

THE LYCEUM CLUB
MELBOURNE • FOUNDED 1912



STRATEGIC PLAN 2020 - 2025

Updated 2023



Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background to the Strategic Plan.....	1
1.2 Who we are. Inspiring women, extraordinary insights	1
1.3 Lyceum Club purpose.....	1
1.4 Lyceum Club values	2
1.5 Strategic themes.....	2
1.6 Key focus areas.....	2
1.7 Initiatives	2
2. Overview	3
3. Membership base	4
3.1 Overview.....	4
3.2 Initiatives	4
4. Membership Experience.....	5
4.1 Overview.....	5
4.2 Initiatives	5
5. Programs and Activities	6
5.1 Overview.....	6
5.2 Initiatives	6
6. Sustainability	7
6.1 Overview.....	7
6.2 Initiatives	7
Appendix A – Status Update – Lyceum Club 5-Year Strategic Plan.....	8



THE LYCEUM CLUB
MELBOURNE • FOUNDED 1912

2020-2025 Strategic Plan Update

1. Introduction

1.1 Background to the Strategic Plan

In 2020, the Board developed a five-year strategic plan to lead and guide the Club's priorities and resources to 2025. 2020 was also the first year of a three-year global pandemic and a state of emergency was declared in Victoria.

This disruption negatively impacted many businesses and operations, including the Lyceum Club. This disruption continues today with the Club experiencing high costs for goods and services, skills shortages and reduced revenue. Considering these challenges, the Board has reviewed the Club's five-year strategy for the remaining two years to financial year 2026 (to 30 June 2025).

Many of the goals and initiatives in the original plan have been completed or are on track to be completed. Appendix A lists the progress achieved against each initiative.

This updated strategic plan provides the Club with a roadmap for the next two years. It outlines a set of strategies, priorities, and initiatives to revitalise the Club's membership base, provide new opportunities for members to engage with the Club and to rebuild the balance sheet.

1.2 Who we are. Inspiring women, extraordinary insights

The Melbourne Lyceum Club was established in 1912 as a club for tertiary educated women and women connected with, or distinguished in literature, science, education, music or art, philanthropy, journalism, social or public service and the learned professions¹.

The Club is a welcoming place where women from a range of backgrounds can meet for discussion, develop friendships and share life experiences. The Club's activities are contemporary and inspiring, based around circles of interest where all members are welcome to participate. It is a non-political and non-sectarian organisation.

The Club is steeped in over 110 years of history, but always remains contemporary and focused on the needs and aspirations of women today and for future generations. Members come from a broad range of professions, artistic endeavours and backgrounds. Many members have been recognised with honours and other awards for their achievements in the professions, the artistic world and the community.

Our members actively contribute to the Club's vibrancy and success through volunteer participation and involvement in Committees and Circles.

1.3 Lyceum Club purpose

Since its commencement, the Club has flourished due to the extraordinary women who established the Club and the loyalty of members who continue to support its activities, participate in Club life, introduce friends and sustain the Club's membership base.

The Club's purpose has remained constant throughout its 111-year history: to provide intellectual, artistic, social and professional enrichment for its members in a warm and welcoming environment.

¹ Clause 2. (a) Constitution of the Lyceum Club



1.4 Lyceum Club values

This plan recognises qualities that describe the interactions of members in the Club, by identifying three values – respect, belonging and lifelong learning.

Our relationships are founded on respect towards each other and our valued staff, showing courtesy and kindness in all our interactions. We respectfully exchange ideas, establish enriching relationships and develop life-long friendships.

Belonging to the Club means members and guests are welcome and accepted, and that we relax, laugh, talk openly, and develop deep and lasting friendships. Our curiosity leads us to have a real interest in what others have to say, valuing and appreciating their different points of view and life experiences.

Lifelong learning drives our desire to discover and explore answers around deeper questions. We pursue life-long learning by participating in professional and cultural activities, taking part in our extensive range of circles and club events and learning from each other.

1.5 Strategic themes

This plan confirms three themes that underpin the Club's success and ensures it remains vibrant and relevant to members:

1. Attract and engage a growing and active membership
2. Be vibrant, financially stable and well-run
3. Enable the Club to evolve and adapt to meet existing and future needs of members

1.6 Key focus areas

These three themes have been expanded to include four key focus areas:

1. Membership base – attract and retain members
2. Member experience – increase member participation
3. Programs & activities – enhance life-long learning
4. Sustainability – return the Club to an operating surplus

1.7 Initiatives

In addition to the broad range of activities and services currently on offer the Club will pursue the following new initiatives:

- Actively seek new members across a diverse range of ages, backgrounds and experiences who will add to the vibrancy of our Club.
- Streamline the nomination process for new members, while retaining our high standard for membership.
- Provide opportunities for the Club's newest members to engage more fully in the Club.
- Provide more activities for the Club's traditional membership base including recognising years of membership, focusing on specific professional groups and specific interest areas.
- Invest in business systems and technology to support members and enable members to engage easily with the club.
- Employ and develop skilled, capable staff who make members feel welcome at all times and create a personalised atmosphere in the Club.
- Proceed with plans for renovating and enhancing the Club house ground floor and first floor, supported by a responsible financing strategy based on Club contributions and member philanthropy.
- Identify new funding streams by maximising opportunities to utilise the Club building more fully.
- Review governance systems, processes and practices to ensure they conform with legislative requirements and support the efficient and responsible functioning of the Club.

These initiatives are outlined in the pages that follow.

2. Overview

The Lyceum Club Strategic Plan 2020-2025 – updated

Purpose	To provide intellectual, artistic, social, and professional enrichment for generations of accomplished women in a warm and welcoming environment			
Values	Respect Belonging Lifelong learning			
Strategic themes	A. Attract and engage a growing and active membership	B. Be vibrant, financially stable and well run	C. Enable the Club to evolve and adapt to meet existing and future needs of members	
Focus areas	1. Membership base	2. Member experience	3. Programmes and Activities	4. Sustainability
2023 imperatives	Attract and retain members	Increase member participation	Enhance lifelong learning	Return to operating surplus
Measures for success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Increased diversity and next generation members. 1.2 Growing membership base. 1.3 Streamlined membership processes. 1.4 Enhanced new-member engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. The Club is offering intergenerational learning and growth. 2.2 IT systems are upgraded to support members, services, board and staff. 2.3 Building upgrade of level 1/ground floor has commenced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Members experience a diversity of circles and programme offerings. 3.2 New opportunities to participate in the Club are identified and actioned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. The Club's revenue base is strengthened. 4.2 Private events become a third income stream. 4.3 Fundraising strategies are in place. 4.4 Governance and operational structures are robust and effective.
Indicative initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Increase new member/Ridgway events – 4 per year. 1.2 Introduce events for prospective new members – 4 per year. 1.3 Identify diverse membership base and develop diversity strategy. 1.4 Identify specific target groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Identify professional groups events. 2.2 Recognise years of membership. 2.3 Expand reciprocal clubs. 2.4 Upgrade IT systems. 2.5 Plan building upgrade. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Increase outstanding programmes and breadth of circle offerings. 3.2 Identify new opportunities for members to participate in the Club. 3.3 Identify members for specific events to increase attendance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1 Expand the uptake of private and corporate events. 4.2 Implement philanthropy and bequests strategy. 4.3 Develop fundraising strategy for building upgrade. 4.4 Enhance governance and operational structures. 4.5 Identify and grow new income streams. 4.6 Minimise environmental footprint.



3. Membership base

Our 2023 Imperative: 'Attract and retain members'.

3.1 Overview

The Club is a community of notable, interesting, educated and talented women at different work and life stages and diverse cultural and professional backgrounds including:

1. Women students and working professionals.
2. Women in transition from full time careers.
3. Active and engaged women who have retired from paid professions.

Members also come from a broad range of ages and income levels and the Club provides events and activities to ensure all members can participate in Club life accordingly.

The Club contributes to the cultural life of Melbourne through its artist-in-residence program, Margaret Sutherland Bursary and its programme of events and guest speakers.

The Club is an active member of Australian Association of Lyceum Clubs and International Association of Lyceum Clubs and participates in cultural exchange with Lyceum Clubs globally.

The Club aims to grow its membership base with diverse members who provide the next generation of women members, streamline membership processes and enhance new member engagement.

3.2 Initiatives

To attract and retain a growing and active membership base the Club will:

1. Increase new member/Ridgway events.
Four specific new member events will be held including lunches, dinners and cocktail parties, to encourage new members' participation and integration into Club life.
2. Introduce events for prospective new members.
The Club will hold four prospective member events in 2023/24 to encourage current members to introduce friends and colleagues as potential new members.
The Club will streamline new member nomination processes whilst retaining its high standards for membership.
3. Identify a diverse membership base and develop a diversity strategy.
The Club will develop a diversity strategy that attracts new members from a range of age groups, cultural and professional backgrounds, and life experiences, to enrich our membership and create a vibrant Club reflective of the wider community of educated and artistic women.
4. Encourage new membership and participation from specific professional groups.
Women from a range of professional and cultural backgrounds who are not currently members will be invited to attend club events to experience the value of Club membership.



4. Membership Experience

Our 2023 Imperative: 'Increase member participation'.

4.1 Overview

Increased membership participation supports the Club's plan to attract and retain members and to provide our members with forward thinking programs and activities for generations of active members.

Members are enriched and inspired by the wide array of opportunities for lifelong learning and the lasting friendships that develop through actively participating in Club life.

Our Club comprises several generations of members who learn from and inspire each other through their conversations and friendships.

The Club will enable members to engage with the Club more easily whilst maintaining the personal touch that makes members feel welcome by providing contemporary, accessible technology and processes.

4.2 Initiatives

To increase member participation in Club life the Club will:

1. Identify members in specific professional groups for events.
The Club will identify exciting and stimulating speakers that encourage members with specific professional backgrounds to come together and foster friendships at the Club.
2. Recognise years of membership.
The Club will recognise and honour years of membership with specific activities such as lunches, dinners, cocktail events and other recognition events.
3. Expand reciprocal Club connections.
The Club will provide the opportunity for members to expand their social connections and cultural understanding through expanding reciprocal accommodation arrangements around the world.
4. Upgrade IT Systems.
The Club will invest in more efficient and user-friendly technology that handles the complexities of our Club's operations and which members find easy and intuitive to use.
5. Building upgrade.
The Club will commence planning the redevelopment of the entry and Level One of the Club house so that these spaces provide a more welcoming entry to the Club, and encourage new and existing members to use these facilities in a variety of ways. We will also enhance staff amenities.



5. Programs and Activities

Our 2023 Imperative: 'Enhance lifelong learning'.

5.1 Overview

The Club is a welcoming place of learning, culture and enrichment for a broad range of women of different ages, backgrounds and fields of work, and at various stages in their lives. It offers a wide range of intellectual, educational, cultural, professional, scientific and social activities to enrich their lives and provide them with a perfect environment for lifelong learning.

Lifelong learning and enrichment are fostered through Club events with prominent, highly regarded speakers and performers, and over 60 circles covering a wide range of interests that provide interesting information. The Club is a place to hear specialists in their fields of research, have language and art classes, participate in reading, choir and book groups, attend culture and performing arts events and hold discussions in areas of professional and social interest, as well as board and card games for much entertainment and enjoyment. These activities provide highly valued connection with others and enhances personal well-being.

The Strategic Plan will enhance the provision of activities for lifelong learning and for women of all ages to participate actively through an expanded range of programs and activities. These opportunities will lead to member exchange of views across a broad range of areas through different modes of interaction. Learning from each other enables members to open their minds to the worlds of women with different experiences and of different generations and deepens their understanding of intellectual, professional, social, global and personal issues.

We will work to deliver a variety of member experiences and new opportunities for members to participate in the Club.

5.2 Initiatives

To enhance lifelong learning the Club will:

1. Continue to offer outstanding programs and breadth of circles.

The Club will continue to assess, develop and conduct contemporary and inspiring Club and Circle events considering our diverse membership backgrounds, life stages and interests.

2. Identify new opportunities for members to participate in the Club.

The Club will investigate different event formats such as weekend forums and workshops. The Club will consult with members on ways we can increase participation.

3. Identify members for specific events to increase attendance.

The Club will identify members from various backgrounds, age groups and locations, and construct specific events that will be particularly relevant and attractive to these membership groups.



6. Sustainability

Our 2023 Imperative: 'Return to operating surplus'.

6.1 Overview

The Club must remain financially viable and sustainable for our club to continue and thrive. The club operates in a dynamic economic, social and political environment that calls for a considered approach to sustainability.

Sustainability by its very nature is a long-term proposition. It is integrated into all aspects of operations – from service delivery through to governance and management. The Club will continue to update its governance and financial practices in a responsible manner and as a practical response to changing circumstances.

The Lyceum Club has sufficient financial reserves to protect it against downturns. However, we will rebuild our reserves and generate the revenue necessary to return to operating surplus following the financial impact of the pandemic. The Club will build on current or create new income sources in order to continue to serve members and achieve its overall strategic purpose.

The Club will work to deliver:

1. A strong revenue base, security of income sources and sound financial management.
2. A regular and consistent third income stream, based on expanding the Club's private events and identifying new income streams.
3. Fundraising strategies to enable appropriate planning of building enhancements that will expand member utilisation and enjoyment of club spaces.
4. Robust and effective governance and operational structures to ensure that initiatives and projects are suitably evaluated, scoped, planned, and scheduled.

6.2 Initiatives

To return to an operating surplus we will:

1. Maximise the Clubs physical assets to grow income streams.
The Club will maximise opportunities to utilise the Club's beautiful and adaptable space for private events and corporate functions and to grow new income streams.
2. Implement the Club's philanthropy & bequests strategy.
Broad communication about the stewardship, sound financial management and oversight will provide further confidence that gifts are administered responsibly.
3. Develop a fundraising strategy for building investment.
The Club will fund the building project through a combination of member donations and Club contributions so that building works can be responsibly funded according to need, stages and financial capacity.
4. Enhance governance and operational structures.
The Club will govern responsibly through investment in appropriate business systems and infrastructure, skills, senior appointments and IT support.
5. Minimise our environmental footprint.



Appendix A – Status Update – Lyceum Club 5-Year Strategic Plan

THEME	INITIATIVE	PROGRESS	COMMENTS
1. Membership	1.1 Review current structure and categories of membership including but not limited to a younger members strategy	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Categories were confirmed as an accurate reflection of membership.• Key initiatives to attract younger members include inviting speakers of particular interest to younger members such as the Club's Women of Influence series, annual cocktail party for younger members and trialing of a mentoring program.
	1.2 Review and update the member identification, nomination, election and on-boarding process.	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Membership nomination form has been updated and includes fillable form format.• The member waiting period before nominating new members has been reduced from a minimum of 2 years to a minimum of 12 months.
	1.3 Implement a new member engagement strategy	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New members are identified with coloured dots on name tags to encourage existing members to especially welcome them.• The member information pack for new members has been updated.• Club member Judith Troeth, AM has been delegated responsibility to welcome each new member and organise signing of register.• Club member Sarndi Addison individually welcomes each new member.• New member Ridgway lunches held quarterly.
2. Member Experience	2.1 Review and refresh member communication	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communications Officer appointed and more senior role under review.• A new member database, website and booking system under review.
	2.2 Define and implement agreed service standards	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key operational procedures in place and will be enhanced. Staff induction and training plans in place.
3. Programme, Activities and Interests	3.1 Review the range of circles, services, programs and activities offered by the club	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completed and ongoing review of Programme Committee events and service is continuing. Refer to 3.2 regarding circle activities.
	3.2 Support circle convenors in their role	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Circle Convenor Liaison Paula Johnson has been appointed.• Circle Convenors' information sessions are held. Circle Convenors Kit has been developed and is regularly reviewed.



THEME	INITIATIVE	PROGRESS	COMMENTS
	3.3 Examine the feasibility of mentoring/experience sharing program	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trial has been advertised, but with a low response rate. A new approach will be considered in 2024.
4. Club Facilities and Services	4.1 Commence a program of works to upgrade and repurpose facilities	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redevelopment planning of Level 1 and ground floor has progressed with scoping the brief with architects. • Fundraising Capital campaign strategy is in development. Next steps include consulting with members and developing firm plans.
	4.2 Improve administrative and members services through upgraded IT	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Point of Sale and finance systems implemented. More integration is required to satisfy member needs. • New Wi-Fi installed. • Cyber security insurance is in place. • Members are still experiencing problems with website and booking system. Full review of IT interfaces is a priority.
	4.3 Review and expand club hospitality services	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During lockdowns the Club offered masterclasses and introduced expanded meal, wine and hamper delivery options. • Operations team is established following the appointment of an Operations Manager and a committed and skilled hospitality team. • The Chef is leading a skilled and capable kitchen team with kitchen regularly reviewing and refining food offers and preparing creative menus. Members' feedback is positive. • Private member events are highly successful and growing, with excellent member feedback; now comprises 1/3 of the revenue from food and beverages.
	4.4 Review art collection holdings, policy and storage	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-valuation of art collection completed. • Policy for art acquisition, storage and disposal has been documented. • Library Artwork Register aligned with Art Advisory Register.



THEME	INITIATIVE	PROGRESS	COMMENTS
5. Governance and financials	5.1 Seek member approval for Constitution changes (CPI, Board tenure, hybrid meetings, member nomination process)	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All changes approved by members at 2021 and 2022 AGMs. See 5.4 below for further details.
	5.2 Align the annual budget with the 5-year financial model	In progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The FY 2023/24 budget was approved in June 2023. Preparation of 3-year financial model will be developed.
	5.3 Improve analysis of revenue/cost activities	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance function outsourced and the Board now has highly informative monthly reports with accurate analyses of revenue and cost drivers; all historical member queries and outstanding matters have been resolved and current queries resolved promptly. Members are experiencing much higher accuracy in their monthly statements.
	5.4 Review the Club Constitution, policies and by-laws	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key constitution changes at the 2021 and 2022 AGMs include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2021: sanction of members, timing and lodgment of proxies and ballot papers, electronic register of members, power to make policies and bylaws; 2022: ability to hold hybrid meetings, replace ballot process with new member approval. All changes are operating effectively. Policy changes since 2022 include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conflict of interest policy for directors and Audit, Risk & Finance Committee and an updated conflict of interest register. By laws changes since 2021 include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitors (payment for beverages and to the service of alcohol requirement), private functions (to the service of alcohol requirement), standards of dress, photography policy, nominations for membership, use of Club stationery, reservations and cancellation policy, social media.