

CONCORD and PROGRESS

Concord & Progress

**A Strategic Prospectus for the Royal Society of Victoria
Provided for feedback from our members and supporters**



The Royal Society of Victoria

May the Tempest of discord never re-echo from these walls! May every word resounding here be one expressive of friendly feelings, of philosophic thoughts of elevated inspiration for all that is noble; and in aiming to fulfil the destiny for which we here are called, may our symbols

Concord & Progress

Dr Ferdinand Mueller, President, Royal Society of Victoria, 21st December, 1859.

While discussion, debate and disagreement are vitally important elements of collective decision making that help us to challenge and further define both personal and collective positions on matters, sustained conflict and discord, are unwelcome features of a Society gathered under the banner of shared principles and goals. The Royal Society of Victoria is convened for a great purpose, and if our role is to be discharged productively to win **progress** for our State, our many voices must be given the capacity to speak together to represent good science and provide certainty to the people of Victoria; for though true consensus is a rare gem, through our deliberations we may always find **concord**.

From 1854 the Royal Society of Victoria made its mark as a crucially important instrument for a well-planned, 'civilised' society on the frontier of the sprawling British Empire, part of a stable of initiatives that included Victoria's first university, museum and art gallery. Formed then, as now, from a broad membership representing individuals from different professions, disciplines, political affiliations and cultural backgrounds, our Society was convened to secure a prosperous future for Victoria through harnessing and developing the skills, ingenuity and capacity for **discovery, objective reasoning and critical thinking** in its populace.

Victoria is now a very different place, a technologically-advanced, culturally diverse State of a federated Australia for 116 years, yet the mission and role of the Royal Society of Victoria remains as relevant today as it was 162 years ago, as our 'civilisation' is never complete, forever being renewed to adapt to changing conditions if it is to be sustained. While we must never lose sight of our heritage and proud legacy, the Society must always be **future focussed** in discharging its important role.

Accordingly, we present our strategic prospectus, "Concord and Progress," to guide the Society's contribution to a 21st century Victoria as a **community-based** science organisation. This overview is offered for reflection and feedback from our members and supporters to confirm the settings are right and help us refine our impetus for action in the coming decades. Our subsequent, adopted Strategy will guide development of our first three-year **Strategic Plan**, setting key goals informed by our priorities, to be reviewed and renewed on completion of each triennium. I look forward to your thoughts.

Mike Flattley
Executive Director
21 December, 2015

Our Role and Mission

We promote the value of science to the Victorian community, explaining the important role of **rigour in the scientific process** to inform well-reasoned argument and decision making in our state.

The Royal Society of Victoria convenes an **independent** community of science practitioners, educators, adherents and enthusiasts who **advocate** for and **advance** the value, prestige, excellence and visibility of scientific education, methodology and achievement within and for the benefit of Victoria.

Our Objectives

INCREASING VISIBILITY, VALUE & PRESTIGE FOR SCIENCE IN VICTORIA

The Royal Society of Victoria must increase public understanding of the **scientific method**, its discipline and rigour, as a valuable basis for **objective reasoning and action** in our society.

We must motivate, recognise and celebrate **excellence in scientific endeavour**, increasing the public profile and regard for **high achievers in the sciences in Victoria**.

Pictured: 2015 RSV Research Medal winner Professor David Karoly (right) with RSV President Dr William Birch AM and Her Excellency the Hon Linda Dessau AM, Governor of Victoria



"We have a long tradition of allowing civic affairs to be settled by persuasive rhetoric. That is inadequate for our modern society. Science and technology shape our world and, as a society, we need to make well-reasoned and scientifically literate choices about everything from genetic engineering to geoengineering."

New Scientist, 9 December 2015

FOSTERING GROWTH & INNOVATION IN STEM EDUCATION, TRAINING & ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

"I personally devote much of my working life to science journalism, science education, pure and applied science, and general education. Why? Because it is important that our young people emerge from school and university with a solid awareness of the world around them coupled with a well-tuned ability to make evidence-based decisions, on matters that affect them personally and on matters that affect broader society. Such training equips them not only to contribute technological innovations that will continue to advance the economy, environment and prosperity of our global society, but also to address the existential problems of our times."

*Dr Alan Finkel AM
Chief Scientist of Australia (designate)*

We must advocate and campaign for substantial **investment in science education and literacy** to achieve a baseline standard for Victorian students and future workforce participants.

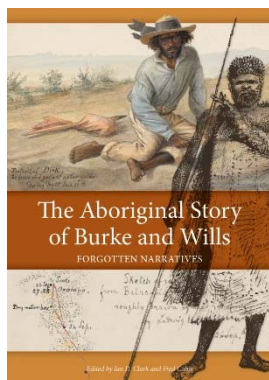
We must identify, support and **promote entry pathways** to tertiary education, research and STEM industry participation for **talented young people** from **diverse** backgrounds.

We will **align** with, **convene** and **develop** a diverse, engaged **community** of STEM educators, researchers, communicators, campaigners, innovators, entrepreneurs and business leaders in Victoria to better realise a **prosperous, sustainable, knowledge-based economy across our State**.



*Pictured: Dr Alan Finkel AM
RSV Trustee & Chief Scientist of
Australia (designate)*

IDENTIFYING & PROMOTING A VICTORIAN LEGACY OF ENDEAVOUR, ACHIEVEMENT & EXCELLENCE IN THE SCIENCES



Pictured: The Aboriginal Story of Burke and Wills: Forgotten Narratives, produced by the Royal Society of Victoria and published by CSIRO Publishing, is the first major study of Aboriginal associations with the Burke and Wills expedition of 1860-61. A main theme of the book is the contrast between the skills, perceptions and knowledge of Indigenous peoples and those of the new arrivals, and the extent to which this affected the outcome of the expedition.

We must reveal and demonstrate the rich legacy of the scientific endeavour in our state as a **foundation for contemporary societal benefits** and an **important source of Victorian cultural identity** – telling the story of Victoria.

We will maintain our heritage listed **building**, develop our facilities and **advocate** to protect significant science **heritage in support of science, innovation and STEM literacy in Victoria**.

ESTABLISHING A SECURE FOUNDATION FOR GROWTH

We must activate the considerable talents of the **membership** through a high level of **engagement, participation** in and **commitment** to our Society's goals, programs and activities.

We must **extend the capacity of the Society** to commission, support and celebrate the advancement of science through philanthropy, partnerships, sponsorships and grants.



Pictured: The beautiful Cudmore Library at the RSV

We will develop and encourage **mechanisms for diversity, succession and sustainability** in the Society's membership and leadership.

We will **optimise revenue for and benefits to** the advancement of Victorian science from hire and usage of the RSV venues and facilities.



Pictured: RSV President Dr William Birch AM convenes the 2015 annual Members' Forum in the Burke & Wills Room

Most importantly, we must secure **new revenue** streams and establish a **sustainable financial model** to support the growth of the RSV's programs and win impact for our activities and key initiatives.

Your Opportunity for Reflection and Feedback

We sincerely welcome your response to this strategic prospectus to inform the further development of our plan for the Society's future. While discussion and debate will always be a feature of Society membership, consideration of your thoughts for the purposes of planning will require your considered comments to be **submitted to the Executive Director, Mike Flattley** at ed@sciencevictoria.org.au by no later than **Friday, 22 January 2016** please.

