



Foundation  
for the WA Museum



2023 / 2024

# ANNUAL REPORT



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*We recognise and respect the Traditional Owners of this Country and their continued connection to the lands, waters and skies.*

# Chair's Message

I am honoured to share our Annual Report 2023–24 with you in my inaugural year of chairing the Foundation for the WA Museum. The Foundation is a key pillar of support for the WA Museum and its work as the custodian of the State's natural, scientific and cultural heritage, centre of research, and hub for learning and education activities. With its state-wide reach, the WA Museum also plays an important role in the heart of regional communities. Having grown up between Fremantle and the Goldfields myself, I truly appreciate the importance of each of the seven WA Museum locations as part of the social fabric of our State.

The WA Museum aims to explore the past, question the present and shape the future.

As we all face a rapidly changing environment, the Foundation has strengthened its focus on the Museum's sustainability work with the launch of the Marine Sustainability Fund in March 2024. This dedicated endowment fund specifically aims to address the urgent need to fund the WA Museum's research and fieldwork in our life-sustaining waters. We were fortunate to host the esteemed film maker James Cameron at the Fund launch to celebrate the display of his personal items which formed part of the *JAMES CAMERON – CHALLENGING THE DEEP* exhibition in Fremantle.

To ensure the Foundation's endowment remains a self-sustaining source of support for the WA Museum, the Foundation team continues to work towards growing its Discovery Endowment Fund and Marine Sustainability Fund through personal

donations and corporate activity. In parallel, the Foundation's Investment Committee is focussed on prudent funds management and responsible investment strategies which also play a vital role in sustaining the endowment.

I would like to thank our outgoing acting Chair James McClements for his steady and visionary leadership of the Foundation as Board Chair between 2022 and 2024. James and his family have consistently demonstrated their long-standing connection to the Foundation as both donors to the general endowment, as well as inaugural founding donors of the Foundation's International Exhibition Fund. I look forward to the contribution James will continue to make to our Board as a Director and active member of the Investment Committee.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Kate Budiselik, who resigned after serving six years on the Foundation's Board. Kate has been a diligent and active contributor to the Foundation Board and Investment Committee, and a significant donor to the International Exhibition Fund. During her time on the Board and chairing the Investment Committee, she was instrumental in establishing and overseeing the Discovery Endowment Fund's investment strategy, which enabled our Discovery Endowment Fund to grow to the point where a significant grant can be distributed to the WA Museum each year.

Thank you to my fellow Board Directors and Investment Committee members for their invaluable contribution to the success of the

Foundation for the WA Museum during this financial year. To our CEO Coralie Bishop and the Foundation team, thank you for creating, strengthening, and stewarding the many connections and relationships that help the Foundation to thrive. And thank you to the Trustees, CEO Alec Coles OBE and the entire team at the Western Australian Museum, who are taking the Museum from strength to strength.

Together, we can create a truly meaningful and impactful legacy. I look forward to leading our shared journey for the benefit of future generations.

**Anna Shave**  
Chair



**Pictured:** Tianqi Lithium Gallery *Connections*, WA Museum Boola Bardip WA, photo by Kelly Pilgrim-Byrne (7 to 1 Photography). **Opposite:** Anna Shave, photo by Miles Noel Photography.



# CEO's Message

The past financial year was filled with exciting firsts.

In August, the Foundation for the WA Museum's 2023 Impact Circle came together and awarded the 2023 Impact Circle Grant to a faunal and maritime archaeological survey of the Houtman Abrolhos Islands.

September could have been renamed "science communication month". Scotch College student Obi Rogers was named the winner of FameLab Academy. Rolling out our new program format for FameLab Australia, the science communication skills development program and competition aimed at early-career researchers, we were able to welcome finalists back to Perth for the first time since the pandemic. Olivia Carroll, an immunologist and microbiologist representing the University of Newcastle and Hunter Medical Research Institute, was crowned the FameLab Australia 2023 winner.

In October, we celebrated the Foundation's inaugural annual strategic grant to the WA Museum. The grant funded the acquisition of the Red Rock Art Collection and Archive, and our supporters greatly appreciated the opportunity to view select pieces of the collection.

A new partnership between the WA Museum, the Foundation for the WA Museum and mining company CITIC Pacific Mining enabled the WA Museum to undertake two field trips to recover rare and nearly complete Diprotodon skeletons from the Pilbara. The excavated fossils of these extinct, giant marsupials will form part of the WA Museum collection and help experts to build a greater understanding of Diprotodon biology and behaviour. The excitement created by the new fossil discoveries is testament to palaeontology's power to fascinate and awaken our curiosity.

The support of our Founding Partner Wesfarmers has made it possible to curate the Ngalang Koort Conversations, a new series that allows us to engage in important conversations about topics that are central to our existence and future. We welcomed AC Grayling as the inaugural speaker in November 2023. Who better than a world-renowned philosopher to question whether artificial intelligence will be humankind's 'last invention' in our first Ngalang Koort Conversation – certainly a topic central to our future.



In March 2024, our focus was on the WA Maritime Museum and the WA Museum's work in marine research. On a perfect Fremantle autumn evening, we celebrated the launch of the WA Maritime Museum's exhibition *JAMES CAMERON – CHALLENGING THE DEEP* with a preview event for Foundation supporters and WA Museum Friend members. James Cameron was able to visit Perth for the exhibition, and we launched the Foundation's new Marine Sustainability Fund at his immensely popular sold-out public talk. The fund will support the WA Museum's marine and ocean strategic initiatives to increase our understanding of our life-sustaining waters.

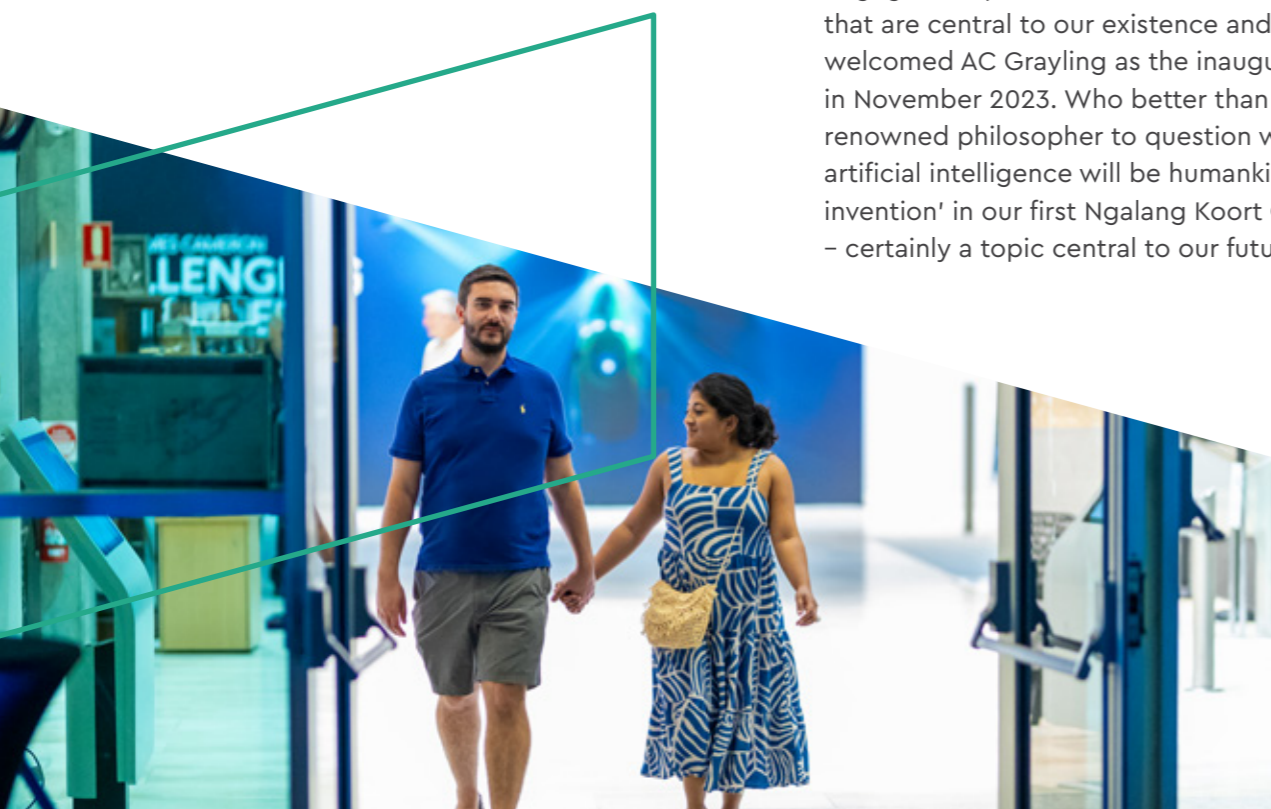
I would like to thank all Foundation Board Directors for their ongoing support and strategic vision for the Foundation. Special thanks go to retiring Director Kate Budiselik. Thanks also to James McClements for his time as Acting Chair and current Chair Anna Shave for their leadership, advice, guidance and fruitful working relationship.

Our work would not be impactful without strategic alignment and close collaboration with our colleagues at the Western Australian Museum – thank you to WA Museum CEO Alec Coles OBE, the executive team and all staff at the WA Museum. It has been a privilege and joy to deepen and expand our collaboration for the benefit of the WA Museum.

Thank you to my wonderful team at the Foundation for their enthusiasm in exploring new opportunities and building new connections, their passion for the work of the WA Museum, and their dedication to growing our endowment fund to support the WA Museum.

And, finally, a deep and sincere thank you to all our partners and donors who have joined us in our quest to ensure the WA Museum can discover more, contribute to more scientific research, and share more knowledge and stories with our community. We cannot do it without you!

**Coralie Bishop**  
Chief Executive Officer

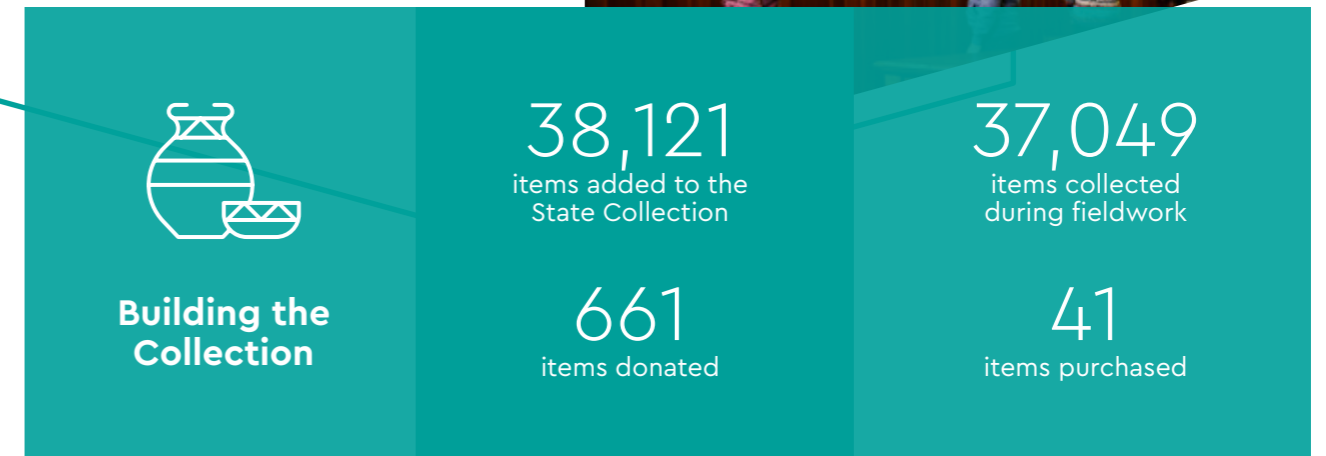
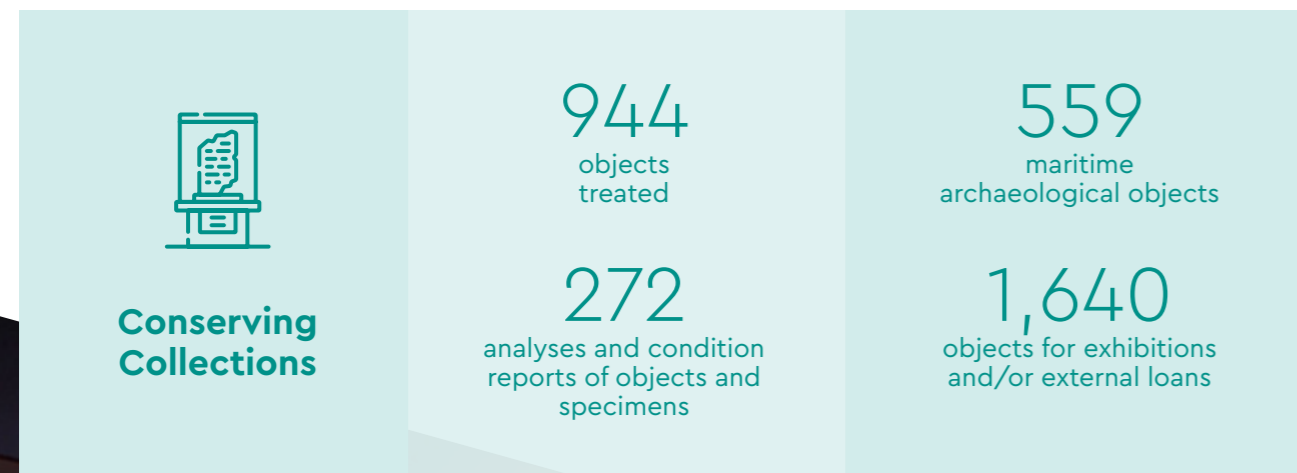


**Pictured opposite page:** *JAMES CAMERON – CHALLENGING THE DEEP* exhibition preview, photo by Michael Goh. **This page:** Coralie Bishop, photo by Miles Noel Photography.

# The WA Museum's Impact

## WA Museum Highlights 2023–24

This is a snapshot of the WA Museum's extensive achievements in 2023–24 that have contributed significantly to local, state, and global scientific communities. The support of the Foundation for the WA Museum and its partners and donors assisted WA Museum to carry out more impactful research, education, and engagement initiatives.



## Visitor Survey Highlights

Impact surveys conducted in December 2023 and June 2024 gathered feedback from visitors to the WA Museum's Perth metropolitan and regional museum sites. This data provides important insights into audience perceptions of the WA Museum. The comparison data indicates changes compared to the previous financial year.



88%

▲ 2%

Agreed their visit to the WA Museum gave them a sense of joy, beauty and wonder



88%

▲ 6%

Agreed visiting the WA Museum sparked their curiosity and made them want to find out more



76%

▲ 1%

Agreed the WA Museum provides enjoyable and vibrant spaces for visitors



NPS=50

▼ 4%

Indicating attendees would recommend the WA Museum to friends, family or colleagues



87%

▲ 6%

Agreed that the WA Museum made them feel welcome and included



68%

▼ 4%

Agreed the WA Museum celebrates Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Culture



92%

▲ 8%

Felt it was important that the WA Museum exhibition they attended was happening in WA



88%

Intend to return to the WA Museum

## Visitor Comment Highlights

“

This organisation and its amazing buildings are central to the story of us/of our society. It connects us to the past and brings us to the now. The growth of its capacity to tell stories has dynamically changed in my lifetime. I trust this organisation with telling the stories – all the stories - of our human and natural environments.

“

Love all the exhibitions they are terrific thank you so much I love being part of this wonderful environment!! It is world class – well done!

“

This was our third trip to the Perth Museum as a family in the last 12 months and we always find new displays to look at and to keep your mind engaged. Thank you for the great work, and to the very helpful staff.

“

Your toddler sessions are fantastic, it's great to start my little one on the journey of knowledge. Get her excited about science & nature. The tours were perfectly set up for ones under 4 years and got them excited & engaged.

“

For a city with a small population, we are very lucky to have a world-class museum that is constantly bringing rare and interesting exhibitions here for all to experience and enjoy. Each exhibition has been curated in a way that showcases its uniqueness in terms of historical, and social-cultural contexts which bring the past, and the exhibits alive. I am quite proud to have an iconic building of this calibre in my home city.

“

The *To The Moon* visit was amazing! Always loved the display and learning at WA Museum. So good for children and adults as well! Great insights! Thank you for all the effort.

“

Great experience. Loved the STEM displays. Visited twice to see it all in detail it was so good.

# The Foundation's Impact: Supporting the WA Museum

## Our Purpose

To enhance the cultural, scientific and social impact of the WA Museum.

## Our Mission

The Foundation for the WA Museum aims to secure its long-term financial sustainability through increased stakeholder support in order to fund high impact WA Museum initiatives.

The Foundation's support for the WA Museum is focused on growing the endowment funds under management; obtaining direct funding support for specific WA Museum projects; and setting up a program of sustainable, regular grant giving that supports the strategic priorities of the WA Museum.

The Foundation assists the WA Museum by supporting storytelling initiatives and major exhibitions, funding ground-breaking scientific research and discovery, and providing the means to acquire new items for the Western Australian State Collection. The Foundation also helps to enable education, learning and outreach programs, and supports regional Museum activities.

## The Discovery Endowment Fund

All gifts to the Foundation flow into the Discovery Endowment Fund, a responsibly managed charitable investment portfolio, which is the source of annual grants to the WA Museum now and in future years.

The Discovery Endowment Fund is a true endowment, meaning that it will never be exhausted. It will grow over time to keep pace with rising costs and needs. Donations to the Foundation for the WA Museum are invested in perpetuity and achieve compound growth. Through this robust fund, the Foundation can support the WA Museum's high impact initiatives into the future.

Through the Foundation's Annual Grant Program, carefully calculated and measured returns flow to the WA Museum. This allows the Museum to bring major strategic initiatives to fruition, which would not be possible otherwise, and reach beyond core business activities covered by State government funding.

## Marine Sustainability Fund

The Marine Sustainability Fund has been created with a sense of urgency to fund the WA Museum's research and fieldwork in our life-sustaining waters. It was launched during filmmaker and deep-sea explorer James Cameron's visit to Perth in March 2024.

The Fund's vision is to support the WA Museum's marine and ocean strategic initiatives to increase understanding of our life-sustaining waters by exploring the past, questioning the present, and shaping the future.

Managed by the Foundation's highly experienced Investment Committee, the fund

is a self-sustaining and permanent source of finance through annual grants to the Museum. The fund will function as a true endowment and provide sustainable funding. Through the establishment of this robust fund, the Foundation can specifically support vital WA Museum marine initiatives in perpetuity and allow the WA Museum to:

- conduct research to inform and protect our future
- discover, investigate and protect maritime cultural heritage
- engage the WA community and inform contemporary scientific research.



**Pictured opposite page:** James Cameron: In Conversation, photo by Miles Noel  
Photography courtesy of WA Museum. **This page:** JAMES CAMERON – CHALLENGING THE DEEP exhibition preview, photo by Michael Goh.



# STEM Education: FameLab and FameLab Academy

In 2023, the Foundation presented the science communication programs FameLab Australia and FameLab Academy. FameLab Australia is aimed at early career researchers nation-wide, while FameLab Academy was delivered to Year 8 and 9 school students in Western Australia.

## FameLab Australia 2023

In 2023, 76 applications were received for FameLab from around Australia. After the initial online science communication training, applicants were invited to submit a video demonstrating their talent at explaining their research in the FameLab format: three minutes in length, with an emphasis on the judging criteria of content, clarity and charisma.

54 applicants progressed to the semi-final round. After in-depth science communication training, the participants competed online in four region semi-finals: New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia, and a combination of South Australia and Tasmania, in which 12 finalists were selected.

After intensive masterclass training as well as specialised media training, the 12 finalists assembled in Perth for an additional three days of workshops and for the final event itself. The final was held at Hackett Hall, WA Museum Boola Bardip, in front of an audience of approximately 300 people, and was livestreamed around the world.

Olivia Carroll, an immunologist and microbiologist representing the University of Newcastle and Hunter Medical Research Institute, was named the winner of FameLab Australia 2023. CSIRO astrometallurgist Dr Matthew Shaw and Curtin University's neuroscientist Melissa Papini were named runners-up. Olivia went on to represent Australia in the international Final held in November 2023.



## Participant comments and feedback

“

My communication (lectures, workshops, conference presentations) has drastically improved and I have more confidence.

—

Doing FameLab was one of the highlights of my PhD!

—

I loved FameLab so much! It was one of the best experiences of my science career so far!

“

I felt re-inspired with science/research hearing about what everyone studies and passion for science communication – this has had a positive impact on my mood at work and hence my research. Solidified my core passion/goal to encourage more creative young people to consider STEM studies i.e., will begin reaching out to do school visits.





## FameLab Academy 2023

Approximately 430 students from twelve Western Australian schools participated in the FameLab Academy science communication training program in 2023. Each of the 12 schools named a finalist, who received individual mentoring from experienced science communicators before competing in the FameLab Academy Final.

In front of a live audience comprised of students from the 12 participating schools, their teachers, FameLab Academy partners, and VIPs, the

finalists demonstrated that they had researched their topics well and embraced the principles of science communication, producing informative and entertaining presentations.

The 2023 winner was Obi Rogers (Scotch College) with his presentation "The Fridge Compartment." Cassandra Avedikian (Mercedes College) and Siofra Cashman (Sacred Heart College) were named runners-up.



Congratulations on two wonderful events with the FameLab Australia and FameLab Academy finals. We were delighted to be able to attend both events and see all of the work done by FWAM to bring these programs together.

**The Department of Jobs Tourism, Science and Innovation**



It was quite marvellous and I am sure the Minister and all the sponsors agree how inspiring it is for those with budding STEM careers and for young people who may be FameLab contestants in the future. It is also a boost for STEM and WA Museum enerally in WA and across the country.

**Lyn Beazley**  
former Chief Scientist of WA



**Pictured:** FameLab Australia National Final 2023.  
Photos by Kelly Pilgrim-Byrne (7 to 1 Photography).

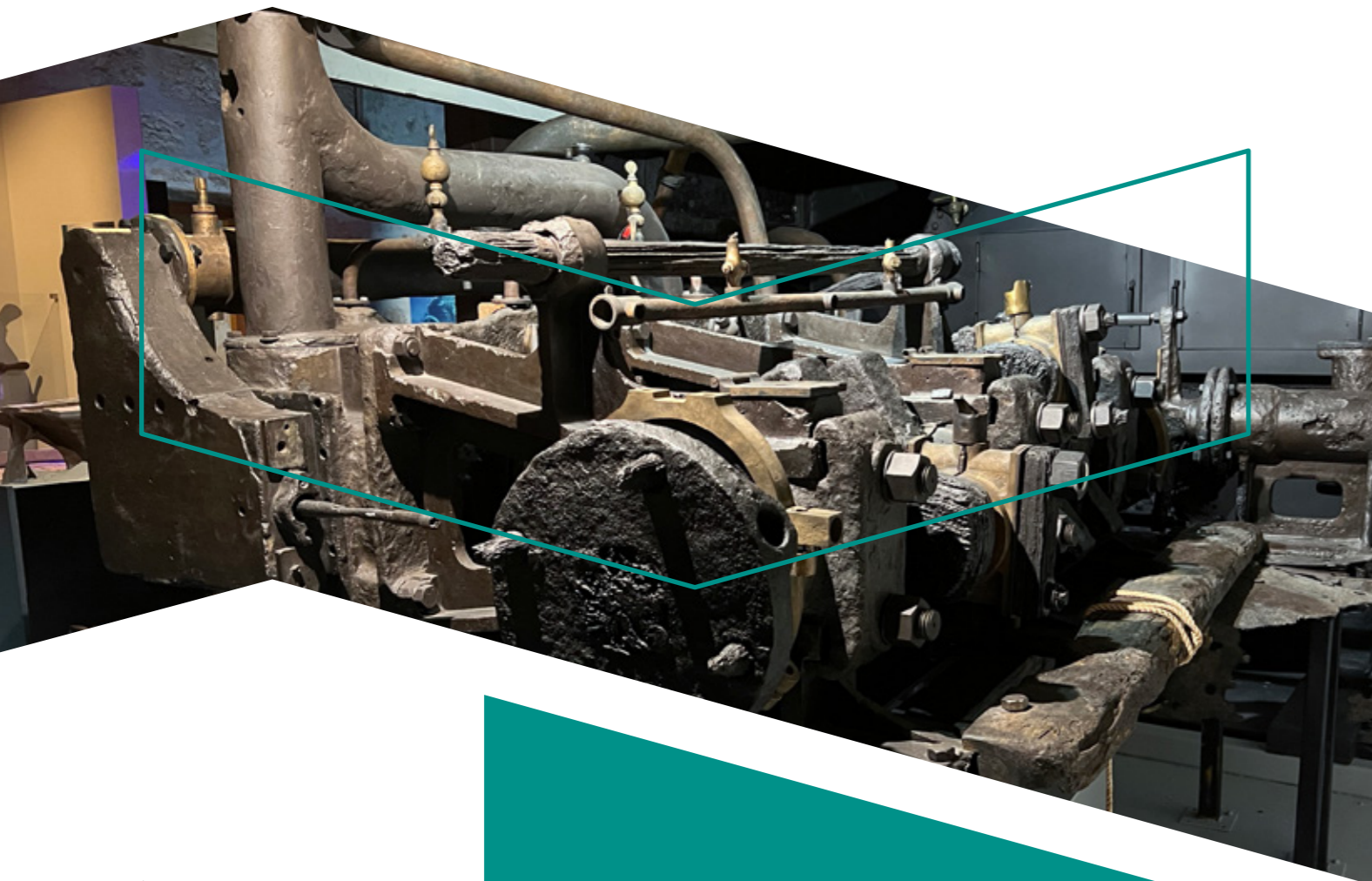
# Completed Grant Projects

## SS Xantho Gallery Refurbishment

In December 2023, the new visitor experience *SS Xantho: unlocking hidden stories of our State* was opened to the public at the WA Shipwrecks Museum in Fremantle. Visitors are able to explore the story of Western Australia's first coastal steamship. New multi-media and interactive platforms explain how one family and the *SS Xantho* were intricately linked to the social, economic, and cultural development of Western Australia in the late 1800s.

Visitors learn about the importance of steamships to the development of our State, the experiences of Aboriginal peoples and indentured Asian workers in the North West, and the groundbreaking work undertaken by the WA Museum to recover and conserve the *SS Xantho's* rare marine steam engine – the gallery's centrepiece.

The Foundation for the WA Museum provided partial funding for the gallery refurbishment and exhibition through one of the Foundation's 2022 Impact Circle Grants.



**Pictured:** SS Xantho Gallery, WA Shipwrecks Museum. Photos by Lowana Bibby courtesy of WA Museum.





## Nothing but Memories

The *Nothing but Memories* project is one of the first attempts by the WA Museum's History Department to undertake a large contemporary collecting project related to a traumatic event, where the nature of the events means objects may be difficult to collect, and the stories and intangible elements of the experience are the most important to document and record.

The *Nothing but Memories* project aimed to use a 'people-first' approach in the exploration of the experiences of Western Australian individuals and communities impacted by the Wooroloo bushfire and Tropical Cyclone Seroja, and give communities a platform to record their own stories. The aim was to capture as broad a range of experiences as possible, from local residents and evacuees, to volunteers, first responders and scientists. The impact of climate change and natural disasters on communities, and on individuals' sense of place were one of the themes explored by the project.

Between 2021 and 2024, the WA Museum worked closely with the Recovery Teams operating in these communities and conducted interviews with impacted residents in the Perth Hills and Mid West.

In total, 13 long form interviews and 30 video journals were recorded and then transcribed by WA Museum staff and volunteers, and two items were added to the WA Museum collection.

The Wooroloo Bushfire Recovery Team invited the WA Museum to participate in a Wellness Expo in Gidgegannup in March 2023, where the WA Museum team presented a showreel video featuring clips from all of the people interviewed in the Wooroloo bushfire. In 2024, a second showreel video featuring clips from the interviews on Cyclone Seroja was completed.

The project was made possible by a Foundation for the WA Museum Minderoo Grant, funded from the Foundation's Discovery Endowment Fund.

## Cretaceous Marine Vertebrates from the Giralia Anticline

The 2023 fieldtrip to the Giralia Range was the third consecutive annual field campaign in the area. Work continued towards revealing a 110-million-year-old marine ecosystem, with emphasis on vertebrates.

Like previous fieldtrips, it was highly successful and added many new specimens to the WA Museum's rapidly growing collection of Cretaceous marine vertebrates, including bony fish material, vertebrae of a juvenile ichthyosaur and shark teeth (including from a new species of anacoracid shark). The field trip also uncovered the first evidence of a super predator - an enamel-covered fragment subsequently identified as part of a large tooth from a plesiosaur (one of several types of plesiosaurs).

Several dozen gastroliths (stomach stones) and associated bone fragments were found, which are thought to have derived from a plesiosaur, and represent the first known gastroliths from Cretaceous rocks in Western Australia.

A total of 249 kg (dry weight) of sediment was collected and extraordinary preservation was confirmed when this large bulk sample was processed. Together with surface collecting

at the excavation site, the sample yielded 16 species of chondrichthyans (sharks and ratfishes) in a single stratigraphic interval spanning approx. 50,000 years.

The most exciting finds from the sample are rostral denticles and oral teeth of saw sharks. The finds represent the oldest record of saw sharks in the world and, together with other somewhat younger records from the lower Murchison River area, indicate that Western Australia's coastal water was the evolutionary birthplace for this unique group of sharks.

The team also uncovered the first evidence of skull material (a tooth) of a leptocleidid plesiosaur found in 2021 and excavated further in 2022. The plesiosaur might represent both a new genus and a new species.

Work continued to excavate a *Dwardius* shark site, with two more teeth being uncovered. An exceptionally well-preserved vertebra of a *Dwardius* shark was found a short distance away from the original excavation pit.

The field trip was made possible by a Foundation for the WA Museum Minderoo Grant, funded from the Foundation's Discovery Endowment Fund.



# Grant Projects in Progress

## From New Species to Shipwrecks – Houtman Abrolhos Islands

It has been over 25 years since a comprehensive multi-taxa marine biodiversity survey of the Houtman Abrolhos Islands was undertaken by the WA Museum.

Over a 14-day field trip, the project "From new species to shipwrecks: targeted marine faunal and maritime archaeological survey of the Houtman Abrolhos Islands" intends to undertake a biodiversity assessment of the major marine groups, studying fishes, molluscs, crustaceans, cnidarians, echinoderms, and poorly known and understudied fauna such as micro-molluscs.

Any potential changes in biodiversity may be identified by historical data comparison to the new faunal collections. In addition, the collection and preservation of new material in DNA-friendly ways will unlock additional opportunities to use modern genetic and genomic tools to detect new species.

Maritime archaeologists from the WA Museum will join the Aquatic Zoology team on the field trip, working together to support marine biota studies as well as further investigation and monitoring of historically significant underwater cultural heritage sites.

The Maritime Heritage team aims to assess, and record select shipwreck sites in the Abrolhos, ranging from the 17th to the 20th centuries. In-water surveys will allow wrecks that have not been visited before to be assessed for the first time. This information will contribute to the Museum's established wreck inspection program focussing on sites that have been previously difficult to access.

The field trip will help discover species new to science, collect genetic information to improve

the WA Museum's understanding of the existing collection and assess vulnerable underwater marine heritage to improve the understanding of shipwreck sites.

Planning for the field trip is underway, which is intended to take place in March 2025.

The Foundation for the WA Museum provided partial funding for the project through the 2023 Impact Circle Grant.

## WA Down Under Gallery Aquarium/Refurbishment

Work continues on the WA Down Under Gallery Aquarium Project, which seeks to add exhibits that focus on marine biodiversity and engage visitors with topics including ocean pollution, wildlife extinction, food security and climate change. The scope of the project includes:

- Installing two large aquariums representing the unique biodiversity of the South West Temperate region and the Swan River Estuary system.
- Creating a space where visitors can touch and study preserved and 3D-printed marine specimens, and examine them under a microscope linked to a digital screen.
- Creating the feeling of being not just immersed, but submerged in the gallery space through the installation of barnacles on the gallery support structures/beams.
- Engaging school students and increasing school visitation by developing curriculum-linked science programs centred on the new gallery exhibits.

The Foundation for the WA Museum provided partial funding for the gallery refurbishment and aquarium through one of the Foundation's 2022 Impact Circle Grants.



## Nyoongar Cultural Learning Resources for Fremantle Museums

A review of Aboriginal content displays for education and learning engagement within the WA Maritime Museum has revealed a structural challenge for education and programs focused on Aboriginal culture and heritage — a disconnect between the traditional language groups represented, and traditional owners that are available locally to address culture topics.

This created an opportunity for new initiatives supporting Aboriginal culture at the WA Maritime Museum, which connects with Fremantle's place and heritage. By connecting local Nyoongar culture to the storytelling opportunities within the WA Maritime Museum, diverse groups of visitors and learners can connect to both the traditions and the ongoing living culture of local elders and Aboriginal community representatives.

The project has been made possible by a Foundation for the WA Museum Munderoo Grant, funded from the Foundation's Discovery Endowment Fund.

## Purchase and Display of Pegmatite Specimens from the Sinclair Mine

Two polished slabs of lithium and caesium-bearing pegmatite from the Sinclair mine near Norseman were purchased by the WA Museum, one for display at the WA Museum Boola Bardip and the other for display at the Museum of the Goldfields. The Sinclair mine was Australia's first commercial caesium mine, having a rare concentration of the caesium-rich mineral pollucite. The thin slabs of colourful pegmatite are an excellent representation of the pegmatite from the Sinclair mine for the WA Museum collection.

The purchase was made possible by a Foundation for the WA Museum Munderoo Grant, funded from the Foundation's Discovery Endowment Fund.

**Pictured:** *Origins* Gallery, WA Museum Boola Bardip. Photo by Luke Riley Creative courtesy of WA Museum.

## Towards a World- leading Women's Sport Collection: A Pilot

The WA Museum's History Department has identified some key gaps in the representation of women's sport in the WA Museum's collection, particularly over the last 20 years. Considering the paucity of histories of women's sport, and with several women's sports undergoing significant growth and evolution in more recent times, it is important to document these changes and collect objects and stories from those involved. After reviewing the sports collection and literature, curators chose to target three sports: Australian rules football, cricket and basketball.

Many themes have emerged through the recent growth in literature and articles addressing women in sport. Limited media coverage and the difficulties women's sports have faced in attracting funding and sponsorship have been well documented along with blatant chauvinism. Less well known is the historical lack of research into women's sporting injuries which has contributed to more concussion and knee injuries. These themes have been covered in the interviews.

Given the Museum's interest in material objects, curators are interested in how changes in women's sport can be reflected in collectable items. This means discussion has sometimes focussed on how sporting codes are avoiding injuries and how codes are adapting fields, facilities, equipment or uniforms to suit women.

Overarching all these themes is women's and girls' love of sport, and their desire, like males, to be able to choose from a wide range, including those involving more physical interaction or that have held the national imagination for so long.

By 30 June 2024, three formal video interviews had been carried out by History staff. Interviewees to date are Jan Cooper (former National Manager for Women's and Girls' Pathways at the Australian Football League), Nathan Johansen (coach of the women's Railway Football Team and East Fremantle Development Squad in Geraldton) and Leanne Bidwell (instrumental in setting up women's cricket in Geraldton).

In addition to interviews, the WA Museum filmed footage of women's football and cricket teams training in Geraldton, which can complement the interviews.

This project was made possible by a Foundation for the WA Museum Minderoo Grant, funded from the Foundation's Discovery Endowment Fund.



## 2023–24 Annual Grant: Kalyenup 2026 & Legacy Collection

In 2023–24, the Foundation for the WA Museum distributed its second strategic annual grant to the WA Museum as part of the Foundation's Grant Distribution Policy. The WA Museum has allocated funding of approx. \$240,000 across two strategic projects – the Legacy Collection Project and the Kalyenup 2026 Project; and four smaller "Minderoo Grants".

The Legacy Collection Project aims to address the demand for access to WA Museum specimen data through the digitisation and registration of key sub-collections and objects held by the WA Museum. The project will allow the vast wealth of objects and information contained in the Museum's collections to reach a wider audience.

The Legacy Collection Project will involve the 3-D digitisation of iconic and threatened species specimens and sub-collections from CT scans; improving the accessibility of DNA tissue and sequences; the discovery and registration of new species and unknown specimens; the digitisation of historical records; and the digitisation and imaging of critical sections of the collections.

The Kalyenup 2026 Project aims to transform the Museum of the Great Southern site into

a stunning place of cultural meaning. The Foundation grant will support two elements of the proposed concept:

- **Exhibition: Entangled Knowledges and the Southern Frontier.** The ARC Linkage Project "Entangled Knowledges: Kaartdijin, Science and History in the Robert Neill Collection" aims to reverse the trajectories of Menang Nyungar knowledge embedded in a historical fish collection, returning language, stories, and fishing practices to the Menang community. New exhibitions and content will be designed with national and international touring capabilities, as well as online digital exhibitions.
- **Public artwork – consultation and artist commission.** A significant Menang artwork, embedded in the existing natural features and reflecting the site's unique history, will be developed for the Museum of the Great Southern site. The 2024 grant will fund the consultation phase and commissioning of this artwork.

Both projects will continue to be supported by the Foundation for the WA Museum in 2025 and 2026 as part of the annual strategic grant process.



Pictured: Reflections Gallery, WA Museum Boola Bardip.

Pictured: Museum of the Great Southern. Photos by Luke Riley Creative courtesy of WA Museum.



## Partnership Update

### Diprotodon Digs 2023 & 2024: Supported by CITIC Pacific Mining

In October 2023, a WA Museum palaeontology team recovered several rare and nearly complete Diprotodon skeletons at Du Boulay Creek, 100km south-west of Karratha.

Diprotodon are extinct marsupials, related to koalas and wombats. They are the largest marsupials that ever lived, weighing up to 2,800kg.

The fossil site lies within the Fortescue River floodplain. Diprotodon fossils were first recovered from the site in 1991; one of these is now on display at the WA Museum Boola Bardip.

The fossil site is unique in that several individuals are located close to each other. While further research is required, it appears that both adult and juvenile skeletons are present, suggesting

the site may have been on a major migration route. The skeletons were partly visible, including sections of skulls, jaws and teeth, and embedded in hard rock. They were at risk of heavy abrasion from flooding, so excavation was critical to preserve them.

In May 2024, a WA Museum team returned to the Pilbara to continue excavating Diprotodon skeletons.

After the fossils were transported to Perth, the skeletons became part of the WA Museum

collection, and enable experts to work on the skeletons and build a greater understanding of Diprotodon biology and behaviour.

Both field trips were enabled by a partnership between the WA Museum, the Foundation for the WA Museum, and nearby minesite operator CITIC Pacific Mining, who provided logistical and financial support, and conducted with support of the Traditional Owners, the Mardudhunera People.



Every single Diprotodon skeleton we unearth tells us a story about how they died. They also allow us to understand how they lived in these ancient mangroves and how they used the land in the past, around eighty to one hundred thousand years ago. It's an extraordinary site, one of a kind in the world!

**Dr Kenny Travouillon**  
Expedition Leader, WA Museum

Research and fieldwork is at the core of the Western Australian Museum's work and contributes to our knowledge of biodiversity, geodiversity and the environment of Western Australia. The new fossil discoveries have without a doubt confirmed the Du Boulay Creek site as being of major scientific significance in terms of ancient Australian megafauna.

**Alec Coles OBE**  
CEO, WA Museum

# Ngalang Koort Conversations



Wesfarmers is delighted to be a Founding Partner of WA Museum Boola Bardip and to be presenting the Ngalang Koort Conversations. We know that ideas-driven, creative, educationally-engaged communities are more agile, inclusive and innovative – and ultimately, better prepared to harness the possibilities and face the challenges our future holds. I hope the Ngalang Koort Conversations will play their part in connecting our community and stimulating discussions that help shape the future of our State.

**Michael Chaney**  
Chair of Wesfarmers

## 2023 Ngalang Koort Conversation with AC Grayling: Supported by Wesfarmers

Supported by Founding Partner Wesfarmers, the Foundation for the WA Museum created the Ngalang Koort ("Our Heart") Conversations lecture series in 2023, in order to explore topics of global importance with acclaimed international speakers. The conversation series will be focused on five broad themes – humanity, truth, enterprise, challenge and justice – and allow for a wide range of conversation topics.

The renowned philosopher A. C. Grayling was the inaugural speaker of the series. In front of a sell-out audience in the WA Museum Boola Bardip's Hackett Hall, he explored the question "Will AI be humankind's 'last invention'?" in a conversation with Robyn Owens, a mathematician and pioneering computational vision scientist, on 15 November 2023.



## New & Renewed Partners

In addition to CITIC Pacific Mining, the Foundation for the WA Museum welcomed a number of new and returning partners in 2023–24.

- Global law firm Herbert Smith Freehills became the Foundation for the WA Museum's legal partner.
- The University of Western Australia entered into a three-year partnership with the Foundation for the WA Museum to support FameLab Australia.
- The Forrest Research Foundation extended its partnership with the Foundation for the WA Museum to FameLab Australia.
- The Western Australian Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation renewed its support for FameLab in 2024.
- Comm-it partnered with the Foundation again to provide science communication training to all 2024 FameLab participants.
- The Community Broadcasting Foundation confirmed its support for FameLab until 2026.





# Bequest Update

## The World's Largest Assembly of Western Australian Postal Paraphernalia Now Online

Bessel Hanekamp donated his collection of over 30,000 stamp, postmark, and envelope samples from across WA's history to the WA Museum in November 2012.

Bessel's stamp collection, inherited from his father, evolved into a significant passion, with him amassing a remarkable collection of over 30,000 stamp, postmark, and envelope ("cover") samples from across WA's history. Amongst other treasures, the collection also includes rare stamp samples from around the world, letters dating back to the early colonial era, and ephemera related to the Trans-Australian Railway.

Now in the care of the WA Museum, the Collection not only serves as a testament to the Hanekamp family's enduring legacy but also stands as one of the country's largest dedicated collections of postal paraphernalia. Beyond its philatelic significance, the collection serves as a powerful historical reference database, enriching our understanding of the State's past.

In April 2024, the WA Museum launched a new online portal for the Hanekamp Postal Collection, which provides access to one of his subcollections. The portal focuses on a subcollection of Registration Labels, which were used to mark registered mail between 1908 and 1985. This allows philatelists, history enthusiasts and anyone curious about snail mail to explore personal stories that reveal the history and significance behind the featured objects.

The WA Museum team is working on adding more of the collection to the online portal soon.



**Pictured:** Bessel Hanekamp Collection. Photos courtesy of WA Museum.

# Supporting the WA Museum into the Future



## Financial Overview as at 30 June 2024

The Foundation for the WA Museum gratefully acknowledges the steadfast support of its partners and donors throughout the financial year ending 30 June 2024. Our commitment to strengthening the Discovery Endowment Fund's principal has resulted in a milestone achievement, reaching \$34 million in funds under management. This progress has enabled the Board to sustain the annual grant distribution program, highlighted by a second annual grant of \$240,000 to the WA Museum, bringing the total value of grants awarded over the past two years to an impressive \$797,000.

During the year, the Foundation also secured additional funding to support specific WA Museum projects, expanding the scope of our work and impact across diverse initiatives. These contributions are instrumental in advancing new and ongoing projects that resonate deeply with our mission and community.

The Foundation successfully launched the Marine Sustainability Fund (MSF) this year, a dedicated fund to support research, sustainable care, and the protection of Western Australia's marine habitats. By actively growing the MSF, the Foundation is reinforcing the WA Museum's essential efforts in marine conservation, ensuring a lasting, positive impact on ocean ecosystems for generations to come.

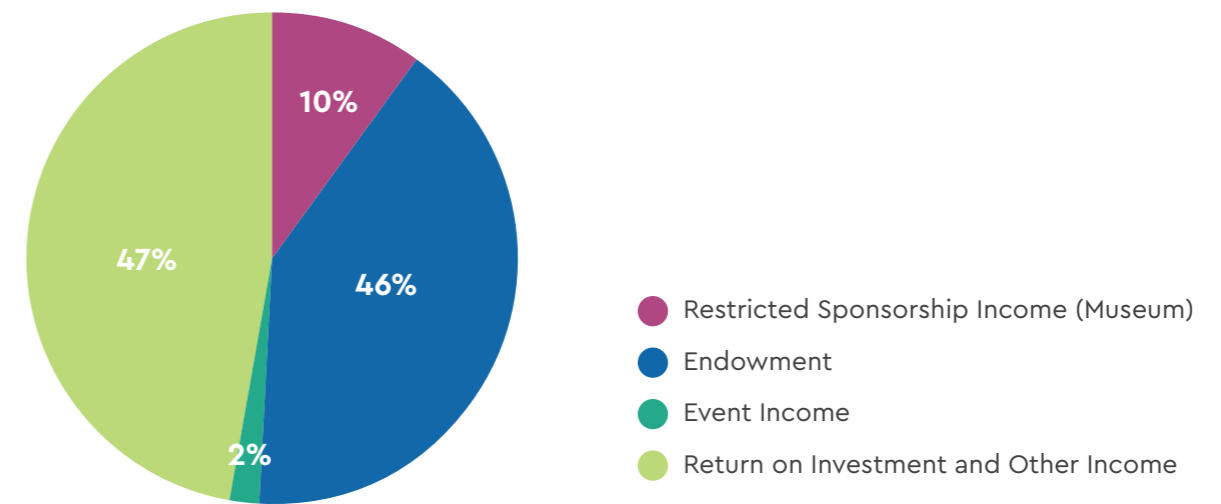
Sponsorship, donations and fundraising continue to be a significant source of income for the Foundation, contributing \$2,196,100 (\$2,249,420 in 2023). The continued growth of the Foundation's Discovery Endowment Fund and support for the WA Museum is made possible through the unwavering commitment of the Foundation's founding partners – Minderoo Foundation, Rio Tinto, Stan Perron Charitable Foundation, Tianqi Lithium, Wesfarmers, and Woodside Energy – as well as the generous support of our donors, who share the Foundation's vision for a vibrant, thriving WA Museum and a sustainable future.

The Foundation is pleased to report a surplus for the financial year ending 30 June 2024. The Foundation maintains diligent oversight of all expenses and remains focused on sustaining the momentum from contributions received through the International Exhibition Fund, MSF and various other fundraising activities. This prudent financial management allows us to maintain a strong financial position, empowering us to make a meaningful impact in support of the WA Museum's strategic priorities.

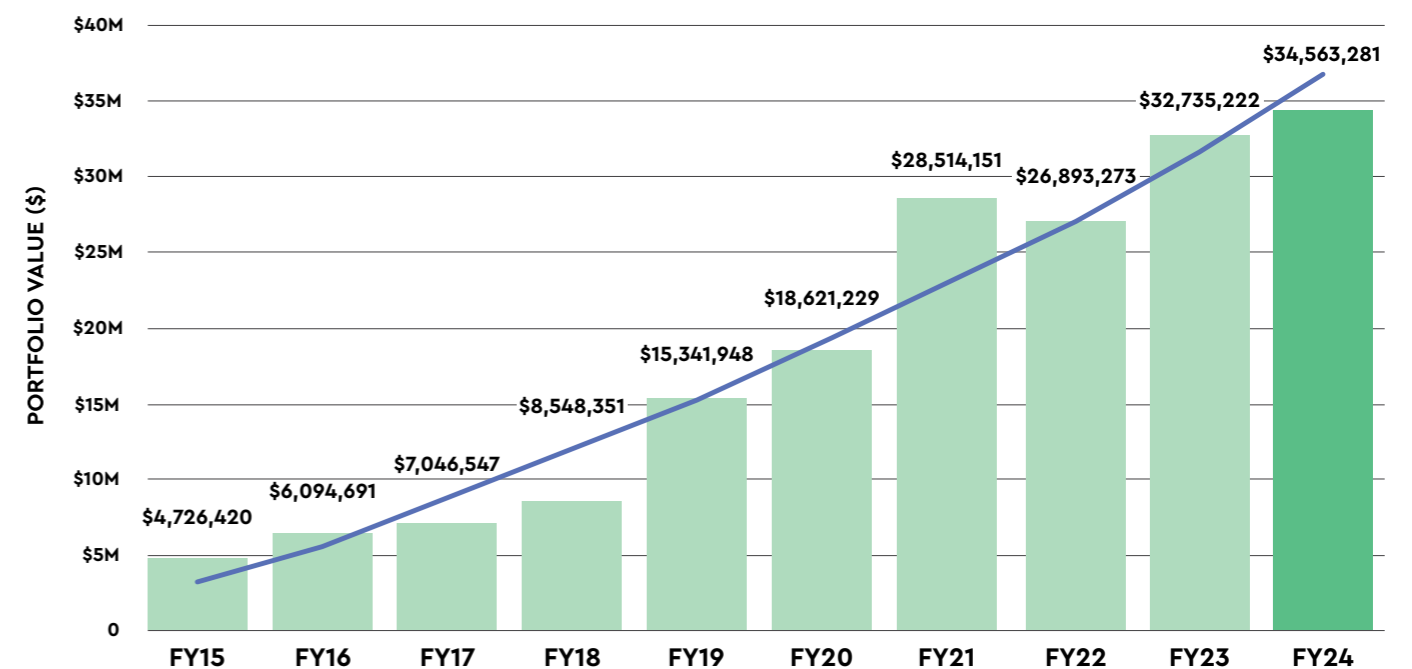
As at 30 June 2024, the balance of the Discovery Endowment Portfolio was \$34,563,281. The Foundation portfolio delivered a total net return of +9.85% over the 12 months to 30 June 2024. The portfolio delivered excellent results, surpassing its performance targets and benchmark expectations. At the same time, it maintained lower risk levels than anticipated.

The Foundation's Board, management, and staff extend heartfelt gratitude to all supporters whose generosity fuels our efforts to champion the WA Museum, raise awareness, and secure future funding and sponsorship for its exhibitions, pioneering initiatives, and world-class projects. Together, we are enhancing the WA Museums cultural, scientific, educational and social impact.

## Total Income



## Foundation for the WA Museum Discovery Endowment Fund



# Our Board



## Anna Shave

**Non-Executive Chairperson, Member of the Investment Committee**

Anna is a senior investment professional with a combined corporate and financial services background spanning over two decades. In February 2024, she was appointed as Managing Director of Resource Capital Funds' private equity innovation investment team and their Director for Investor Relations in the Asia Pacific region.

Between 2016 and 2023, Anna worked with Tanarra Capital, an Australasian alternatives manager, as a Principal with the Group and Head of the WA office. During her time at Tanarra she participated as a member of the Executive team and Investment Committee across the alternatives platform. Prior to Tanarra, Anna served in executive roles at Fortescue Ltd (ASX:FMG) as well as investment banking and capital markets roles at JPMorgan and Bank of America Merrill Lynch in New York.

Anna is a Non-Executive Director on several private company boards, the Australian Investment Council and of Good Sammy Enterprises, and owns and operates several family businesses. She holds a Bachelor of Commerce from Curtin University.

Anna joined the Foundation Board in May 2022 and was appointed Chairperson in January 2024.



## Chris Bingemann

**Non-Executive Director, Member (until May 2024) and Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee (from May 2024)**

Chris is one of the Founding Partners and Director – Corporate Finance at Wallabi Group, which is a boutique financial and investment advisory firm. He has more than 20 years of mergers and acquisitions and capital markets experience across mining, oil and gas and general industrials.

Previously a Director at Bank of America Merrill Lynch, Chris was most recently a Partner in PwC's Corporate Finance business, leading the national M&A team.

He holds a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Western Australia, is a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, and has a Graduate Diploma of Applied Finance from FINSIA.

Chris joined the Foundation Board in April 2023.



## Kate Budiselik

**Non-Executive Director, Chair of the Investment Committee and Member of the Audit and Risk Committee (until June 2024)**

Kate holds Bachelor of Economics and Graduate Diploma in Applied Finance and Investment. She is currently a partner at StepStone Group. Prior to StepStone, Kate was a vice president at Macquarie Investment Management Private Markets and a member of the infrastructure investment team. Prior to joining Macquarie, Kate was responsible for formulating and managing infrastructure, real estate and private equity asset class strategies and multi-manager line-ups for the state pension fund of Western Australia – Government Employees Superannuation Board.

Kate joined the Foundation Board in June 2021 and resigned in June 2024.



## Mae Cardaci

**Non-Executive Director**

Mae is an Australian-law qualified Senior Associate with Herbert Smith Freehills Teamsource. She is experienced in contract negotiation, capital projects and procurement, local and international dispute resolution and litigation in company law, contractual disputes and trust law.

Mae joined the Foundation Board in October 2016.





### James McClements

**Non-Executive Director, Acting Chair of the Investment Committee**

James is the Co-founder and Managing Partner of Resource Capital Funds. James has extensive board experience having served on the boards of 11 RCF portfolio companies.

James joined the Foundation Board in November 2011 and served as acting Chair between March 2022 and December 2023.



### Rubini Ventouras

**Non-Executive Director, Chair (until June 2024) and Member (from June 2024) of the Audit and Risk Committee**

Rubini is General Counsel for Australian Capital Equity and has more than 20 years of international experience in legal and commercial sectors.

She was appointed as a Trustee of the WA Museum in July 2012, retiring in June 2024, and was a member of the WA Museum's Audit and Finance Committee. She is currently a member of the Lotterywest Board and Chair of the Lotterywest Audit and Risk Management Committee.

Rubini holds a Bachelor of Law and Bachelor of Commerce (Accounting) and is admitted to practice law in Western Australia and the High Court of Australia.

Rubini joined the Foundation Board in August 2016.



### Dr Marcus Tan

**Non-Executive Director**

A UWA medical graduate with an Executive MBA from the Australian Graduate School of Management, Marcus has over 25 years of clinical and commercial experience. His diverse career spans the health, technology, investment and philanthropic sectors. Marcus was the Founder of Healthengine, one of Australia's largest online consumer healthcare platforms and a leader in the Australian technology and innovation ecosystem as a tech startup mentor, investor and industry spokesperson.

A Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, Marcus is the Founder & Executive Chair of Wellspring Group which offers consulting, investing and philanthropic funding in the key priority areas of health, economic empowerment and education. He is also the Chair of Spacecubed, co-founder and Ambassador of Meridian Global Foundation, and a Venture Partner at Purpose Ventures, a newly established West Australian focussed venture capital fund.

Marcus joined the Foundation Board in April 2023.



### Shane McGurk

**Non-Executive Director**

Shane holds a Master's Degree in Education and is a company director and co-founder of Next Learning. He brings to the Foundation over 40 years of experience delivering education in the private and public sectors in national, international, and online learning environments.

As well as holding leadership roles at prestigious schools in Australia and the UK, Shane has worked with the University of Western Australia to produce content and design advice for educational software. Through his combination of communication skills and expertise in technology, he has pioneered the use of applications in teaching and learning within diverse learning environments. Shane is currently an Apple Professional Learning Specialist.

The Town of Cottesloe recognised his commitment to community involvement and named him its 2022 Citizen of the Year.

Shane joined the Foundation Board in June 2024.



**Pictured:** Tianqi Lithium Gallery Connections, WA Museum Boola Bardip WA, photo by Kelly Pilgrim-Byrne (7 to 1 Photography). WA Museum Entomology Collection, image courtesy of WA Museum.

# Thank you to our Partners

Our Partners share a passion for exploring the past, questioning the present and shaping the future. Independently, they have invested in the Foundation for the WA Museum through its Discovery Endowment Fund, leaving a significant cultural footprint in our State.

## Founding Partners



Distinguished Partner



Woodside Learning Studios



Stan Perron Gallery  
*WA Treasures*



Rio Tinto Gallery  
*Innovations*



Tianqi Lithium Gallery  
*Connections*

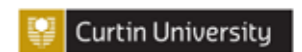


Wesfarmers Gallery  
*Ngalang Koort Boodja Wirn*

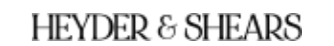
## Major Partners



## Partners



## Supporting Partners



# Thank you to our Donors

We gratefully acknowledge all donors who supported the Foundation for the WA Museum during this financial year.

## International Exhibition Fund Donors

- Kate Budiselik
- The McClements Foundation
- Mineral Resources
- Nev Power and Family

## Major Donors

- Brasington Family
- Kate Budiselik
- The McClements Foundation
- Mineral Resources
- Nev Power and Family
- Ungar Family Foundation
- Wellspring Foundation

## Donors \$1000+

- Amanda Kailis PMAP Foundation
- Suzanne Ardagh
- Chris Bingemann
- Coralie and Peter Bishop
- Mae Cardaci
- Meg Coffey
- David Cornelius
- Joanne Cruickshank
- John Day
- Paul and Didi Downie
- Joanne Farrell
- Jason Farrow
- Elizabeth Harris
- Dallas Hickman and Alex Hickman
- Bridget Faye AM
- John Goodlad
- Mark Hanlon

- Julie Hobbs
- Jim and Freda Irenic
- Maria Kailis
- David Kyle
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- Anne Last
- Darryl Mack and Helen Taylor
- Todd and Kerry Mairs
- Jo and Michael Malone OAM
- Amanda Mannolini
- Justin Mannolini
- Barrymore Markham
- Margaret Matthews
- Brodie McCulloch
- John and Beth McKechnie
- Glenda Morgan
- Steve Padbury
- Julian Peet
- Robert, Lidia and Sue Petty
- Ruth Phelps
- Robert Ranalli and Mel Watts
- Bryan and Jan Rodgers
- Rob Rowell
- Steve Scudamore
- Anna Sloboda
- Spectrum Health
- Spinifex Trust
- Robyn Tamke
- Phil Thick
- Anonymous (2)

We also gratefully acknowledge the support of the 160 donors who supported the Foundation with donations up to \$999.

## Bequests

- Honoria Ethel Anderson
- Veronica Barker
- Dr Harry Butler
- Bessel Hanekamp
- Dennis King
- Marjorie Keller-Tun
- Dr Brian Leary
- Joe Putcuypys and Elena Moustafina
- Shelagh Wakely
- Ethel Patricia Wright

We thank our benefactors and their families whose generosity helps us to protect the future of Western Australia's natural and cultural heritage for generations to come.

**Pictured:** Tianqi Lithium Gallery Connections, WA Museum Boola Bardip WA, photo by Kelly Pilgrim-Byrne (7 to 1 Photography).





# Foundation for the WA Museum





## Foundation for the WA Museum

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