

Media Release

The Hon Colin Brooks MP
Minister for Industry and Advanced Manufacturing
Minister for Creative Industries



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NEW PRESIDENT TO LEAD STATE LIBRARY VICTORIA'S NEXT ERA

As the State Library Victoria marks its 170th anniversary, the iconic institution will usher in a new era with the appointment of respected public and private sector leader Helen Silver AO as the 25th President of the Library Board of Victoria.

Minister Brooks today announced Ms Silver's appointment – to lead the next chapter for one of the states most celebrated public spaces – supporting learning, research and community connection.

It follows the retirement of Christine Christian AO who has served the Library as a board Director since 2013 and as President since 2021.

Helen Silver AO has dedicated her career to ensuring strong governance in major public and private sector organisations.

She was the CEO and Secretary of Victoria's Department of Premier and Cabinet between 2008-2013, where she led the state through major events such as the Black Saturday bushfires. She also led the arts portfolio and Arts Victoria – the government's creative body now known as Creative Victoria.

Alongside board and executive roles in the insurance, banking and infrastructure sectors, Ms Silver also has a long-standing connection to the creative industries. She currently serves as Chair of the Australian Children's Television Foundation and previously served on the board of Victorian Arts Centre Trust and Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

Ms Silver's appointment follows the appointment of renowned librarian Christine Mackenzie AM and historian and academic and author Emeritus Professor Peter McPhee who joined the board as Directors earlier this month bringing a wealth of expertise and experience across the library, history and research sectors.

Minister Brooks paid tribute to Christine Christian AO for her leadership as President, championing free access to the Library's spaces and collections. Ms Christian has strengthened the Library's foundations as a global cultural destination that sits at the heart of Victoria's cultural life.

Ms Christian also looked to the future, funding StartSpace, the Library's free entrepreneurial hub now supporting over 2,000 members. Minister Brooks said her vision and generosity ensure the Library continues to inspire, educate, and provide knowledge and opportunity for all Victorians.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Colin Brooks MP

"Helen Silver is an extraordinary leader with a wealth of experience at the helm of major organisations that serve the Victorian public. I look forward to working with Helen and the board as they take the Library into its next era"

"I congratulate and thank Christine Christian AO for her leadership as President and over a decade of service to the library and for her generosity and vision ensuring the library lives up to its purpose as a space where anyone can freely access knowledge to reach their potential"

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Quote attributable to Helen Silver AO

"I am honoured to join the Library Board of Victoria. The Library's mission is vital, to provide free access to knowledge, support research and learning, and enrich the lives of all Victorians.

I look forward to supporting the Library's continued service to the community and helping expand opportunities for every Victorian to discover, learn, and connect."

Quote attributable to Christine Christian AO

"In my time as President I have pursued many goals but have been guided by a singular ambition - to further realise Redmond Barry's idea of the State Library as the people's university. After five years, I leave knowing that thousands more Victorians, from all walks of life, have walked through the doors and either gazed in wonder at the glories of the building, or been enriched by exhibitions and collections.

"It's been a joy and a privilege to pursue this work with the many talented people who work at the Library, and with the energetic assistance of my fellow board directors a true honour to help steward Victoria's treasures while ensuring our great Library continues to evolve for future generations."