

About Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust



Did you know...

The Royal Botanic Garden Sydney is situated on the site of the first European Farm that was established in Australia in 1788.

Our lands

The Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust is responsible for three iconic botanic gardens and one of Australia's most significant public parks.

Royal Botanic Garden Sydney

The Royal Botanic Garden Sydney encompasses 30 hectares and is the oldest botanic garden in Australia. It is also Australia's oldest living scientific institution and home to an outstanding collection of plants from around the world. The Garden is also home to the National Herbarium of New South Wales which contains more than 1.2 million plant specimens, including scientific and historically significant collections and samples gathered by Banks and Solander during the voyage of the Endeavour in 1770. Within the Herbarium is the Daniel Solander Library which is the premier botanical and horticultural library in Australia, with a world-class collection of botanic, taxonomic and horticultural literature.

In November 2017, the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney was named the Major Tourist Attraction of the Year at the NSW Tourism Awards. The Garden attracts more than five million visits from around Australia and the world each year.

Australian Botanic Garden Mount Annan

The Australian Botanic Garden Mount Annan showcases the enormous diversity of Australian flora. Covering 416 hectares between Camden and Campbelltown in Sydney's south-west, it is Australia's largest botanic garden. Its horticultural displays contrast with natural areas of remnant Cumberland Plain Woodland, an endangered ecological community of the region. The Trust's plant conservation research facilities are based at the Garden, including the award-winning Australian PlantBank which houses the New South Wales Seedbank.

In June 2018, the NSW Government announced that the Australian Botanic Garden Mount Annan will become the new home of the National Herbarium of NSW.

Blue Mountains Botanic Garden Mount Tomah

The Blue Mountains Botanic Garden Mount Tomah is situated 1,000 metres above sea level in the World Heritage-listed Greater Blue Mountains. It features 28 hectares of manicured gardens showcasing cool climate plants from around the world. The botanical collection sits adjacent to 10 hectares of pristine, warm temperate rainforest within a 33-hectare heritage property known as 'The Jungle'. Separated by Bells Line of Road, the Garden also manages a conservation area of 189 hectares of wet and dry sclerophyll forest including heath, rainforest and some closed forest.

The Domain

This 34 hectares of urban parkland wraps around the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney. It is endowed with significant natural and cultural heritage values, and plays a central role in Sydney's festivals and cultural events, as well as the recreational and sporting pursuits of city workers and residents.

Management responsibility

The Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust is the statutory body, established under the *Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust Act 1980*, to oversee the management and stewardship of the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney, the Domain, the Australian Botanic Garden Mount Annan and the Blue Mountains Botanic Garden Mount Tomah.

In January 2014 the NSW Government announced that the operational staff from the Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust would integrate with operational staff of the Centennial Park & Moore Park Trust. The operating name for the new administrative entity was subsequently confirmed as *Botanic Gardens & Centennial Parklands*.

See more online at
rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au



Chairman's report



I was delighted to accept the appointment as Chair of the Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust and particularly so at a time when we are doing so well.

This year the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney took out top honours at the NSW Tourism Awards – being named NSW's Major Tourist Attraction of the Year and going on to take out Bronze nationally. The Garden is now frequently named as one of the world's best, and this is a credit not only to our horticulturalists, but our whole team.

Visitation across all three Gardens is now at record levels, surpassing six million visits in 2017/18. This has been supported by exciting new customer initiatives such as smart cell technology, providing free wifi and upgraded security.

The Royal Botanic Gardens & Domain Trust is one of our nation's most important scientific institutions. This year, we saw that recognised through the NSW Government's vote of confidence in our future with a \$60 million capital investment commitment to support our vital science work.

The \$60 million commitment will deliver a new purpose-built Centre of Innovation in Plant Sciences at the Australian Botanic Garden Mount Annan. This will be the nation's premier botanic science research facility – adding to Western Sydney's emergence as an important scientific and innovation hub.

The existing National Herbarium site at the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney will be revitalised and turned into a new science, horticulture and education centre, showcasing the work of the Gardens' world-class experts.

Our scientists are tackling some of the most critical challenges facing humanity today. Starting with the first European explorers collecting and naming species, the science here has evolved to include plant pathology, genetics, ecology and seed science. Our Gardens are also a magnet for schools and education programs – teaching the scientists of tomorrow, as well as taking our message to the world through a rejuvenated science brand, new website, smartphone apps and a popular new podcast series.

None of this would be possible without the support of our professional and hardworking staff, the support of the NSW Government, our philanthropic and corporate supporters, our volunteers, and the Foundation and Friends of the Botanic Gardens.

Lastly, I would like to pay tribute to Ken Boundy, who retired as Chair of the Trust in June 2018. Under Ken's leadership over the past six years, the Trust has positioned our Gardens as world-recognised tourist destinations and secured these vital investments into our future as a world-leader in plant sciences. The Trust looks forward to continuing the hard work to ensure our iconic green spaces continue to be recognised amongst the most innovative and attractive botanic gardens in the world.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philip Marcus Clark AM'. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Philip Marcus Clark AM

Chair

Royal Botanic Gardens & Domain Trust

Executive Director's Report



The past year has been one of hard earned achievement for all our talented staff.

Over the past four years, we have embarked on a path of change in our operational delivery, and 2017/2018 saw this hard work recognised.

The Royal Botanic Garden Sydney has been transformed. This year we opened our first new thematic garden in more than two decades – the magnificent Southern Africa Garden. The Calyx – our magnificent horticultural showpiece – hosted its third major exhibition, surpassing 200,000 visits. The restoration of Victoria Lodge was unveiled to the public for the first time – attracting high praise and support for the adaptive reuse of this heritage landmark. Our vital plant science work has received international recognition through prestigious research grants, a revitalised brand, a new podcast, and the opening up of our PlantClinic for visitors to the Garden.

At the Blue Mountains Botanic Garden Mount Tomah, the milestone 30th birthday was celebrated with a month-long calendar of activities, and we delivered important upgrades

to visitor amenities and a brand-new entrance sign. The Australian Botanic Garden Mount Annan was announced as the future home of the National Herbarium of NSW, cementing the future of western Sydney as an international plant science hub.

These achievements are only possible due to the tireless efforts of our scientists, horticulturalists, and all staff. Through their unwavering commitment to making our Gardens world-class, we've been able to achieve so much this year.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Kim Ellis'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a light-colored background.

Kim Ellis

Executive Director

Botanic Gardens & Centennial Parklands

Botanic Gardens & Centennial Parklands Strategic Plan 2015-2020

In 2014 the Minister for Environment and Heritage announced the operational integration of the staff from the Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust and the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust. The integration did not impact the Trusts or legislation governing the lands under management.

As a result of this management integration a Strategic Plan was developed to drive the work of the new organisation.

Our Strategic Goal

Deliver sustainable and world-leading botanic gardens and parklands.

Our vision

We aspire to be:

- World-class curators and managers of internationally-valued botanic gardens, parklands and collections
- Universally recognised as making a significant contribution to the quality, understanding and enjoyment of life
- Advocates and custodians for our unique heritage and sites, and their national and international significance
- Outstanding leaders in providing exceptional science, horticultural, educational, cultural and recreational offerings
- One of the top five botanic gardens and parklands in the world.

Core values

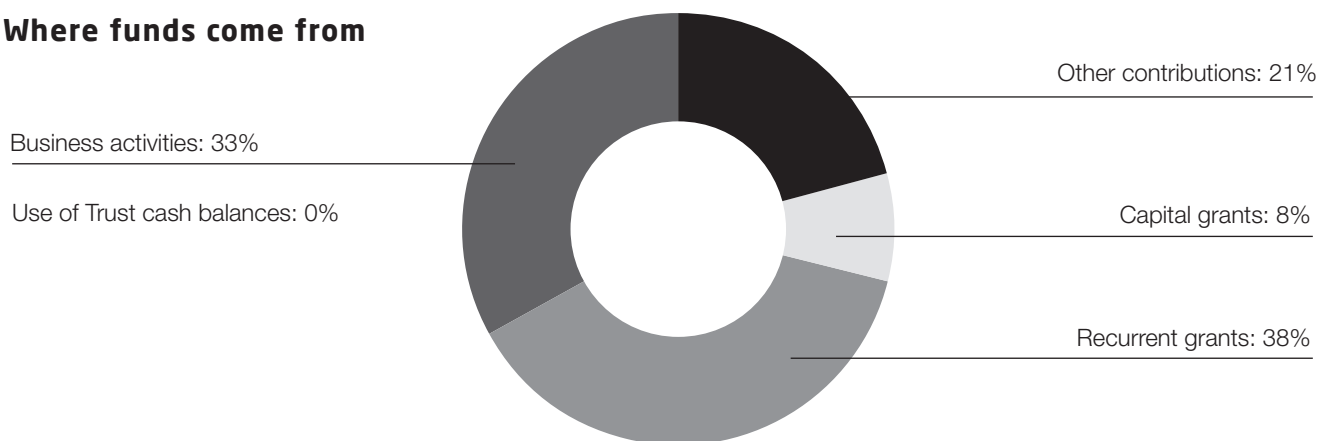
- **Relevance:** Deliver extraordinary quality and value for the community, our customers and stakeholders
- **Respect:** We value, support and develop our people
- **Energetic:** Innovative and adventurous
- **Leadership:** Inspiring as individuals and as an organisation
- **Sustainability:** Securing our environmental, social and financial future
- **Resilient:** Adaptable while focused on our core outcomes
- **Collaborative:** With those around us, within our teams and with our partners, stakeholders and the community
- **Integrity:** Ethical, responsible, transparent and accountable.

Our Strategic Priorities

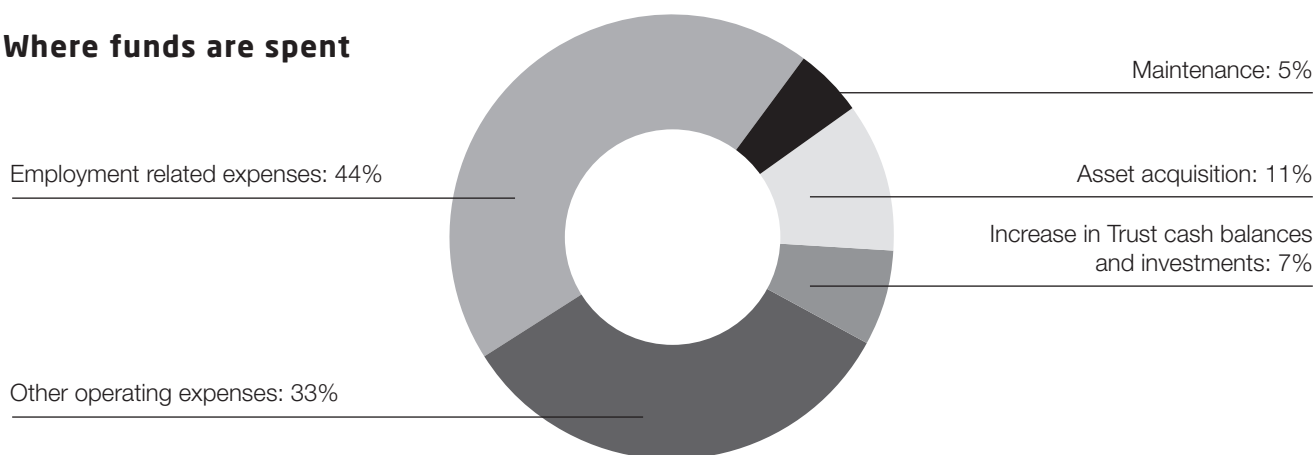
1. Grow and diversify our funding sources
2. Build a leadership, stakeholder and customer focused organisation
3. Build a world-class education capability
4. Ensure our science-based research, conservation, horticultural capacity, activities and collaborations are locally and globally relevant
5. Focus our operations on efficient and effective asset management
6. Maximise participation in all sporting, leisure activities and reflective recreation
7. Ensure our strategies and plans are current, relevant, forward-looking and our stakeholders and communities fully consulted
8. Deliver an outstanding visitor experience.

Financial summary

Where funds come from



Where funds are spent



Our key financial overview

In the 2017-18 financial year the Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust was able to again generate increased revenue but is still reliant on recurrent government funding to support its operating expenses. Any surpluses generated are directed towards the Trust's capital program particularly to address deferred maintenance works.

	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16
Trust generated revenue	26.7	23.1	21.0
Trust operating expenses	46.1	43.2	43.0
Government recurrent funding contribution	21.7	21.0	22.3
% Trust self-funding	53%	51%	48%