



Visitor Experience & Engagement Strategy

2022 – 24



Acknowledgement of Country

The Sydney Opera House lives on Tubowgule, Gadigal country. We acknowledge the Gadigal, the traditional custodians of this place, also known as Bennelong Point, and pay our deepest respects to all Elders, past, present and future.

For thousands of years Tubowgule has been a place of gathering and belonging. The Opera House continues this legacy today by embracing and celebrating First Nations people and culture.

Welcome

A Sydney Opera House experience is like no other. From *Bluey* to Badu Gili, Lizzo to *La Traviata*, tours to tempting meals, the Opera House offers unmissable art and experiences in a world-renowned setting. Each year, millions of people gather on site and engage with us online to be entertained, to learn, to escape and to connect. Whether it's seeing a brilliant show, enjoying a meal or just being at this special place, we want everyone to feel welcomed and inspired by the unique magic of the Opera House.



The Visitor Experience & Engagement Strategy 2022-24 sets out how we will deliver on our purpose – to ‘welcome and wow’. As Australia’s premier cultural and tourism destination, we are committed to delivering a holistic visitor experience that is consistently excellent and extraordinary.

The far-reaching impacts of COVID-19 have highlighted the importance of our role in reaching and engaging audiences and visitors, no matter where they are, with the breadth of experiences we offer.

In recent years, we have made significant improvements to the visitor experience, providing a solid foundation for responding to the challenges and opportunities in an ever-changing environment. Four high-level pillars will guide us as we reopen the Concert Hall in mid-2022 through to our 50th anniversary in 2023 and beyond. We will:

- Place visitors centre-stage, with a culture committed to collaboration and continuous improvement.
- Showcase vibrant and inviting experiences – beyond the stage – for everyone, every day.
- Engage, welcome, and deliver safe, consistent and frictionless end-to-end journeys, on site and online.
- Collaborate and integrate with the right partners to strengthen and elevate the visitor experience.

Drawing on visitor and audience insights, this strategy has been developed in consultation with the many Opera House teams that contribute to the broader visitor experience. Its delivery will be underpinned by the Opera House values of safety, creativity, excellence, collaboration, and accountability. We will also be guided by the Opera House’s Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging Strategy and our commitment to the United Nations Global Goals. We will monitor progress against the clear actions and measures set out in this strategy and summarised on pages 26-33.

The Opera House belongs to all Australians. Over the life of this strategy, we will work collaboratively to inspire and strengthen the community, opening doors and sharing creativity. Through the priority areas identified, we will deliver extraordinary visitor experiences that welcome and wow, now and into the future.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, belonging to Jade McKellar.

Jade McKellar
Chief Customer Officer

Marketing and Communications,
Ticketing, Visitor Services, Access, Tours,
Tourism, Food & Beverage, and Retail

Our Purpose

To welcome and wow

We will welcome every person
and take them from the ordinary
into the extraordinary.

Our Values

Safety

Our greatest responsibility

Creativity

Be bold and innovative

Excellence

Make it the best

Collaboration

One team

Accountability

Focus and own it

Guiding Principles

Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging

The Sydney Opera House –
who we are and everything
we do – reflects and respects
the diversity of our community.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

A framework for a more
sustainable future.

Who We Are

As a symbol of modern Australia, the nation's premier tourist destination and one of the world's busiest performing arts centres, the Opera House plays an integral and contemporary role in Australia's identity. A celebrated community meeting place, the Opera House is operated and maintained on behalf of the NSW Government and the people of NSW by the Opera House Trust. The State, National and World Heritage-listed site is inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List as a 'masterpiece of human creative genius'. In 2018 it was estimated by global professional service provider Deloitte to have a social asset value of \$6.2 billion and make a \$1.2 billion contribution to the Australian economy annually.

Our vision is to be as bold and inspiring as the Opera House itself.

Our mission is two-fold:

- To treasure and renew the Opera House for future generations of artists, audiences and visitors.
- To inspire, and strengthen the community, through everything we do.

In a normal year, the Opera House welcomes almost 11 million people to the site, with almost 1.5 million people seeing a show and more than 560,000 visitors taking a guided tour. The Opera House hosts more than 1,800 performances a year, including the work of eight flagship resident companies – Australian Chamber Orchestra, Bangarra Dance Theatre, Bell Shakespeare, Opera Australia, Sydney Theatre Company, The Australian Ballet, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, and Sydney Philharmonia Choirs. The Opera House's own programming arm, Sydney Opera House Presents, complements the works of its resident companies through the presentation of First Nations programming, contemporary music and performance, talks and ideas, classical music, children, families and creative learning, artist and sector development, and digital programming. Additionally, a broad range of shows and community events are presented by third parties at the Opera House.

The Opera House's reach is not limited to its geographic location – it is also an online portal for performances, creative learning, ideas and discussions reaching audiences and communities nationally and internationally through an innovative program of digital experiences. More than 1.7 million hours of Opera House video content was consumed globally in 2019-20.



Photograph by Ken Leanfore

Sydney Opera Home Story

Every visitor has a story. A core aspiration for our visitor experience is to celebrate the diversity of our community and be inclusive and welcoming to every visitor. The impact of what we do is beautifully captured in this story from one of our visitors.

***From Kerrie Nelson, School Principal.
Giant Steps School:***

"I would like to formally thank Opera House staff whose creativity, inclusive philosophy and enormous hard work made this opportunity available to a group of children who would otherwise find it almost impossible to access performances at Opera House.

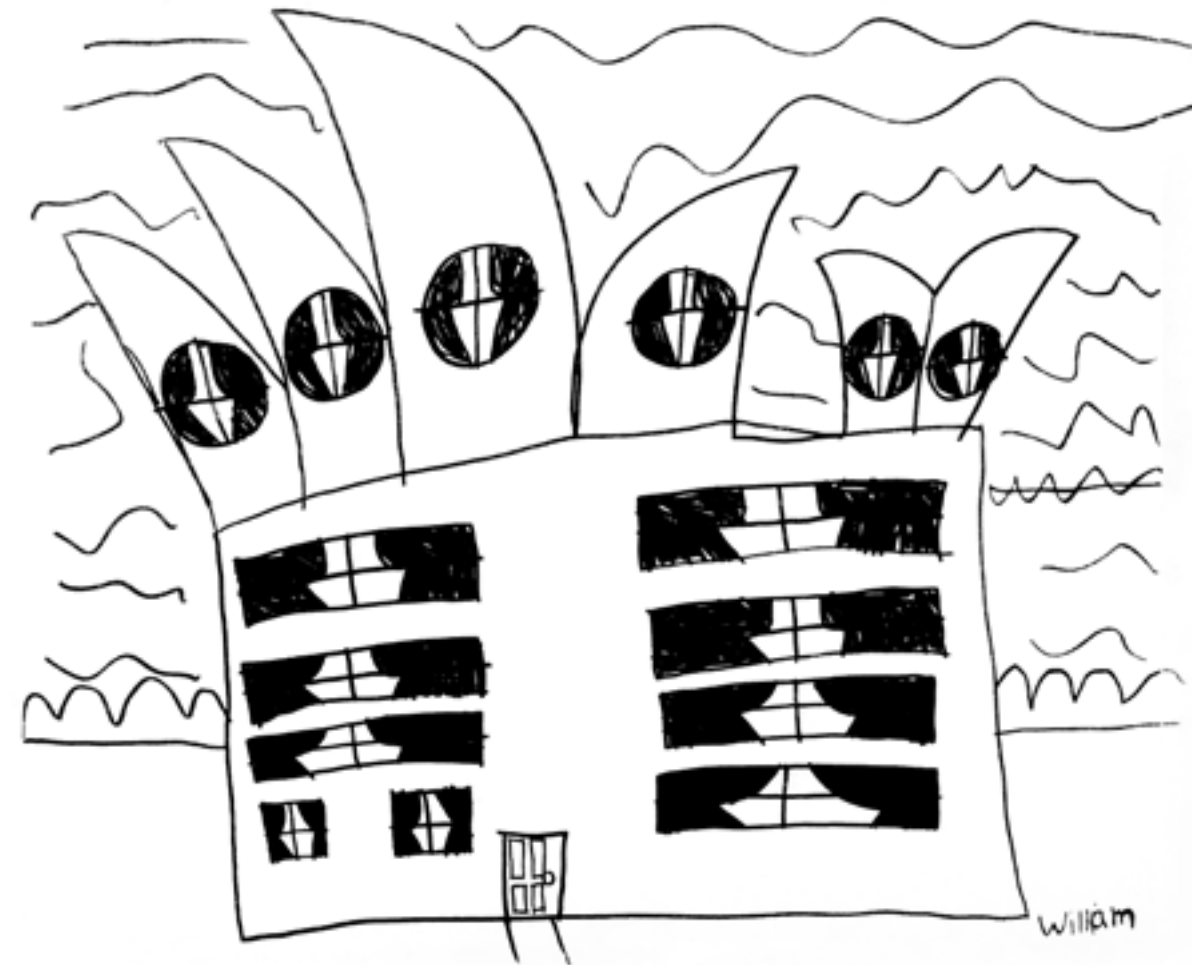
The enclosed gift was painted by one of our students and he added windows and curtains to the Opera House sails and titled the piece 'Opera Home'. This piece certainly symbolises our connectivity as a school as well as an individual student to the Opera House and we thank you for "giving it a go".

From William, Giant Steps School:

"My name is William, I am 11 years old and have Autism. I mostly cannot talk and words that I attempt are very difficult for others to understand. My main passion in life is creating art. I love detail and have an imaginative mind. I also use drawings as means of communication; this enables me to connect to other people and helps to reduce my isolation.

I loved visiting the Opera House last year with my peers to see Boxy George. I had so much fun. Here is my gift to you ... my interpretation of the Opera House."

"I loved visiting the Opera House last year with my peers to see Boxy George. I had so much fun. Here is my gift to you... my interpretation of the Opera House."





Challenges and Opportunities

The priorities for the Visitor Experience & Engagement Strategy are shaped by the wider strategic landscape. We recognise this is a period of wider social, demographic, technological and economic change.

Our strategy responds to both opportunities and challenges as a result of COVID-19, digital innovation and changing customer expectations, with a focus on human connection and a commitment to sustainability.



COVID-19 Unprecedented Change

The ongoing global pandemic has brought widespread economic and social uncertainty. This unprecedented period of disruption will continue to affect domestic and international visitors, reducing operating revenue and visitation. The domestic market will be our primary focus until international travel recovers.

This period challenges us to think innovatively about our operations, to explore how we can maximise opportunities in other areas, and adapt to changing priorities as we recover.

The health and safety of everyone on site is our top priority at all times and we will continue to monitor and adapt our COVID-19 safety measures accordingly.



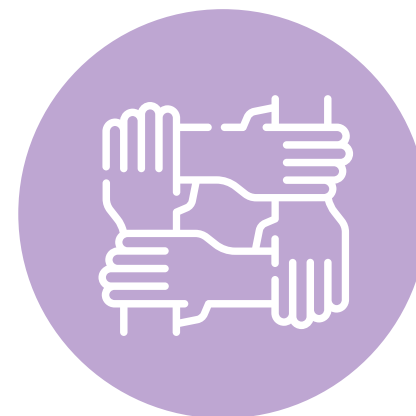
Ever-evolving Customer Expectations

Digital Innovation

Technology is accelerating the pace of change for organisations and customers alike. Beyond information and transactions, innovative digital experiences can deepen visitor connections and reach new audiences wherever they are.

Customer and visitor expectations of a seamless, user-friendly experience are increasing, driving the need for the Opera House to address friction or pain points and provide bold and inspiring experiences for all audiences, on-site or online.





Diverse Audiences and Visitor Groups

New Visitors, New Needs

The profile of our visitors is shifting – increasing in diversity and increasing in age. We must also evolve to stay relevant and accessible. With a core part of the Opera House’s mission being to inspire, and strengthen the community, through everything we do, we have a social responsibility to ensure the Opera House is accessible, reflective of and appealing to all in our community. With one third of Australians now born overseas, we have new relationships to form.

Not only does our art need to reflect the demands of a broader spectrum of people, but so should the entire visitor journey. A genuinely inclusive experience needs to consider everything from language to food preferences, pricing to security, inclusive facilities and engagement channels.



Human Connection and Storytelling

Emotional Connection

As an arts centre, telling great stories has always been at the heart of how we connect with people. In a world that increasingly demands easier, seamless experiences through technology, we also need to emphasise human connection and experience.

We want to offer every visitor a genuine, welcoming connection that leads to an ongoing relationship, not just a transaction. Every visitor touchpoint must be welcoming and inclusive. We have an opportunity to bring more stories to our visitors – about our art, the work we do with our community, and even our visitors themselves.





Environmental Sustainability

Making a Positive Impact

Australians and consumers across the globe are becoming more aware of how their choices can impact the environment.

More than ever before, we are seeing people take sustainability into their own hands and building it into their daily lives and practices. Already, consumers are trending towards meat-free and plastic-free choices, questioning old ways and choosing greener products and practices. The Opera House must ensure every aspect of the visitor journey leads to a positive environmental outcome.

Strategic Pillars

To deliver on our purpose to welcome and wow, four key strategic pillars guide our decision-making and priorities over the next three years.

The following pages detail the goals, objectives and desired outcomes for each pillar along with highlighted key actions and measures of success

This strategy has been developed in partnership with the Artistic Strategy (2022-24) and in alignment with other strategic Opera House plans including:

- Reconciliation Action Plan (2020-22)
- Environmental Action Plan (2020-23)
- Accessibility Action Plan (2020-23)
- Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Strategy (2021-23)
- Our commitment to the United Nations Global Goals

The Pillars



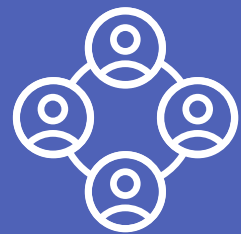
Visitor-Centric Culture



Exciting & Innovative Experiences



Seamless Visitor Journeys



Meaningful Collaborations

Visitor-Centric Culture

Goal

Place visitors centre-stage, with a culture committed to collaboration and continuous improvement.



Objectives

- Empower and develop all our people to provide consistently excellent, inclusive customer service that brings the Opera House brand to life.
- Cultivate a culture of collaboration through common goals, communication and celebration.
- Ensure our people reflect our diverse community, our practices are safe, inclusive, and we instil a sense of belonging for everyone.

Outcomes

- Improved skills and knowledge.
- More collaborative solutions.
- More inclusive practices.



Key Actions

- Invest in staff and contractor training across customer service, accessibility, sustainability and cultural awareness.
- Introduce new roles dedicated to growing and servicing new and diverse visitors.
- Introduce a recognition program for excellence in visitor-centric culture.
- Continue the work of the Customer Experience Action Group to channel communication, champion a visitor centric mindset and collaboratively solve visitor challenges.
- Set a clear measurement framework, that defines, aligns and cascades visitor and customer success and its value from enterprise level to individual KPIs.
- Execute our commitments outlined in broader organisational strategies and action plans:
 - Diversity Inclusion and Belonging Strategy (2021-23)
 - Reconciliation Action Plan (2020-22)
 - Accessibility Action Plan (2020-23)
 - Environmental Action Plan (2020-23)

Key Measures

- Training completion rates.
- Staff satisfaction score.
- Inclusion and diversity score.

Exciting & Innovative Experiences

Goal

Showcase vibrant and inviting experiences – beyond the stage – for everyone, everyday.



Objectives

- Extend art beyond the stage and integrate into visitor experiences for deeper and enriched visitor engagement.
- Offer extraordinary experiences, beyond the stage, that activate more of the precinct day and night, driving community connections while honouring our heritage.
- Diversify the visitor experience offering to increase revenue.

Outcomes

- Increased visitor participation.
- New visitors engaged in new ways.
- Strong commercial results.



Key Actions

- Create regular free and low cost activations and experiences to drive deeper visitor connections between visitors, the building and art.
- Deliver more opportunities for the community to meet and celebrate.
- Incorporate First Nations into the on-site experience, including food & beverage and live performance.
- Develop and implement a 'first-time visitors' orientation guide.
- Implement the Food and Beverage strategy – focused on service excellence, collaboration, technology and sustainability – to establish the precinct as a destination for dining.

Key Measures

- Onsite visitor dwell time and spend.
- Number of low-cost/free experiences offered.
- Repeat visitation.

Seamless Visitor Journeys

Goal

Engage, welcome, and deliver safe, consistent and frictionless end-to-end journeys, on site and online.



Objectives

- Reinvigorate our brand and promote the full visitor experience to increase awareness and conversion.
- Understand and anticipate the needs of our current and future visitors.
- Optimise systems and processes, including marketing technology, and enhance facilities to better meet visitor needs.

Outcomes

- Improved user experience.
- Better met visitor needs.
- Considered as a 'place for me'.



Key Actions

- Review and develop solutions to unify CRM, consolidate inventory management and deliver integrations that will increase analytical potential, deliver seamless upsell/cross-sell functionality and improve customer experience.
- Review and improve visitor wayfinding.
- Expand the Voice of Customer feedback program.
- Start the on-site journey earlier, expanding the physical footprint for a more intuitive journey.
- Reboot our marketing technology focusing on website, email, CRM and data asset management for better targeting capabilities across all digital channels.
- Refresh website design including information architecture.

Key Measures

- Customer satisfaction score.
- COVID safety satisfaction score.
- Positive brand associations.

Meaningful Collaborations

Goal

Collaborate and integrate with the right partners to strengthen and elevate the visitor experience.



Objectives

- Build on successful collaborations with Sydney's cultural and tourism organisations.
- Enhance the visitor experience through collaborations and partnerships that celebrate our community.
- Work with partners and operators to embed more sustainable practices

Outcomes

- Increased reach to new visitors.
- Increased community collaboration.
- Embedded sustainable practices.



Key Actions

- Develop collaborations with fellow NSW Government cultural institutions and others.
- Deepen partnerships and increase consultation with peak bodies and organisations that support and build capacity for diversity, inclusion and belonging, reconciliation, accessibility and sustainability initiatives.
- Implement the commitments set-out in the Sydney Opera House's fourth Environmental Action Plan (2020–23).

Key Measures

- First-time attendance.
- Diversity of audiences and visitors.
- Sustainable event management certification.



Our Values

The way we work matters

At the Sydney Opera House, we've developed a set of values which we live by.

Safety

Our greatest responsibility

Sydney Opera House is a place for everyone. And when people come to visit us, they're under our care. That's why safety is our number one priority. Feeling safe means everyone has an incredible experience.

Creativity

Be bold and innovative

Our creativity is what brings people to us. It's in the bones of the building, the soul of the stage, and is at the heart of how we operate.

Excellence

Make it the best

Sydney Opera House is an iconic, dynamic and inspiring place. This is what sets the bar for people's experiences, and plays a part in shaping our nation's culture. And when we're at our best, we can transform people's experiences into something extraordinary.

Collaboration

One team

It takes a whole crew to 'put on a show'. We are a group of experienced, diverse, and passionate people. And we only get stronger when we collaborate, support each other, and share what we know.

Accountability

Focus and own it

Accountability is about making a promise, to answer to ourselves and the rest of the team. But it also gives us the independence to back ourselves and the freedom to make a call when we need to.

Our Commitment to the Global Goals

In 2019, the Opera House committed to the United Nations Global Goals. A to-do list for the world, the goals address some of the most pressing issues of our time, including poverty, inequality, climate, education and justice. The table opposite shows how the Visitor Experience & Engagement Strategy aligns with the Global Goals.



Photograph by Daniel Boud

| United Nations Global Goal | Target | Opera House Commitment | Strategy Alignment to the Goals |
|--|--------------|---|---|
|  4 QUALITY EDUCATION | 4.7 | The Opera House will promote quality education and learning opportunities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower and develop all our people to provide consistently excellent, inclusive, and agile customer service that brings the Opera House brand to life • Cultivate a culture of collaboration through common goals, communication and celebration • Extend the art beyond stage and integrate into the visitor experience for deeper and enriched engagement |
|  8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH | 8.3 8.9 | The Opera House will champion diversity, and human rights in its workforce and business operations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure our people reflect our diverse community, our practices are safe, inclusive, and we instil a sense of belonging for everyone • Diversify the visitor experience offering to increase revenue |
|  10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES | 10.2 | The Opera House will improve inclusion and accessibility on and off stage. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and anticipate the needs of current and future visitors • Optimise systems and processes, including marketing technology, and enhance facilities to better meet visitor needs |
|  11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES | 11.7 | The Opera House will safeguard and revitalise cultural practices, heritage and sustainability. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer extraordinary experiences, beyond the stage, that activate more of the precinct day and night, driving community connections while honouring our heritage |
|  12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION | 12.2 12.6 | The Opera House will reduce its environmental impact and act as a leader in sustainability. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners and operators to deliver a more environmentally sustainable visit |
|  17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS | 17.16 | The Opera House will deepen and enrich its relationships with partners. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the visitor experience through collaborations and partnerships that celebrate our community • Build on successful collaborations with Sydney's cultural and tourism organisations |

Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging

At the heart of the Visitor Experience & Engagement Strategy is our vision for diversity, inclusion and belonging:

The Sydney Opera House – who we are and everything we do – reflects and respects the diversity of the community.

Diversity

The range of people throughout the organisation – ‘who’s making decisions, being recruited, and promoted’ – and the programming and experiences we offer.

Inclusion

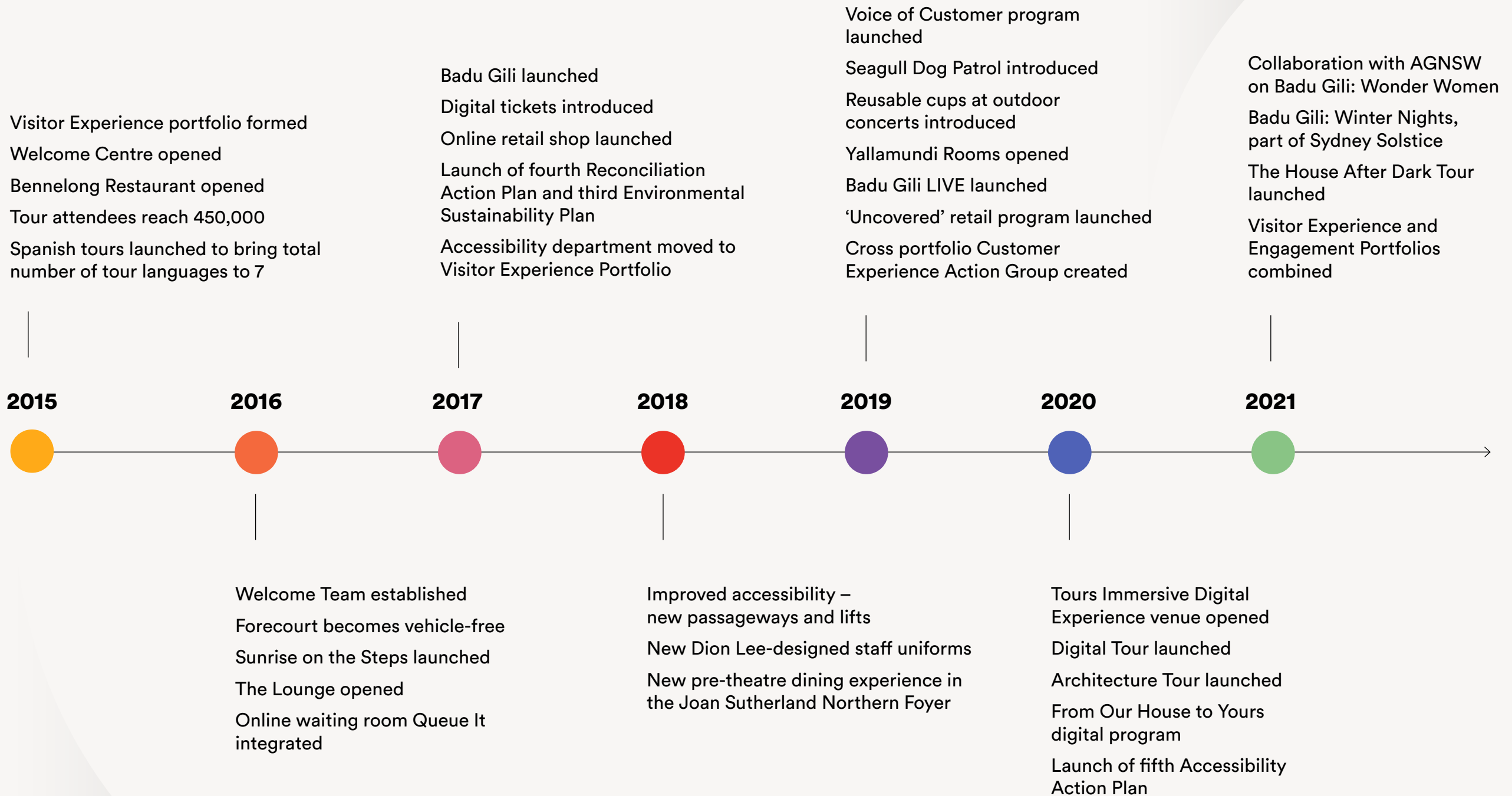
Respecting and celebrating our differences – and what we have in common – in the way we work and how we treat each other.

Belonging

Creating an equitable and welcoming environment in which everyone – all staff, artists, audiences and visitors feels accepted and supported.



Visitor Experience Highlights



Visitor Feedback



“The Opera House setting is “up there” with the worlds best and perfectly adds to the sense of occasion. It is strikingly impressive whilst at the same time being inclusive and welcoming”

Aimee, Engadine NSW
Photograph by Daniel Boud
Artwork by Kaylene Whiskey

“I was pleased to notice you have ‘employed’ a friendly Dog to scare off the very pesky, annoying Seagulls.”

Ed, Zetland NSW
Photograph by Jacquie Manning



“I love the diversity of the shows that are presented. I feel it is a place for all the people. One of my favourite places in the world. Proud to take visitors for tours, shows, food and drinks. ”

Meg, Cherrybrook NSW
Photograph by Steve Woodburn



“The “Front of House” are always amazing, nothing is too much trouble. Being someone in a wheelchair its greatly appreciated.”

Robert, Waterloo NSW
Photograph by Ken Leanfore



“Opera House forecourt performances are fantastic! I loved the reusable cups and the environmentally friendly approach to food and drink!”

Belinda, Old Toongabie NSW
Photograph by Prudence Upton

“A most enjoyable and informative event. I like the idea of having events like this that are low cost and more available to a broader range of people. We’re out-of-towners and appreciated the opportunity to attend something different!”

Caroline, Duffy ACT
Photograph by Mikki Gomez



Visitor Experience & Engagement Strategy 2022 – 24

Sydney Opera House Vision

To be as bold and inspiring as the Opera House itself

Visitor Experience Purpose

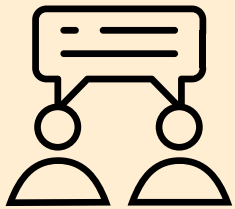
To welcome and wow

Our Values

Safety | Creativity | Excellence | Collaboration | Accountability

Guiding Principles

Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging | United Nations Global Goals



1. Visitor-Centric Culture

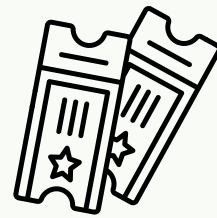
Place visitors centre-stage, with a culture committed to collaboration and continuous improvement

Objectives

1. Empower and develop all our people to provide consistently excellent, inclusive customer service that brings the Opera House brand to life
2. Cultivate a culture of collaboration through common goals, communication and celebration
3. Ensure our people reflect our diverse community, our practices are safe, inclusive, and we instil a sense of belonging for everyone

Outcomes

- Improved skills and knowledge
- More collaborative solutions
- More inclusive practices



2. Exciting & Innovative Experiences

Showcase vibrant and inviting experiences – beyond the stage - for everyone, everyday

Objectives

4. Extend the art beyond the stage and integrate into visitor experiences for deeper and enriched visitor engagement
5. Offer extraordinary experiences, beyond the stage, that activate more of the precinct day and night, driving community connections while honouring our heritage
6. Diversify the visitor experience offering to increase revenue

Outcomes

- Increased visitor participation
- New visitors engaged in new ways
- Strong commercial results



3. Seamless Visitor Journeys

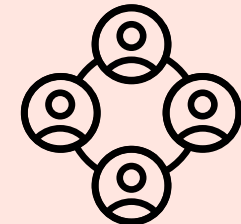
Engage, welcome, and deliver safe, consistent and frictionless end-to-end journeys, on site and online

Objectives

7. Reinvigorate our brand and promote the full visitor experience to increase awareness and conversion
8. Understand and anticipate the needs of our current and future visitors
9. Optimise systems and processes, including marketing technology, and enhance facilities to better meet visitor needs

Outcomes

- Improved user experience
- Better met visitor needs
- Considered as a 'place for me'



4. Meaningful Collaborations

Collaborate and integrate with the right partners to strengthen and elevate the visitor experience

Objectives

10. Build on successful collaborations with Sydney's cultural and tourism organisations
11. Enhance the visitor experience through collaborations and partnerships that celebrate our community
12. Work with partners and operators to embed more sustainable practices

Outcomes

- Increased reach to new visitors
- Increased community collaboration
- Embedded sustainable practices

