

Media Release

Steve Dimopoulos MP

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events
Minister for Creative Industries



Monday, 26 June 2023

TWO MILLION REASONS TO LOVE STATE LIBRARY VICTORIA

Australia's busiest public library has hit the record books, with the State Library Victoria welcoming a record-breaking 2,071,251 visitors through the doors in the past 12 months – attracting people of all ages and backgrounds to the city landmark.

Marking the start of the busy school holiday period for the Library, Minister for Creative Industries Steve Dimopoulos joined State Library Victoria CEO Paul Duldig and Library staff today to mark the milestone visitation.

With the growing demand for the Library's services throughout 2022-23, an average of 730 people walked through the doors every hour. In May alone, the Library hit a daily visitor record twice – with two days recording more than 9,000 visits.

A treasured icon in the heart of Melbourne's CBD, the State Library Victoria attracts visitors of all ages and backgrounds, with 79 per cent of visitors under 35 years old, and 51 per cent culturally and linguistically diverse - providing free access to education and inspiration for all.

Established in 1854, State Library Victoria has been a popular destination for Victorians and visitors for 167 years. Whilst being a hub for local students and an essential resource for researchers, the Library is also a popular, free attraction for families and interstate and international visitors.

In a visit to the Library, you can see priceless items from Victoria's history such as Ned Kelly's armour and Jerilderie Letter, take part in a storytelling workshop or activities for young people, gain business advice for your startup, view a 4000-year-old clay tablet showing one of the world's earliest forms of writing and much more.

Visitation numbers will only increase with the State Library Victoria's school holiday activities, including LEGO Robotics workshops, behind-the-scenes tours of the Library's secret spaces and an exhibition of more than 140 photographs from the State Collection alongside emerging and established Victorian storytellers.

The record-breaking figures follow the \$88.1 million Vision 2020 redevelopment project which was completed in December 2019. The project opened up 40 per cent more space within the Library to the public, boosting its program offering and increasing seating by 70 per cent to accommodate an ever-growing demand for its services.

The redevelopment of one of the world's oldest public libraries was made possible with a \$60.4 million investment from the Andrews Labor Government alongside private and public donations.

State Library Victoria is free to visit and is open 7 days a week. For opening times and to find out what's on, visit www.slv.vic.gov.au

Quotes attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Steve Dimopoulos

"State Library Victoria has been a treasured icon of our city and state for generations. It was established as 'the People's University' and today it continues to provide free access to knowledge, inspiration and fun for all."

"These numbers show that our Library is as relevant and vital now as it was 167 years ago, and it's wonderful seeing the building absolutely pumping with Victorians and visitors of all ages and backgrounds."

Media contact: Bodil Droga 0413 701 929 | bodil.droga@minstaff.vic.gov.au

Quotes attributable to State Library Victoria CEO Paul Duldig

“It is clear from the rush every day at opening time that the Library is at the heart of a fresh enthusiasm for Victoria’s cultural landmarks and continues to play a vital role in enriching the lives of visitors, researchers and students.”

“Vision 2020 was designed to make State Library Victoria more accessible, adaptable and innovative. That people are flooding in stands as a clear endorsement of what has been a labour of love for our donors and our staff.”