

**WILDLIFE ART MUSEUM  
OF AUSTRALIA**



**The Grampians, Victoria**

**Economic and Social  
Impact Study**

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### Disclaimer

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# Executive Summary

## E1 Overview

The Wildlife Art Museum of Australia (WAMA) began as an aspiration of the Grampians arts community, but has evolved to a proposed scale which would make WAMA an arts and environmental precinct unmatched in Australia. With the combined efforts of local proponents and the voluntary efforts of the WAMA Foundation (which was initially known as the Australian Wildlife Art Foundation), the project is planned as a development of national and international significance.

The WAMA location, near the acclaimed Grampians National Park (Gariwerd), will house a permanent and occasional collection of artworks narrating the development of artistic achievements, from Australia's pre-historic beginnings in caves, through the scientific and illustrative work of early explorers, to more impressionistic and symbolic works of the present day. The museum will be a landmark building of sustainable design; an outstanding attraction in its own right. The WAMA site will accommodate:

- Exhibitions from communities and societies around Australia and overseas;
- Workshop facilities, hosting eminent artists and drawing on the inspiration of the natural environment;
- An Australian botanical landscape showcasing the diversity and complexity of our Australian flora and ecosystems;
- An educational focus with emphasis on experiential learning opportunities;

- Facilities that showcase a sustainable built environment in harmony with the natural ecosystems;
- Complementary enterprises within the complex.

Detailed design, feasibility assessment and business planning for the WAMA initiative have not yet been undertaken.

The WAMA Foundation has provided briefings on the intended venture for the preparation of an Economic and Social Impact Study. The vision is for an ambitious project which is large in scale and dimension, which will have an iconic status, and which will be recognised as a major attraction both nationally and internationally.

The project team has used this vision as a key premise for the projected economic and social impacts. Estimates and conclusions in this report are based on the WAMA Foundation's proposed venture being implemented over time, and they have been derived from the expected scale and nature of development planned by the WAMA Foundation, using:

- Preliminary concept plans;
- Input from WAMA stakeholders;
- Reviews and comparisons with other museum, gallery and botanic gardens developments around Australia; and
- Tourism data, regional economic data, and analysis and modelling.

## E2 Major Findings

- WAMA is an entirely appropriate economic development initiative in the context of the transitioning Northern Grampians economy. This regional economy is transforming from a natural resource and secondary industry base to a balanced service economy, in which the quinary sector (services primarily delivered to personal and domestic markets) dominates. WAMA is a quinary sector initiative.
- Successful implementation of WAMA would make substantial contributions to the objectives of both the Grampians Economic Development Plan (Grampians Regional Development Australia) and the Grampians Tourism Inc. Strategic Plan.
- The WAMA organisation structure appears to be well founded; having engaged volunteers and other stakeholders from a diverse range of professional, artistic, technical and business backgrounds.
- The breadth of WAMA experiences and services implies that it will create a product offering with strong appeal to international, Victorian and other Australian visitors, as well as regular interest from residents of the Grampians region. While WAMA is likely to attract visitors with a general interest in the 'package' of experiences, it is also likely to attract a wide range of market segments with a specific interest in one or more aspects of the complex.
- People visit the Grampians region for a range of reasons, but the majority are motivated by the desire to explore the Grampians National Park. WAMA's setting among native vegetation, a landscaped Australian botanical gardens and a backdrop of the Grampians mountain range will provide a compelling attraction for visitors seeking nature-based experiences. The Grampians Ranges are home to 12 of the 16 known examples of Aboriginal rock paintings in Victoria. There are at least eight Aboriginal cave art galleries in the Ranges. WAMA will build upon the wildlife experiences available in the Grampians Ranges, which offer the chance to encounter:
  - 800 of Victoria's 2,200 native plant species (of which 20 are endemic to the Grampians, including Thryptomene, Snowy Bauera and Rosy Bush-pea);
  - Many of Australia's most remarkable mammals (echidna, platypus, koala, pygmy and sugar gliders, rat kangaroos, wallabies and kangaroos) and lizards; and
  - One quarter of Victoria's 400 bird species (which are native to the Grampians), most of which have been recorded within the WAMA site.
- It is estimated that the construction of WAMA will require capital expenditures of \$22 million, of which \$15.6 million will be in building and facilities construction and \$6.4 million will be in site development works. The estimated short-term jobs generated from this direct construction expenditure is 68 full-time equivalents. Total estimated regional economic contribution from the construction phase of WAMA is \$27.9 million and 92 short-term full-time equivalent jobs.
- Economic contribution estimates have modelled visitation to WAMA over three stages of development (Stage 1 being years 1 to 5, Stage 2 being years 6 to 10, and Stage 3 being beyond 10 years). These visitation levels are: Stage 1: 89,000 visitors per annum; Stage 2: 182,500 visitors per annum; and Stage 3: 256,700 visitors per annum.
- Following implementation as envisaged by the WAMA Foundation, it is estimated that the complex would make an annual regional economic contribution of \$13.06 million and 46 full-time equivalent jobs during its Stage 1 years, and \$29.43 million and 103 full-time equivalent jobs during Stage 3 (beyond year 10).
- Among wide ranging social impacts, WAMA will:
  - Substantially enhance the Grampians regional tourism product offering through its iconic appeal, meetings/conference and training facilities, restaurant, café and recreational facilities.
  - Provide a capacity to deepen people's understanding and connection with the natural world.
  - Involve students and community members in research and monitoring of the indigenous environment, contributing to the body of knowledge about the natural heritage of the Grampians region.
  - Through recognition of the region's original custodians and their long association with the landscape of the Grampians region, strengthen understanding of local Aboriginal cultures and heritage, and increase social inclusion.
  - Generally, bring a major cultural and artistic institution to the doorstep of Grampians residents.