and progressed as required.

Permits and Emergency and Building Orders

Disclosure about buildings owned or controlled by Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria.

- 10 Building Permits were issued. These were for Restoration Works at E-Gate Lodge and The Terrace (x2, x1 for fit out and x1 for roof frame works), the new Changing Places Facility, a new Gantry in the Works Yard and GMT Pillars installation at Melbourne Gardens; and the Visitor Centre refurbishment, new Lift, new Stringybark Boardwalk, and extension to the Ian Potter Lakeside Kiosk at Cranbourne Gardens.
- 5 Certificates of Final Completion were issued. These were for Restoration Works at E-Gate Lodge, fitout of The Terrace, and the new Changing Places Facility at Melbourne Gardens; and the Visitor Centre refurbishment and the new Lift at Cranbourne Gardens.
- There were no Occupancy Permits issued.

Conformity

Changing Places Facility. Room now has a permitted use "Public Assembly" BCA Class of building "9b". There is also a performance solution with respect to the room, to accept a reduced door opening width of 915mm in lieu of 950mm – providing suitable access for people who are using the facility.

The Cranbourne Gardens Visitor Centre and entrance to the Australian Garden were also brought into conformity as part of the refurbishment works.

Three Melbourne Gardens buildings were required to be brought into conformity, for which Building Permits and Performance Solutions are being obtained: — The Tropical Glasshouse has a closed causeway that exceeds exit thresholds — The Gardens House has a ramp that does not comply with National Construction Code and AS1428 – Design for Access and Mobility — The Herbarium has storage within 500mm of sprinkler heads on cabinets obstructing sprinklers within.

The presence of mould and indoor air quality issues previously identified in various buildings at Melbourne Gardens is being remediated through an ongoing program of works. All occupied areas identified in the report have been made safe or had their activities relocated to ensure safety of staff and visitors.

Emergency and building orders: None for either site.

Additional information available on request FRD221

In compliance with the requirements of the Standing Directions of the Minister for Finance, details in respect of the items listed below have been retained by RBGV and are available in full on request, subject to the provisions of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*:

- a. Details of publications produced by RBGV about itself, and how these can be obtained
- b. Details of any major external reviews carried out on RBGV
- c. Details of major research and development activities undertaken by RBGV
- d. Details of major promotional, public relations and marketing activities undertaken by RBGV to develop community awareness of the entity and its services
- e. Details of changes in prices, fees, charges, rates and levies charged
- f. A statement on industrial relations within RBGV
- g. A statement of completion of declarations of pecuniary interests by relevant officers
- h. All contractors engaged, services provided, and expenditure committed for each engagement (in addition to the information included in RBGV's annual report)

The information is available on request from:

Freedom of Information Officer
Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria
Phone: (03) 9252 2300
E-mail: foi@rbg.vic.gov.au

Additional information included in annual report

Details in respect to the following items have been included in RBGV's annual report on pages indicated below:

- i. Assessments and measures undertaken to improve the occupational health and safety of employees.
- j. A list of of RBGV's major committees and the purpose of each committee.
- k. Details of overseas visits undertaken by senior officers.

Information that is not applicable to Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria:

- l. A declaration of shares held by senior officers (no shares have been issued in Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria).



Disclosure index



Legislation	Requirement	Page
Declaration in Report of Operations		
SD 5.2.3	Responsible Body Declaration	1
Year in Review		
	Chairperson and Director and Chief Executive's report	2
MRO	Vision, Mission, Values	4
FRD 22	Manner of establishment and responsible Minister (s)	13
FRD 22	Objectives, functions, powers and duties	6
Performance reporting: Non-financial		
FRD 22, FRD 27	Achievements, operational performance, key Initiatives	18–31
Financial information: Financial		
FRD 22	Five-year financial summary	45
MRO, FRD 22, FRD 27	Significant changes in financial position	44
	Summary of performance against budgetary objectives	43
	Significant changes or factors affecting performance	44
FRD22	Subsequent Events	44
Governance and Organisational structure		
FRD 22	Organisational structure and corporate governance	17
FRD 22	Governing body	14
FRD 22, SD 3.2.1	Audit and Risk committee membership and roles	15
FRD 22	Board committees	15
FRD 22	Occupational health and safety	96
Workforce data		
FRD 22	Public sector values and employment principles	93
RD 22, FRD 29	Workforce data	93
FRD 22	Workforce Inclusion Policy	96
FRD 15	Executive Officer data	95

Other information

FRD 25	Local jobs first	104
FRD 22	Government advertising expenditure	103
FRD 22	Consultancy expenditure	103
FRD 22H	ICT expenditure	104
FRD 12B	Major contracts	104
FRD 22H	Freedom of information	105
FRD 22	Building Act 1993	115
FRD 22	Competitive Neutrality Policy	105
PID Act FRD 22	Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012	105
FRD 24	Office-based environmental impacts	107
MRO	DataVic access policy	105
FRD 22	Additional information available on request	116
SD 5.1.4	Financial Management Compliance attestation	114

Acronyms:

FRD	Financial Reporting Direction
MRO	Model Report of Operations
SD	Standing Direction
PID Act	Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012





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