

Media Release

Jaclyn Symes MLC

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Treasurer

Minister for Industrial Relations

Minister for Regional Development



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BENDIGO ART GALLERY REDEVELOPMENT READY TO ROLL

Bendigo Art Gallery will take its status as a world-class cultural facility and tourism drawcard to a new level with a major redevelopment set to begin early next year – backed by the Allan Labor Government.

Minister for Creative Industries Colin Brooks representing the Minister for Regional Development Jaclyn Symes today joined Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards at the Gallery to announce that the highly anticipated redevelopment will get underway early next year.

The project is being funded by a \$21 million investment from the Allan Labor Government, \$9 million from the City of Greater Bendigo, \$4 million from the Gallery Board, and \$9.35 million in philanthropic support. The redevelopment will transform the building – and its impact on the community – for generations to come.

The project will deliver a new second-floor blockbuster exhibition space, expand the Gallery's storage capacity, and add an innovative learning centre, theatrette, and a Traditional Owner Place of Keeping for Dja Dja Wurrung cultural material.

Having outgrown its current facilities, the redevelopment will ensure the Gallery continues to attract and deliver the best of local and international exhibitions, while also enhancing its programs for the local community.

Bendigo Art Gallery is a key tourism driver for the region, generating more than \$113 million in economic impact for Greater Bendigo since 2012 through its blockbuster exhibition program. *Frida Kahlo: In Her Own Image* has sold over 50,000 tickets since opening in March, with nearly 90 per cent of visitors coming from outside Bendigo.

Construction is expected to commence in early 2026 and is set to reopen in early 2028. A program of offsite exhibitions will be staged across Bendigo during construction to continue delivering arts and culture opportunities for visitors, businesses, community and students.

For more information, visit rdv.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Regional Development Jaclyn Symes

"The Gallery redevelopment will enhance this world-class destination and make even more people choose to visit Bendigo."

"Our funding for this project is part of the more than \$45 billion we have invested over the last ten years to make sure our regional cities and towns are even better places to live, work, stay and play."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Colin Brooks

"This region has an incredible creative scene and we're proudly backing Bendigo Art Gallery to ensure this cultural and economic powerhouse can continue to flourish into the future."

"This is exciting news for local and visiting art and culture lovers, the local community and local businesses, who can look forward to future exhibitions that will boost the local economy even more once the works are complete."

Quote attributable to Premier and Member for Bendigo East Jacinta Allan

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"Bendigo Art Gallery is already an iconic cultural destination not only in Victoria but in Australia. I'm proud to make sure the gallery continues to thrive and welcome visitors for generations to come in a boost for tourism and local jobs."

Quotes attributable to Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards

"This is a proud moment for our region – this project will support local creatives, create opportunities for young people and showcase the very best of Bendigo to the world."

Quotes attributable to City of Greater Bendigo Mayor Cr Andrea Metcalf

"It is exciting to confirm this city-defining project is going ahead, ready to deliver a fantastic outcome."

"Today's announcement intends to give certainty to our community, particularly the many businesses that benefit from the tourism generated by the Gallery."

Quotes attributable to Gallery Director Jessica Bridgfoot

"This project will meet key objectives and realise our original vision to deliver 'The People's Gallery' – a place that empowers the Bendigo and broader Victorian community through accessibility, education, shared economic benefit and celebrating our Traditional Owners."

"The Gallery will deliver a series of pop-up exhibitions and public programs around the city to attract visitors and engage the community and students during the redevelopment period."