



Strategic Plan 2021–23

The Royal Society of NSW traces its origins to the Philosophical Society of Australasia, which was established on 27 June 1821. The Society received Royal Assent in 1866 and was incorporated by an Act of the NSW Parliament in 1881.

Today, the Society is an inclusive learned institution that encompasses a diverse group of people who are dedicated to ideas that matter. It draws together people who span and cross a wide range of disciplines and knowledge, creates a focus for sharing and applying expertise, and delivers an independent and authoritative voice. Valuing the notion of the public intellectual, the Society

encourages its Members and Fellows to speak out on important issues that shape the future of NSW and the nation. It is a collegiate enterprise, providing a meeting place for people with common interests in advancing knowledge and contributing to a better future.

This strategic plan for 2021–23 builds upon the directions of previous plans while also responding to the imperatives of today’s upheavals. The plan articulates an inclusive and progressive vision, refines the mission, and sharpens the initiatives required to enhance the relevance of the Society’s contribution to our modern state and nation.

Vision	Enriching lives through knowledge and inquiry		
Mission	Contribute to a just, secure, and sustainable society by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilising the multidisciplinary expertise of Society members • Providing authentic and authoritative information • Addressing national and global challenges • Recognising and promoting excellence 		
Initiatives	Leading intellectual debate <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Foster transdisciplinary debate on global/national and NSW challenges b) Promote awareness of major issues confronting society c) Promote inclusion and diversity across all Society activities d) Recognise excellence in all fields of knowledge 	Building partnerships <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Strengthen partnerships with government to advance the Society’s mission and message b) Establish and consolidate partnerships with organisations and networks with complementary strengths c) Establish relationships with business and philanthropic organisations to improve the Society’s financial security d) Build upon and broaden the mutually valued relationship with our Patron and Government House 	Enhancing Impact <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Enhance engagement of the membership in the Society b) Increase the Society’s reach into the community c) Expand the Society’s engagement in rural and regional NSW through existing and new branches

Values

The Society upholds the principles of liberal democracy, respects religious, political, and cultural freedoms, and promotes non-discriminatory evidence-based discourse and the free exchange of ideas.

The Society subscribes to the following ideals:

- Commitment to advancing the best interests of society: advancing knowledge and understanding for a more just, sustainable, and secure society.
- A questioning spirit: supporting the principles of freedom of thought and speech, and the scientific method of inquiry.
- Diverse and inclusive engagement: embracing and including individual differences and contributions to our collective success and social engagement.
- Boldness and innovation: acting with courage to address issues of the day, take calculated risks, and to innovate as modern technologies expand ways to communicate.
- Professional governance: organisational practices that are ethical, expert, inclusive, consultative, participatory, accountable, and sustainable.

Implementation

The Council is responsible for delivering the initiatives of the 2021-23 Strategic Plan.

The organisational structure of the Society has been conceived as a collection of programs that is designed and implemented by Council and its Committees. The Committees will undertake the detailed work of the Society, providing reports and advice to Council on the present and future conduct of the programs.

Act and Rules

The Society is governed by its Act of Incorporation (1881) and Rules (incorporating the By-laws) that were updated most recently in December 2020. [These are available online.](#)

Key Policies

In line with the Society's [values and principles](#), the Council, in January 2020, adopted its initial [Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#).

This policy is considered by Council annually, and updated as appropriate, with progress being reported to both Council and the membership.