

State Library of South Australia

Media Release



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STATE LIBRARY AGAIN NOMINATED AS ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL LIBRARIES IN THE WORLD

The State Library of South Australia has been honored with a nomination in the Top 10 Most Beautiful Libraries in the World as part of the 1000 Libraries Awards 2025. Other esteemed nominees in this category include Library of Trinity College Dublin, Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Austrian National Library, and the New York Public Library.

The 1000 Libraries Awards celebrate the world's most beautiful libraries, bookshops, and book cafes, as voted by the public.

Central to this nomination is the iconic Mortlock Chamber — an enchanting space that captivates the imagination of all who enter. A beloved space for South Australians and visitors alike, it is where architecture, history, and stories intersect.

The Mortlock Chamber is a stunning example of mid-Victorian public design, first opening on 18 December 1884 as a hub for the Public Library, Museum, and Art Gallery. With an initial collection of 23,000 books and a dedicated staff of three, this iconic building laid the foundation for a visionary cultural precinct.

Today, the State Library welcomes almost 500,000 visitors annually and is the largest public research library in the state and among the most iconic cultural institutions in South Australia.

As custodians of South Australian stories, with a vast collection that takes up to almost 60 kilometres of shelving, the State Library plays a significant role in collecting, preserving, and making accessible the State's history for current and future generations to enjoy, experience and learn from.

The Hon Andrea Michaels MP, Minister for Arts said:

"It is an honour to have the State Library of South Australia recognised with this nomination.

The State Library is an incredibly beautiful building located at the heart of Adelaide's cultural boulevard. Its beauty is testament to the stunning architecture of the Victorian era as well as the many South Australians who have acted as caretakers to preserve both its built history and the incredible collections within."

State Library's Director Megan Berghuis expressed her delight at the nomination:

"The Mortlock Chamber is one of the most loved and remarkable spaces in South Australia, telling our rich and diverse stories since 1884. The State Library houses some of our world-class collections, is a beloved space for researchers, authors and students and hosts seasonal events, displays and activities for the whole family. We are thrilled again to be nominated amongst some of the most recognisable libraries in the world and encourage South Australians and all who love the Mortlock Chamber to vote for this cherished cultural institution."

To support ongoing preservation and enhance the experience of one of South Australia's most iconic spaces, the State Library will be temporarily closing the Mortlock Chamber from June through to September 2025 while carpeting works are undertaken.

The final rankings for the Top 10 Most Beautiful Libraries in the World will be determined by a public vote, and the State Library is calling on South Australians and supporters to help secure this international recognition.

To vote for the State Library, visit <https://bit.ly/VoteSLSA>

Voting is open until 15 July 2025, with the winners announced 21 July 2025.

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