

19 May 2021



**CULTURAL
FACILITIES
CORPORATION**

HEAD OF CULTURAL FACILITIES CORPORATION RESIGNS

Chair of the Cultural Facilities Corporation, Richard Refshauge, today announced that the Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation, Harriet Elvin, was stepping down from the role in order to pursue academic research in cultural leadership.

The Corporation is a statutory enterprise of the ACT Government that manages the Canberra Theatre Centre, the Canberra Museum and Gallery, and three historic places : Lanyon, Calthorpes' House and Mugga-Mugga.

Ms Elvin has headed up the organisation for nearly 24 years, since its creation in 1997. She has led major projects such as the completion and commissioning of The Playhouse and the Canberra Museum and Gallery, the Library and Link Project, major conservation programs at the historic sites, and the initial stages of the new theatre project. Under her guidance, the Corporation has become a leader in the ACT's cultural landscape, providing a wide range of cultural experiences and achieving significant increases in visitor numbers, own-sourced revenues and contributions to the ACT economy, including through large-scale theatre shows.

Her achievements have been recognised through awards including a Centenary Medal, recognition as ACT Telstra Businesswoman of the Year, induction into the Alumni Hall of Fame at the ANU's College of Business and Economics, and selection as one of the 100 inspiring women in Canberra's history, in the UN Women's *100 Years 100 Women* initiative in Canberra's Centenary year.

In announcing Ms Elvin's resignation, Justice Refshauge said, "Harriet Elvin's resignation is truly the passing of an era. As the Corporation's first and only CEO to date, she effectively and securely established it as a leading institution in Canberra and unique in Australia. She assured its place as a cultural leader in Canberra and beyond, inspired committed staff and enabled Canberrans and more to be enriched by its cultural, social history and historic preservation and insight activities and to support them enthusiastically. We thank her for her stellar contribution; we will desperately miss her charm, good humour and reliable and expert guidance, but wish her well in the next phase of her wonderful life."

Minister for the Arts Tara Cheyne said, "Harriet Elvin's contribution to the ACT's cultural landscape is profound and unparalleled. I give my sincere thanks to her on behalf of the ACT Government and wider community for almost 24 years of passionate service, dedication and vision. To steward some of the region's most significant cultural institutions requires great leadership and cultural expertise, and we are indebted as a city and as a community to her incredible contribution."

Ms Elvin said, "It has been an extraordinary privilege for me to serve for so long in a role that has been so rewarding. I thank the arts ministers I have served, the Corporation's board and advisory committee members, staff and volunteers, sponsors and donors, and my many colleagues in the cultural sector and the ACT Government Service, for all their support in allowing me to do this."

"This role has allowed me to combine my personal values with my professional life, to work with people who are passionate about what they do, and to provide rich cultural experiences to the community. I am proud of the organisation's achievements and believe we provide a high standard of cultural services to the people of Canberra and visitors to our city."

"It is always hard to move on from such a rewarding position. But I have an exciting opportunity to do research in my area of particular interest, cultural leadership, and feel confident handing over to a new CEO, as the organisation makes excellent progress recovering from COVID, and has a clear way forward with the new theatre and cultural precinct project."

Ms Elvin said a major focus of her role in recent years had been to develop the next generation of arts leaders, and as a legacy to the organisation she would establish a fund so that she could personally support professional development in cultural leadership.

The CEO position will be advertised nationally in the near future. Ms Elvin will stay on in the role while the new CEO is recruited.

ENDS

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MEDIA RELEASE

