



Friday 16 April 2021

Mr Enver Erdogan  
Committee Chair  
Legislative Council Economy and Infrastructure Committee  
Parliament of Victoria

To the Committee

**RE: INQUIRY INTO THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE TOURISM AND EVENTS SECTORS**

The National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) greatly appreciates the opportunity to contribute to the current Inquiry into the impact of COVID-19 on the tourism and events sectors.

As the most visited art museum in Australia, NGV plays a significant role in the tourism sector and attracts a broad audience of local, national and international visitors. In 2019-20(FY), 26% of NGV's audience were overseas visitors, not including the high number of organised tour groups visiting the Gallery. A further 21% were interstate visitors and 8% travelled from regional Victoria.

Over the past six years, both domestic and international tourism has been a major strategic focus and audience driver to the NGV. NGV exhibitions and events that are exclusive to Melbourne have been critical in persuading tourists to prioritise Melbourne and Victoria as their destination of choice for experiencing arts and culture.

For NGV and other tourism providers, the extended closure of Australian borders poses a risk that international tourism operators, with whom we have held long standing and important partnerships, will choose to prioritise other markets and attractions.

Over the next several years, the NGV has programmed arguably our most ambitious schedule of exhibitions and events. This winter, the NGV will deliver its 17th Melbourne Winter Masterpieces exhibition, *French Impressionism from The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, alongside a second world-exclusive exhibition, *Goya: Drawings from the Prado Museum* which has been curated especially by the Prado Museum, Madrid, for the NGV. Opening 5 December 2021, our major summer exhibition will coincide with the return of the NGV Gala, Australia's preeminent cultural and fashion event which has achieved a global profile and previously generated more than \$4.6 million of national and international earned media in 2019 and a social media reach of 200 million.

The NGV is working to secure corporate and philanthropic support in a compromised environment for these exhibitions, and attracting a significant national audience will be critical to deliver our objectives. In the past year, NGV has worked closely with Tourism Australia, Visit Victoria and the City of Melbourne, featuring in their respective 'Holiday here this year',

**NGV**

'Stay close, go further' and 'FOMO' campaigns to rebuild audiences. Additional Government support to deliver impactful interstate marketing and media campaigns will be important to drive national awareness and enable the NGV to deliver the economic impact these Melbourne-exclusive exhibitions have the potential to create for Victoria.

Upon the reopening of international borders, Government support to lead overseas events to promote the NGV and Victoria as the cultural capital of Australia in key global markets would also provide meaningful impact for the sector. As international travel resumes, a continued profile in target markets including China, India, USA, UK and NZ will be imperative to attracting new and returning visitors to Melbourne and the NGV in a hyper-competitive national tourism market.

Complementing further international outreach and events, the NGV would also strongly support a comprehensive schedule of international famils to re-excite media and key opinion leaders with the depth and diversity of enriching experiences Melbourne has to offer.

Following a period that has severely tested the resilience of the tourism and events sectors, the NGV is committed to rebuilding visitation to Victoria and welcomes the opportunity to work with the Victorian Government to leverage the NGV as a global asset for Australia, and together deliver new initiatives that ensure the growth and prosperity of our State.

Yours sincerely,

**Jane Zantuck**

Assistant Director, Marketing and Corporate Partnerships  
National Gallery of Victoria