



Board of the
Botanic Gardens *and*
State Herbarium

Strategic Plan 2017–2022

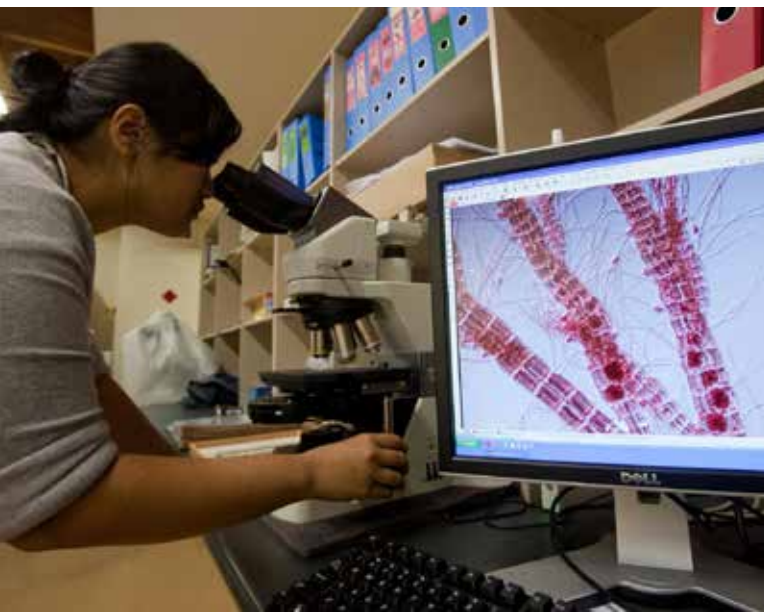




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Reconciliation statement

The Board of the Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium recognise South Australia's Aboriginal people as the traditional custodians of the State's lands, water, plants and animals – commonly known as Country.

We observe that Country is central to the social, cultural and spiritual lives of Aboriginal people.

We will build respectful and honest relationships through our work and develop a better awareness of Aboriginal history, knowledge and culture.



Foreword from the Chair

The importance of botanic gardens in our society was acknowledged in 1837, when Colonial William Light included an area for a botanic garden in his plan for the city of Adelaide. From this initial vision, three botanic gardens and the State Herbarium have developed over the past 180 years to create what is now known as the Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium of South Australia.

These institutions have a rich history and have developed to be a part of the cultural and scientific fabric of Adelaide since its inception. Importantly, Adelaide Botanic Garden, Wittunga Botanic Garden, the State Herbarium and Botanic Park are situated on part of traditional lands of the Kaurna people of the Adelaide Plains. In addition, part of Mount Lofty Botanic Garden lies on country of the Peramangk people.

There is a clear strategic direction by government and industry to enhance the City of Adelaide and enable social, environmental and economic prosperity in South Australia. With this comes a place for one of South Australia's most visited cultural and scientific institutions to be an active contributor to improve the quality of life for South Australians, and provide meaningful experiences for those visiting the state for business, research, study and pleasure.

The sustainable use of nature, water management, changing climates, connecting people with nature, and the promotion of premium produce and tourism are all priorities for South Australia, now and into the future. These South Australian priorities, and others that emerge, will continue to be woven into the work undertaken by our institutions.

With three botanic garden estates, the State Herbarium, the heritage landscape of Botanic Park and the Santos Museum of Economic Botany, we provide a diversity of experiences, services and expertise to a wide community, at a local, national and international level.

I am pleased to introduce the new Strategic Plan for the Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium, which sets out our commitment, over the next five years, for developing our people and strengthening our organisation. This will allow us to deepen our scientific research and its applications, expand our knowledge-sharing, and strengthen our community engagement and visitor experiences through our rich and unique collections and garden landscapes.

On behalf of the Board, I look forward to collaborating with the state's environment agency and working with other government agencies, the Friends of the Botanic Gardens, the Adelaide Botanic Gardens Foundation, non-government organisations, business, industry and individuals to deliver our goals and priorities.

Judy Potter

Presiding Member
Board of the Botanic Gardens and
State Herbarium

9 June 2017



Image on previous page: Colonel William Light's Plan of Adelaide, 1837. The original proposed site for the Botanic Gardens can be seen in the north-west corner (the current location of Bonython Park).

Source: History SA, HT2001.166. Drawn by 16 year old Robert Thomas to Colonel Light's draft.



Foreword from the Director

We are part of a global community of botanical institutions that cultivate and curate plants and landscapes, and undertake botanical research, to inspire and advance botanical understanding. We do this through the work of our State Herbarium, Seed Conservation Centre, Santos Museum of Economic Botany and our public programmes, including the Australian Centre of Horticultural Excellence.

There are multiple opportunities for the Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium. A critical part of our planning for the future of these institutions is to understand that we are custodians of rich and unique scientific and cultural collections, and that we have diverse staff expertise. Together they form the heart and soul of these institutions. As ‘temporary’ custodians we have significant responsibility for managing this legacy for the benefit of current and future generations locally, nationally and globally. We are mindful that we need to maintain our relevance to society and that our success is linked to our ability to meet the changing needs of the community.

We will continue to inspire the community through our living museum and preserved collections. We will maintain focus on managing collections, and using them to enhance knowledge and understanding of the plant sciences and horticulture. What will change, over the next five years and beyond, is where we place emphasis.

Being outward-focused is critical to maintain our relevance. Through diversifying our partnerships and entering into long-term collaborations we will extend our reach and impact. Our science will continue to be the foundation of the community’s botanical knowledge.

We will enhance our collections and our knowledge management systems to support horticultural and botanical science. This will allow us to integrate our multiple disciplines to further inspire our visitors and the community, and improve understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of gardens, and the essential role of plants in sustaining and enriching life.

Our staff, Board, Foundation, Friends and key partners have contributed to planning our future course of action. We will focus on our people, recognising that our staff—their passion and expertise—are our greatest asset.

Our botanic gardens will always be an oasis, a tranquil and peaceful place.

Dr Lucy A. Sutherland

Director
Botanic Gardens and
State Herbarium

9 June 2017



Our vision

Our vision is a community inspired to actively contribute to the sustainability of our world.

Through our work in realising this vision, the Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium of South Australia will be recognised as world-class in botanical sciences, collections and conservation, influential in leading changes in humanity, and a creative and collaborative institution that advances thinking through experimental approaches.

Our mission

Our mission is to build an understanding and appreciation of the botanical world.

We manage living, cultural and preserved collections and use our science and research to improve understanding of the botanical world. Our science is vital to support our community's resilience and sustainability, and it underpins evidence-based decisions that inform effective legislation, policies, education, management and land use practices.

We engage with the wider community to share stories about plants and enhance understanding and appreciation of the importance of plants in sustaining life, and as a key part of cultural identity.

Our places provide unique experiences and learning opportunities for visitors, and create an urban oasis of peace and tranquillity.

Our strategic focus

Over the next five years, our overarching strategic focus will be to develop as a global destination. We will concentrate on three focus areas to guide our efforts towards realising our long-term vision.

We will focus on:

- 1. Creating destination gardens**
- 2. Deepening our science**
- 3. Facilitating lifelong learning and engagement**

A five-year business plan, reviewed annually, outlines activities and a staged implementation of our priorities.



1. Creating destination gardens

The Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium is a collections-based cultural institution where the living and preserved collections are its foundation, and its cultural collections demonstrate how plants have been used over time. These all require ongoing care and attention, based on expert knowledge and skills within the institution.

Our mature living plants and landscapes will be revitalised and new collections introduced. Our goal is to facilitate public enjoyment, education, conservation and research. We will take a holistic approach to creating destination gardens. Our gardens are a place for all; a hub for learning, botanical knowledge, a place to see plants grow, and a haven for biodiversity.

We will increase our role in tourism and provide unique focused experiences in our gardens. These will motivate visitors to South Australia, inspiring ongoing connections with our botanical world.

We will continue to develop partnerships to provide excellent services across our Gardens. We will focus on the Mount Lofty and Wittunga Botanic Gardens to enrich visitor opportunities and experiences outside of the city. This will contribute to South Australia's economic and social prosperity.

Key action		Performance	Expected outcomes
a)	Revitalising our living collections	Increase in seasonal and annual visitation and customer satisfaction	Diversification of visitor profile
b)	Diversifying our herbarium, living and cultural collections	Growth of collections	Collections that underpin our role as leaders in science, conservation and community education
c)	Masterplanning a vision for the future	Masterplans updated for the three Botanic Gardens and an implementation schedule prepared	Managing our heritage and adding to our legacy for the future
d)	Sustainably managing Botanic Park	Management Plan based on sustainable outcomes for Botanic Park	Botanic Park retains its heritage features and diverse, healthy collections
e)	Revitalising our infrastructure to higher standards	Funding secured for infrastructure developments	Improved visitor experience and working environment
f)	Offering unique tourist experiences	A tourism strategy that identifies new initiatives and commissionable tourism products	Increased tourism engagement and revenue
g)	Developing partnerships to expand activity in Mount Lofty and Wittunga Botanic Gardens	Increased number and diversity of activity and participants	A community hub creating long-lasting connections and memories
			Opportunities for enterprises to add value and dimensions to the diverse visitor experiences
h)	Promoting Adelaide Botanic Garden as a cultural institution and attraction	Active participation in new developments	Maintaining relevance to a broad community
i)	Positioning Adelaide Botanic Garden as a flagship in the North Terrace cultural precinct	Raising the profile of Adelaide Botanic Garden as an institution	Recognised as an iconic North Terrace cultural institution and attraction
j)	Ensuring climate change adaptation underpins revitalisation	A strategy for BGS's contribution to Carbon Neutral Adelaide	Well-curated collections and a future legacy adapted to changing climates
k)	Collaborating closely with the horticultural industry	Increase in horticultural industry partnerships	Enhanced native plant product line available for the public and increased revenue



2. Deepening our science

Through the State Herbarium and the South Australian Seed Conservation Centre, our research and scientific expertise provide a point of truth for botanical knowledge. We aim to deepen our science and increase its application in society.

There is a continuing need for science and research to identify plants and assist in solving some of the big issues. This information guides decision-making and policy. Our collections will be maintained in the best possible way for the long-term, allowing future generations to make the most of them. This knowledge will be used in the future in ways not imagined.

We will continue to focus on understanding and conserving our flora by:

- Filling gaps in knowledge and collections
- Providing science-based solutions for sustainable use, while conserving our biodiversity
- Leading botanical research and sharing our discoveries and knowledge with stakeholders ranging from the wider scientific community, to the youngest visitors to our Gardens
- Training the next generation of botanists, taxonomists and seed conservationists
- Managing our collections so that they can be maintained in perpetuity.

Our cultural collections and technical library fundamentally support *deepening our science*. We will use our research and innovative approach to identify simple and elegant solutions to problems faced by natural resource managers, and relevant sectors of the community.

Key action	Performance	Expected outcomes
a) Establishing an ambitious vision for science and conservation	Increased international peer engagement	Recognised and acknowledged by the botanical and horticultural community
b) Increasing support for science and conservation activities	More funding sources and an expanded collaboration network	An improved staff and research profile
c) Fostering new and enhanced collaborations	Increased network of partners	An enriched contribution to science
d) Applying up-to-date technology and information management systems	Increased efficiencies and application	New understanding of our botanical science and research with fewer business impediments
e) Conserving our flora	All threatened native SA vascular plants 'banked' and key provenances understood	Improved conservation of our flora and reducing risk to threatened species
f) Modernising collection management practices	Number of new initiatives (e.g. DNA barcoding, growing techniques)	Conservation of our collections in perpetuity
g) Demonstrating leadership in provision and use of botanical knowledge	Needs driven, technology-based, knowledge products created	Products widely used and the BGSB brand recognised
h) Developing a digital strategy for knowledge sharing	Integrated botanical information system	A reliable knowledge-base for all
i) Demonstrating carbon-neutral living	Raised community awareness	Proactive delivery of <i>Carbon Neutral Adelaide</i>



3. Lifelong learning and engagement

We are a place for lifelong learning. We facilitate connections between people and the botanical and natural world. Our reach will widen through diversifying and strengthening partnerships. We will provide opportunities for people to experience plants throughout their lives.

We will expand public programmes to communicate our work in horticulture, science and research. Our programmes will share knowledge and botanical expertise. We will enhance understanding and appreciation of the role of plants in everyone’s lives.

We challenge our traditional approach to connecting people to plants. We embrace our multicultural and diverse society and partner with our communities to explore cultural plant connections and relationships.

Key action	Performance	Expected outcomes
a) Developing enriched, evolving experiences, from cradle to grave	Increased number and diversity of public programmes and returning participants	High rate of satisfied return-users
b) Creating learning experiences and pathways in community, vocational and tertiary education	Well-attended programmes	An innovative, stimulating hub for learning
c) Creating new business partnerships to facilitate new experiences	Increased types of business partnerships to deliver programmes	Increased revenue
d) Interpreting collections, science, horticulture and research in innovative ways	Developing and implementing an Interpretive Masterplan	Improved informal learning opportunities
e) Encouraging our community to explore its cultural relationships with the natural world	Culturally diverse range of collections and activities engaging a broader demographic	Recognition of the strength of a multicultural society
f) Building long-term learning relationships	Engagement with secondary and tertiary learning institutions including the Adelaide Botanic High School	Secondary and tertiary students building a lifelong connection with the Gardens
g) Becoming a destination for horticultural and botanical learning	Institution-wide and external expertise into programmes incorporated	High-quality capacity and capability of students and trainees in horticulture and/or botany
h) Using citizen-science to contribute to our research and knowledge	New citizen-science projects initiated	Data collected contributing to our programmes and enhancing engagement of the community



Our enablers

This Strategic Plan will be enabled by our staff, the provision of sufficient resources, high quality technology, rich and diverse partnerships and facilities that meet our contemporary needs.

Innovation through experimentation will be embedded in our operations. Trialling our ideas, and evaluating and monitoring our efforts, will provide feedback to improve outcomes. This will ensure we will have a world-class reputation with our colleagues, peers and visitors.

4. Enhanced staff profile



The Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium has expertise across multiple disciplines including the arts, sciences and education. A well-considered approach to succession planning will enable the management of an ageing staff profile and manage risk around a significant reliance on Associates and volunteers,

who make a large contribution to our core work and reputation. We will maintain and develop our resources, our expertise and specialisations to enable us to increase the institution’s reach and impact, to advance our science and research, as well as our education and public programmes.

Key action		Performance	Expected outcomes
a)	Identifying gaps in staffing capacity and expertise	A review of staffing profile and realignment of organisational structure	An organisational structure aligned to deliver the new mission and vision
b)	Professional development	Implementing a strategic programme to deliver specialised needs	Staff profile evolving with the needs of the business
c)	Succession planning in science and horticulture	Staged implementation of a succession plan	Reduced institutional risk to delivery of the vision and mission
d)	Continued recognition and support of Associate and volunteer contributions	Increase in annual hours worked by volunteers and Associates	Diversification of institutional expertise and improved mentoring to support succession planning, and establish an enriched, involved community

5. Adaptable business model



The Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium will evolve its business model to enable greater security in the longer term, while ensuring it is sympathetic to a botanical cultural institution.

Long-term investment by today’s donors and other supporters will create a legacy for future generations to enjoy and benefit from the work of our institution.

Strategies include:

— We aim to grow our endowments to financially underpin our institution and ensure its long-term sustainability

- We will generate revenue through commercialisation
- We will adapt new funding opportunities by increasing our ability to participate in diverse government and non-government project funding programmes
- We will seek partnerships with philanthropic and corporate sectors.

Key action		Performance	Expected outcomes
a)	Developing a strategy for a diversified business model	An overall increase of 35% in non-government revenue and new government grants by 2021–22	Increased capacity to deliver our vision
b)	Reinvigorating the Adelaide Botanic Gardens Foundation’s philanthropic model	Growth in Foundation’s capital base	Enhanced financial support for activities
c)	Resourcing to accommodate and manage our collections, associated research and education	Funding success	Collections, research and education activities enhanced without being compromised
d)	Gaining industry and community support for our new business approaches	Increased collaborative resourcing of activities and services	More external advocacy
e)	Developing an effective communications strategy on the work of the BGSH	Increased number of subscribers to regular communications/social media	More advocacy and collaborators to deliver our vision

6. Modernising technology



Rapid changes in technology have outpaced our investment in information technology systems.

The Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium needs new and enhanced information management systems for the herbarium, living collections, rare books and archives, nursery and Seed Conservation Centre. New, more advanced technology is required to support digitisation, storage, backup, and retrieval of images and data.

Unprecedented opportunities exist to better understand visitors' use of the gardens and our collections and the communication products we deliver. Due to ever-emerging technologies, we require technology support solutions that enable us to harness these opportunities.

Globally, the incorporation of technologies is progressing rapidly in modern botanic gardens, as well as supporting research institutions such as our State Herbarium and Seed Conservation Centre.

Future developments underway include:

- Having access to adaptable solutions with an amazing diversity of features, such as visitor interpretive material, including interactive electronic displays
- Exploring social media opportunities to communicate to our stakeholders and users of our gardens and outputs
- The use of molecular DNA-based identification and confirmation of living collections provenances.

New technology solutions are required to enable:

- Modern business operations
- Sustainable operations of systems, for example water management systems, energy efficiency and events
- Accurate documentation and risk management of collections requiring controlled environments
- Accurate documentation of visitor experiences and visitor usage
- The delivery of lifelong learning activities and engagement opportunities
- Improved efficiency and effectiveness during field work.

Key action		Performance	Expected outcomes
a)	Managing data effectively	Creating stable and accessible infrastructure	More rapid and adaptable data delivery
b)	Adopting innovative approaches to curation	Identify opportunities to apply technological practices (e.g. use of drones, robotics)	Efficient curation of collections and data
c)	Resourcing the installation of backup energy systems	New and improved energy systems available to core facilities	Lowering risk to assets through maintaining continuity of energy supply
d)	Providing online infrastructure for public and external engagement	Implement a diverse, functional range of applications (such as e-commerce)	Effective point of sale and e-learning
e)	Implementing the use of individual based, portable data devices	Enable use of digital data collections in the 'field'	More flexible and diverse work practices
f)	Scoping potential applications for new technologies for the entire organisation	Securing resources for initiatives to apply technologies	Efficiencies and innovative applications to operations

7. New centre for BGSH



A new unified centre for the Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium, close to North Terrace, will provide an appropriate location as part of the cultural precinct, and provide closer proximity to the city's universities.

The Tram Barn housing the State Herbarium will reach capacity within the next decade. The building does not provide a long-term solution for housing the State's Herbarium.

During this Strategic Plan, the planning for short and long-term needs will be completed. The full development of this unified centre is not in the period covered by this plan. However, preparation of a business case for government to support the design and construction of new facilities for the Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium will be essential.

Immediate planning for Herbarium space reorganisation as an interim measure will assist in managing this collection and the work environment in the short-term.

Key action		Performance	Expected outcomes
a)	The recognition and support of the South Australian government of the need for a new facility	Project, scope and case for support presented to the South Australian government	Community support for the development of a new centre for BGSB
b)	Developing a critical infrastructure action plan as temporary solution until construction of new building	Effective management of collections within available space	Collections not compromised by space limitations

8. Partnerships



Diversifying and strengthening partnerships will enable us to attract additional expertise and resources. This will extend the work and reach of the Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium towards becoming a global destination for science, horticulture, research and public programmes.

Our long-term partnership with the Friends of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide will continue to strengthen the provision of public programmes and engagement with the community.

Deepening our research and education relies on partnerships with various universities, as well as relationships with other scientific and cultural institutions.

In addition, the application of our scientific efforts will require us to further develop relationships with natural resources managers.

Partnering on commercial ventures will diversify our business model and enable richer offerings to our visitors.

Key action		Performance	Expected outcomes
a)	Developing a partnership model that improves diversity of opportunities	Number of new partnerships	Growth in ventures and resourcing to deliver strategic priorities
b)	Increasing national and international partnerships as part of a global community	Participation in national and international exchange initiatives	Recognition as an international institution
c)	Inspiring relationships with Adelaide's botanical and cultural groups	Number of joint activities	Supporting the delivery of botanical and cultural activities
d)	Developing innovative new research areas	New collaborative partners	A broader research program



Strategic Plan 2017–2022

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In addition to the in-depth consultation that has occurred throughout the preparation of this plan, the Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium also briefed and had discussions with a number of community groups. We would especially like to acknowledge:

- Members of the Friends of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide
- The Mount Lofty Botanic Garden Support Group
- The Blackwood Action Group

Images

Front cover (clockwise from top): Pincushion protea (*Leucospermum cordifolium*) [BGSH], Little Sprouts Kitchen Garden [BGSH], Mount Lofty Botanic Garden [BGSH], Santos Museum of Economic Botany [Grant Hancock] and Herbarium researcher identifying marine algae [BGSH]. Page 2-3: Palm House in Adelaide Botanic Garden [Richard Humphrys]. Page 6: Autumn in Mount Lofty Botanic Garden [BGSH]. Page 9: Little Sprouts Kitchen Garden class [BGSH]. Page 11: Economic Garden in Adelaide Botanic Garden [BGSH]. Page 13 (left and right images): South Australian Seed Conservation Centre Field Trip to Mamungari Conservation Park [Andy Rasheed, Eyefood], (centre): *Tubaria fiveashiana* watercolour [Rosa C. Fiveash]. Page 15 (clockwise from top): Australian Centre of Horticultural Excellence trainees [BGSH], Chief Botanist Professor Michelle Waycott being interviewed for *Totally Wild* [BGSH], World Environment Day celebrations in Adelaide Botanic Garden [BGSH]. Page 16: Horticultural trainees in Adelaide Botanic Garden [BGSH]. Page 17: James Taylor Concert in Botanic Park [Space Events]. Page 18: South Australian Seed Conservation Centre [Andy Rasheed, Eyefood]. Page 19: BGSH Digital application [BGSH]. Page 20: Goodman Building, Adelaide Botanic Garden [BGSH]. Page 21: Wittunga Botanic Garden 40th Anniversary celebrations [BGSH]. Back cover: First Creek Wetland in Adelaide Botanic Garden [John Gollings, supplied by TCL Landscape Architects].



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The Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium is dedicated to building an understanding and appreciation of the botanical world. It relies on support for its horticulture, science, conservation and education programmes. Please help us with our work today, and in the future. The Board has deductible gift recipient status (items 1 & 4), and our work is also supported by fundraising efforts of The Trustee for Adelaide Botanic Gardens Foundation Fund, which has deductible gift recipient status (item 2).