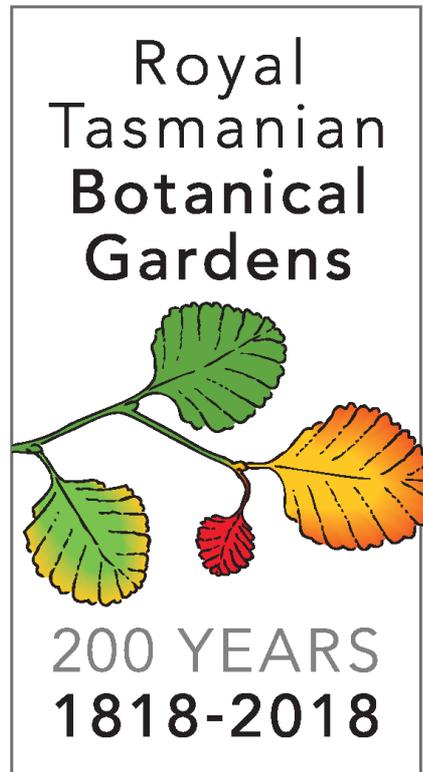


# Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens



## Business Operational Plan 2018-2023



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## 1. Executive Summary

The Business Operational Plan 2018-2023(BOP) represents the eighth Business Operations Plan based on the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens (RTBG) Strategic Master Plan 2009-2029 (SMP).

Based on the outcomes of a Board Workshop held on 19 January 2018 this Business Operations Plan gives further definition to and resets the work of the 2016 -2021 BOP.

Recognising that we are in the business of connecting plants to people, the redefined goals see a focus on the RTBG's core business.

### **Core Business**

We do this in three ways:

1. We promote the Gardens and engage with the Tasmanian community,
2. We strategically manage our thriving living collections, and;
3. We create a quality environment that provides an exemplary visitor experience.

*These three activities are the focus of our business.*

While recognising that the other three goals enable Core Business -

We have, and continue to develop, skills and capabilities to deliver our core business. The three ways we do this are:

4. Partnerships that deliver maximum value to the Gardens,
5. People and culture that deliver a quality visitor experience, and;
6. A self-supporting, sustainable enterprise.

Our business decisions are made by answering three key questions:

1. Is it core business of the Gardens?
2. Does it exemplify the values of the Gardens?
3. Does it align with, and represent the Tasmanian brand?

In addition, the BOP will continue the introduction of organisational changes designed to refocus the Garden's horticultural planning and the delivery of business enterprise, public programs and science programs.

The BOP acknowledges the essential external activities performed by the RTBG staff including departmental, cross agency, community, and industry initiatives. Although labour intensive, these cooperative projects are deemed to be of significant benefit to the organisation, its staff and the community.

While daily management, administrative, operational and maintenance tasks are not indicated in this plan, this work takes up the majority of staff time and needs to be accounted for and recognised.

## **2. Key priorities**

The **Key Priorities** are:

### **Strategic Planning and the RTBG Strategic Master Plan (SMP)**

Meeting the outcomes of the Board's 2018 strategic planning session, as articulated in this BOP is a key focus for the 2018 / 2023 period. The BOP also retains and carries through recommendations from the SMP and its associated plans. The Recommendations for the Development for the Living Collections (completed in 2015) continues to form the basis for the collection's strategic activity.

### **Planning and Implementation of the Bicentenary**

The Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens celebrated its Bicentenary in 2018. This anniversary provided the opportunity to celebrate this important milestone and the role that the RTBG plays in Tasmania and reinforced the Gardens intrinsic value as a leading and contemporary cool climate Garden and a place where locals and the community can engage. This extensive celebration concluded with a volunteer's morning tea, hosted by the Premier in the early part of 2019; however, the momentum gained by extensive marketing and coverage will continue to reap benefits.

### **Capital Works Project- Visitor Engagement**

The State Government commitment of \$3.6m and a further budget of \$4m will contribute soundly to develop the Gardens proposed overall front entrance and infrastructure improvements to enable the Gardens to deliver a world class visitor service and to better manage the significant increase in visitors to the Gardens (as recommended in the RTBG's Strategic Master Plan 2009 – 2029). The proposed full scope of the Capital Works Programs projected costs are estimated to be \$7.6m.

The key priorities of the Capital Works Project is to design and construct the new visitor centre and associated works to enable the organisation to become a self-supporting sustainable enterprise. In doing so, deliver a built environment that supports the core business strategies to 'create a quality environment that provides an exemplary visitor experience' and to 'promote the Gardens and engage with the Tasmanian community', whilst managing the thriving living collections and building upon existing income streams for the Gardens.

### **Sustainable Business Enterprise and Marketing**

The Business Enterprise and Marketing Unit incorporates the Visitor Services commercial operations, learning and volunteer management functions. The Marketing and Communications Plan supports these functions and manages the program of events and activity in the gardens, and is reviewed annually. The Marketing Plan is supported by an organisational brand project that has been implemented to ensure the long-term strategy consistently reflects the Gardens brand.

One of the major priorities is to provide an exemplary visitor experience and it has been recognised that the long-term requirement is a physical presence at the main entrance to guide

the visitor journey and enable a comprehensive understanding of the profile of visitors to the Gardens to be captured. The visitor experience plan includes; an entry plan for the front gate, a redevelopment of the current functions within the visitor centre precinct and improved parking in the main avenue.

The RTBG does not currently have the financial resources to achieve all of the goals, objectives and actions set out in the BOP and the SMP. Government appropriations account for only 67% of the day to day running costs of the gardens with the remaining 33% being made up from self-generated revenue. This BOP recognises that in order to achieve the additional goals, objectives and actions identified, it is essential that the RTBG increases its self-generated funding.

To achieve this, the RTBG will continue to develop and implement sustainable business strategies aimed at increasing donations and self-generated income including the further development of RTBG commercial products and services. There is a significant contribution by volunteers towards the visitor services functions of the RTBG and is supported by a Volunteer Management Plan.

The onsite commercial operations including tours, The Botanical Shop and Hub. Succulent Restaurant and Sprout Café are key components in contributing to long-term sustainability, with a focus on growing revenue through these businesses.

Hosting large events, such as concerts, community theatre and activities and corporate functions, as well as providing venues for weddings, celebrations and corporate meetings are also revenue generating areas of focus.

### **Financial Management and Business Operational Services**

Financial management and reporting is carried out using the system of NRET Finance Division using the Finance One System.

### **Staffing**

The RTBG recognises and values the wealth of experience and knowledge of our staff and is committed to the principles and values of diversity in the workplace and will ensure as a priority that our staff are recruited, trained and retained to deliver a quality experience. Actions to achieve this include:

- Conduct a structural and operational review of the organisation with the aim of ensuring the most efficient and effective use of resources.
- Undertake a training needs analysis in line with the needs of the gardens.
- Develop and implement a training and development plan.
- Develop and implement a volunteer operational management plan.

### **Develop Partnerships that Deliver Maximum Value for the Gardens**

Continue to develop and enhance partnerships with key strategic partners including Tourism Tasmania, Destination Southern Tasmania, Hobart City Council, TMAG, Macquarie Point Development Corporation and the Port Arthur Management Authority.

Plan and implement a process and outcomes for a more collaborative focussed partnership with Friends of the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens Inc. (Friends), and volunteer and support groups.

### **Community Engagement and Social Inclusion**

The RTBG will continue to develop community engagement programs based around the Tasmanian Community Food Garden and other aspects of the RTBG's operations. The redevelopment of the former Education Pod and the surrounding landscape into a community engagement /multifunction precinct provides increased opportunities for these spaces to be utilised by individual community groups as well as being a versatile venue for RTBG community-based income generating events.

### **Tasmanian Seed Conservation Centre (TSCC)**

In addition to routine collection and processing work to meet collection targets associated with the TSCC, efforts will continue toward identifying and securing ongoing funding for targeted collection and research programs both locally and in conjunction with the Australian Seed Bank Partnership (ASBP).

Work will be undertaken to ensure the security and quality of the Seed Bank collections through the installation of failsafe devices and functional and security focussed improvements to the drying room and cool storage facilities. The completion of the Seedbank Five Year Plan will deliver further focus to the RTBG's programs and include the development of a specific risk management strategy aimed at managing; knowledge transfer, succession and sustainability and awareness raising in relation to the work of the Seed Bank.

### **Policy Development and Updates**

The RTBG is working on a number of policy improvements, including the following updates: business processes (aligning to NRET policies where practical); commercial use; events; contractor and visitor management; authorisations and a range of policies directed by the Strategic Master Plan linked to the management of the Living Collections and Visitor Services.

## **3. Background**

The RTBG is Tasmania's only botanical gardens and is custodian of the State's botanical collections. In addition to the responsibility for the management of Tasmania's botanical collections and associated functions, the Gardens are responsible for the development and delivery of horticultural and botanical based community learning. It also provides visitor facilities and services, the development and delivery of innovative and engaging interpretation and information services, and the conservation and presentation of the significant built and cultural heritage of the site in accordance with the *RTBG Strategic Master Plan 2009-2029 (SMP)*.

While remaining aligned with the recommendations arising from the SMP this BOP sees a refocus based on the outcomes of a Board planning session (19-01-2018) and the previous Board and Management planning session (17-3-2016). The planning sessions established and defined new goals to direct the RTBG for the next five years through the last half of the Bicentenary year and beyond to 2023.

This BOP provides a consolidated document that identifies the organisational focus and priorities for 2018-2023, and indicates how each Business Unit will address these.

The actions contained will provide the basis for more detailed work plans by teams and individual staff. Operational plans detailing the routine work programs within the RTBG will be revised and further developed separately, though directed by this plan.

Reporting on the outcomes of the Plan will be through six monthly updates to the RTBG Board and in the RTBG's Annual Report, which is presented to the Minister by 31 October each year and subsequently tabled in the Tasmanian Parliament.

## **4. Governance**

The RTBG is a State Government statutory organisation, governed by the *Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens Act 2002 (Act)* and is administered by the Department of Natural Resources and Environment (NRET). The seven-member RTBG Board is appointed by, and reports to, the Minister for Parks.

The Board is responsible for managing, conserving and enhancing the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens in accordance with the Act.

## **5. Strategic Framework**

The Vision of the RTBG is:-

***Create and maintain an exceptional Garden that enriches Tasmania's social and cultural life, showcases and contributes to the conservation of the flora of Tasmania and educates the community about the importance of plants.***

RTBG Mission is:-

***We sustainably manage the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens, conserve and develop our living collections and heritage, and create and deliver an exemplary and enlightening visitor experience and thriving organisational culture.***

Organisational Values:-

In achieving its vision and mission, the RTBG is committed to a range of values that will guide its operation. These values include:

- *sustainability;*
- *pursuit of excellence;*
- *fair dealing in commercial and community service;*
- *social and environmental consciousness;*
- *scientific inquiry and integrity;*

- *public accessibility and responsiveness;*
- *staff involvement in planning and programs;*
- *recognition of, and assistance for, friends, volunteers and supporters;*
- *administrative efficiency and accountability; and*
- *respect and recognition for employees and all other stakeholders.*

## **6. Planning**

### **6.1 RTBG Strategic Master Plan (SMP)**

The *Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens Act 2002* required the preparation of a SMP to provide the long-term management framework for the Gardens. The RTBG SMP was developed in 2009 and its recommendations continue to guide the Gardens development and management. A Board and Management review in 2016 recognised the value of the SMP and established new five-year goals in line with the SMP to direct the RTBG through to its Bicentenary in 2018. A subsequent Board Workshop held in early 2018 concentrated on the 2016 review in order to establish the operational priorities for this BOP.

### **6.2 RTBG Business Operational Plan (BOP)**

The *Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens Act 2002* requires that a BOP such as this be prepared annually to provide a business plan, a copy of which is provided to the Minister within 30 days of 31 March each year.

## **7. Risk Management**

The RTBG faces a number of perceived key risk management issues, which have been identified as part of our Strategic Risk Management process.

The Board, Audit and Risk Committee develops, maintains and reviews the RTBG's Risk Management Framework (RMF) and oversees a whole-of-business approach to risk management. The Audit and Risk Committee are currently reviewing the risk matrix framework in order to address the key risks.

## **8. Organisational Functions and Resourcing**

### **8.1 Business Units**

The RTBG continues to manage ongoing organisational change to ensure that the staff structure is aligned with the Board and Departments direction, priorities and key work areas. Under the new structure, the RTBG operates three business units with key functions clearly defined. Each Business Unit Manager operates with a budget and established financial and administrative delegations.

## **8.2 Staff**

At 30 June 2018, the RTBG had 25.12 full-time equivalent (FTE) permanent staff, 2.6 FTE on fixed term contracts and 4 casual staff. Salaries in 2017-18 utilised 92% of the Government Appropriation funding, and around 63% of total revenue (Government Appropriation and RTBG generated revenue).

Botanical Gardens are labour-intensive institutions by nature. The requirement for accurate and detailed documentation of plant collections, intense seasonal garden displays and the associated learning and science programs reflect a significantly higher operating cost per hectare than parks or other public gardens.

To better meet the operational needs of the RTBG the ongoing program of organisational reviews will continue each year to ensure the most efficient use of resources while providing professional and personal development opportunities to staff. In line with Government policy strict vacancy control measures have been implemented and will continue into the future. This in turn creates staff management risks in relation to – succession planning, management of an aging workforce, incapacity to backfill positions, especially in regard to specialisation and experience and the difficulty of finding replacements for experienced, specialised staff.

### **8.2.1 The RTBG Organisational Structure**

The RTBG organisational structure is depicted in **Annexure A**.

## **8.3 Volunteers**

The RTBG has a number of volunteer groups, supporting the activities of the Gardens. The RTBG provides opportunities for volunteers to perform vitally important activities and functions in the Gardens, which amounts to a substantial investment of in-kind human resources.

The functions undertaken by volunteer groups have evolved and new processes have been implemented to ensure that the future management of volunteers is undertaken according to State Government Policy and within accordance of the RTBG Act.

The objective is to both reduce risk, and better align the work of the volunteer groups with the endorsed goals of the RTBG and give more support to volunteers.

Volunteers provide valuable support in a range of areas within the RTBG but they do not replace qualified and experienced professional staff. Volunteers provide a complementary rather than competing set of skills, focusing on tasks that would otherwise generally not be undertaken or assist staff with their tasks. Annually volunteers provide around 15,000 hours of time to RTBG projects representing a cost benefit of approximately \$750,000 per year to the RTBG. In order to maintain and improve current operational outcomes the RTBG must ensure continued high level volunteer participation.

The Gardens also participates in a Corrective Services Work Placement Program for inmates through the Department of Justice. This program provides valuable assistance for the Gardens and provides important training and socialisation opportunities for inmates. Currently the total hours worked by inmates is in excess of 7,500 annually representing a cost benefit of approximately \$320,000 per year to the RTBG.

#### **8.4 Workplace Health & Safety (WHS)**

Ongoing monitoring has ensured the best possible management framework for staff, stakeholders and visitors and its success has been evident in the minimisation of workplace incidents. The RTBG has dedicated a management staff member to ensure the organisation meets the goals of the Whole of Department WHS audit. Two key focuses this year will be to review and update WHS practices in relation to events in the Garden and to ensure all staff and volunteers training requirements in regard to WHS are met.

#### **8.5 Proposed Budget**

The draft recurrent operating budget for the RTBG for 2019-20 is \$4.48 million; of which 65% is funded by annual Government appropriation and 35% by RTBG generated revenue.

#### **8.6 Funding Requests and RTBG Generated Revenue**

A number of items identified in the SMP and BOP require additional funds or support from alternative sources. The RTBG will continue to actively seek external funding sources and partners to mitigate project and program risks associated with funding constraints whilst supporting and delivering the goals of the overall Capital Works Program. There are risks related to external funding sources, often in the form of grants, often requiring significant organisational input and approvals.

While donation revenue has improved incrementally, efforts continue to identify ways to further enhance philanthropic and bequest generated revenue streams. Continual improvement of the Gardens commercial ventures such as the Botanical Shop, Hub, Botanical Gardens Restaurant, Venue hire and Tours is essential to assist in providing additional income streams for the Gardens.

#### **8.7. Business Unit Focus**

The labour-intensive nature of botanical gardens work, along with the seasonal variations, requires 90% of staff time to complete routine maintenance tasks and service activities.

A comprehensive Work Program is developed based on key focus areas each year and provides a detailed profile of the additional tasks programme to be achieved. The general overview of the functions and specific focus for each business unit is as follows:

##### **8.7.1 Garden Operations and Science Unit**

This Unit is responsible for the management of horticultural and botanical operations including the development and maintenance of the Gardens plant collections and displays, heritage landscapes including garden elements and lawns, waste management, student workplace training and event support. The unit is also responsible for the day to day and programmed maintenance of assets and infrastructure under the control of the RTBG.

The Botanical Resources Sub-Unit is responsible for maintaining the documentation of the plant collections on the plant database, mapping, tagging and labelling collections, and plant health protocols and monitoring. This Unit is also responsible for maintaining the ancillary library, herbarium and archival collections. It also provides assistance with plant research through grants

and conservation collections.

The Tasmanian Seed Conservation Centre Sub-Unit is responsible for the long-term conservation of the Tasmanian flora through collection, storage and germination research.

### **8.7.2 Business Enterprise and Marketing Unit**

This Unit is responsible for the commercial operations and visitor services components of the Gardens, which includes learning and interpretation. Volunteer management is also undertaken within this business unit.

Commercial operations incorporates partnerships with tour operators, management of the Botanical Shop and Hub as well as the Licensee delivering the catering products through Succulent Restaurant and Sprout Café.

The Marketing and Promotions area is responsible for delivering the content of the annual marketing plan and undertaking promotions, media liaison, event management, sponsorship and publications. It has a focus on facilitating and supporting revenue generating business as required and an additional focus of developing and maintaining the RTBG Website and social media sites.

### **8.7.3 Business Services Unit**

This Unit is responsible for providing support to financial management, human resources coordination, business administration services and Board services.

## **9. RTBG Management Goals and Objectives (2018- 2023)**

Six goals have been formulated to describe the outcomes the RTBG is striving to achieve in pursuit of its vision and mission. Core Business is defined by the first three Goals with the remaining three goals acting as fundamental supporting mechanisms/ means/ values that are incorporated into the three core goals:

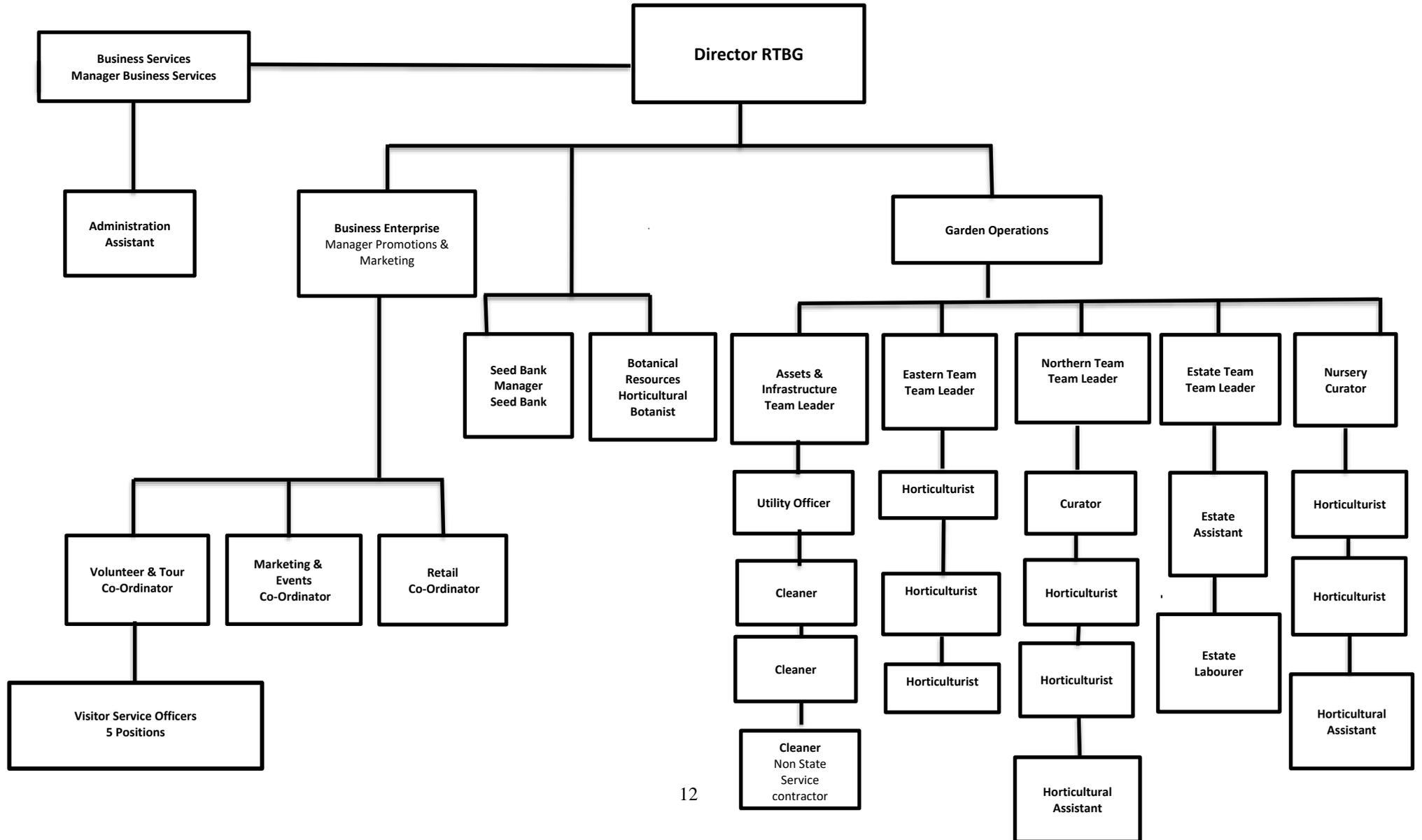
**The RTBG's goals are as follows:**

- To promote the Gardens and engage with the Tasmanian community.
- The strategic management of thriving living collections.
- A quality environment that provides an exemplary visitor experience.
- Partnerships that deliver maximum value for the Gardens.
- Our people and culture deliver a quality visitor experience.
- A sustainable, self-supporting enterprise.

**Specific Objectives have been set to achieve these goals and each objective has a strategy and actions to achieve success. These are captured in Annexure B.**

ROYAL TASMANIAN BOTANICAL GARDENS ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens 2022



## **RTBG BUSINESS OPERATIONAL PLAN GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS TABLE**

### **VISION**

Create and maintain an exceptional Garden that enriches Tasmania's social and cultural life, showcases and contributes to the conservation of the flora of Tasmania and educates the community about the importance of plants.

### **MISSION**

We sustainably manage the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens, conserve and develop our living collections and heritage, and create and deliver an exemplary and enlightening visitor experience and thriving organisational culture.

### **GOALS**

Six goals have been formulated to describe the outcomes the RTBG is trying to achieve in pursuit of its vision and mission. Core Business is defined by the first three Goals with the remaining three goals acting as fundamental supporting mechanisms/ means/ values that are incorporated into the three core goals:

#### **The RTBG's goals are as follows:**

- To promote the Gardens and engage with the Tasmanian community
- The strategic management of thriving living collections
- A quality environment that provides an exemplary visitor experience
- Partnerships that deliver maximum value for the Gardens
- Our people and culture deliver a quality visitor experience
- A sustainable, self-supporting enterprise

## SUMMARY OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOALS	OBJECTIVES
<b><i>To promote the Gardens and engage with the Tasmanian Community</i></b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase the profile of the gardens within the community</li> <li>2. To develop ongoing relationships with the visitors to the RTBG</li> </ol>
<b><i>The strategic management of thriving living collections</i></b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. To maintain, sustain and develop the living collections</li> <li>4. To maintain and develop the Botanical Gardens Estate</li> <li>5. To maintain our commitment to international plant conservation programs</li> </ol>
<b><i>A quality environment that provides an exemplary visitor experience</i></b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. To define, prioritise and fund strategic projects</li> <li>7. To improve the experience and access for visitors to and within the Garden</li> <li>8. To deliver high quality interpretation and information to visitors</li> <li>9. To facilitate the use of the Gardens for creative and targeted learning opportunities</li> <li>10. To ensure environmental sustainability of the Gardens</li> </ol>
<b><i>Partnerships that deliver maximum value for the Gardens</i></b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. To develop strategic partnerships that deliver value and mutual benefits to the RTBG</li> <li>12. To maximise partnerships with peak tourism industry organisations</li> <li>13. To achieve a collaborative, focused approach with Friends</li> </ol>
<b><i>Our people and culture deliver a quality visitor experience</i></b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14. To attract, develop and retain skilled and appropriate staff</li> <li>15. To develop Volunteer capability and enhance their contribution to the Gardens</li> </ol>
<b><i>A sustainable, self-supporting enterprise</i></b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16. To maximise revenue to support the Gardens</li> <li>17. To investigate new revenue opportunities</li> <li>18. To increase the contribution of donations, giving and philanthropy to the gardens.</li> <li>19. To operate under an effective governance model</li> </ol>