

Flinders University Museum of Art Collection Policy

Establishment:	Vice-President (Strategy and Community Engagement), 18 July 2014
Last Amended:	31 October 2023
Nature of Amendment:	Minor repairs to ensure document is up to date.
Date Last Reviewed:	2023
Responsible Officer:	Director, Museum of Art

1. Preamble

The Flinders University Museum of Art Collection was founded in 1966 as a teaching resource for the discipline of Visual Arts. It has continued to expand to the present day and currently comprises some 5,500 works of art.

The Collection is managed by Flinders University Museum of Art (hereafter The Museum), which operates as a professional entity under the auspices of the Flinders University of South Australia through the Office of the Vice-Chancellor. The Museum observes the *Museums Australia Code of Ethics for Art, History and Science Museums (1999)* and *National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries (2nd edition, 2023)*.

2. Statement of Purpose

The Collection supports teaching, learning and research, and serves – in alignment with broader University strategy – as a platform for community engagement.

3. Scope

This Policy defines the guiding principles to be followed by staff of The Museum for the development, management and use of its holdings.

4. Acquisitions

4.1 Areas of focus

The Museum is primarily interested in Australian art with special emphasis given to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander work.

Collecting in the area of international art is determined by pre-existing collection categories in specified fields of Asian, European and Oceanic work as below.

The Director reserves the right to review categories when circumstance warrants.

4.1.1 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art

- Including historical and contemporary works from remote, regional and urban centres.
- Works by artists based in South Australia particularly those from the APY Lands and other remote or regional areas as well as artists with connections to the state are of particular interest.

4.1.2 Non-indigenous Australian Art

- Colonial art (late 18th– late 19th century)
- Émigré art (mid 20th century)
- Post object and documentary art (mid – late 20th century)
- Contemporary art (late 20th century to the present day), in particular:

(i) political prints, posters and cartoons

(ii) works that reflect engagement with Aboriginal culture, and

(iii) works by South Australian artists who have made major contributions to the development of contemporary Australian art practice.

4.1.3 International art

- European prints (15th – 20th century)
- Japanese prints (18th– 20th century)
- Oceanic Art - PNG

4.2 Acquisition process

Original works of art will be acquired through purchase, commission, gift/donation or exchange with other public collections.

4.2.1 Donations/gifts of art

Gifts of art will be encouraged, provided they meet acquisition criteria at 4.3. The Museum retains the right to accept or refuse such offers as they occur.

Gifts that conform with this Collection Policy will be accepted under the provisions of the Cultural Gifts Program in strict accordance with the [Program Guide](#). The cost of valuations required for this scheme will be borne by the donor.

The value of donated works of art and donor details will be notified to the Head of Development & Alumni Relations.

Gifts of art to The Museum will be formally acknowledged by the Vice-Chancellor, or nominee, in accordance with the University's [Policy on Recognition of Service, Donation, Significant Contributions and Personal Achievement](#).

Donations/gifts of art made with conditions will not be accepted.

4.2.2 Procedure

Acquisitions will be made on the recommendation of the Museum Director in consultation with Museum staff and external experts as required.

Approval from the Office of the Vice-Chancellor through the Vice-President and Executive Dean, College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences will be required for the purchase of works above \$15K.

Acquisitions will be reported to the Office of Vice-Chancellor and Financial and Procurement Services on an annual basis.

All acquisitions will be documented as detailed at 5.1.

4.3 Acquisition criteria

4.3.1 Relevance

The museum will only collect works of art that relate to the museum's purpose and key collecting areas as identified at 4.1.

4.3.2 Significance

Priority is given to works which are significant for their historic, aesthetic, scientific/research and/or social/spiritual value.

4.3.3 Provenance and Documentation

Priority is given to works where the history of the work is known and associated documentation and support material can be provided.

4.3.4 Condition

The condition of the work must be taken into consideration. Badly damaged work will not normally be accepted into the collection.

4.3.5 Teaching Potential

Works deemed to have particular value in the University's teaching programs will be prioritised.

4.3.6 Duplication

Works that duplicate items already in the collection will not be accepted unless they are of superior condition and/or historic value. In such a case the duplicate may be considered for deaccessioning.

4.3.7 Legal Requirements

The Museum will only accept works where the donor/vendor has legal title to the work.

With regard to Indigenous cultural property the Museum will adhere to state and Commonwealth legislation covering the ownership/sale/return of skeletal remains and artefacts and objects having religious or cultural significance.

The Museum will also observe the Museums Australia policy document *Continuous Cultures, Ongoing Responsibilities: Principles and guidelines for Australian museums working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage* (February 2005).

4.3.8 Management and Resource Implications

Consideration will be given to the management and resource implications of all acquisitions and the financial and legal implications of accepting all loans or gifts of art.

5. Collection Management

The Museum will observe the National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries (2nd edition, 2023) for the documentation and preservation of the Collection and other items in its care including books and archives.

5.1 Documentation

The Museum will maintain an effective documentation system for its collection by:

- assigning a unique accession number to each new work, and
- establishing a collection record that includes information about the work, its maker, provenance and value and details of agreed credit lines, where works have been donated, and
- striving to photograph all works.

Collection documentation will be stored in The Museum in hardcopy and in the Museum's electronic Collections Management System.

5.2 Conservation & Storage

The Museum aims to achieve high standards of collection care and storage.

- Storage areas must remain clean, secure and sealed against the weather.
- Temperature and relative humidity should be kept as stable as possible.
- Access to storage areas is to be controlled.
- Ultra-violet light should be excluded from storage areas. When storage areas are not in use lights must be turned off.
- Archival quality storage materials should be used for all significant material.
- Storage areas must be regularly checked for pests and other problems.
- Objects are not to be stored on the floor.
- Untrained personnel should never attempt to clean, treat or restore museum objects.

5.3 Valuation

The Collection will be professionally valued every five – seven years.

The valuation will be reviewed by the Director on an annual basis and reported to the University's Financial Services Division as required by the University's [Property, Plant and Equipment Assets Policy and Procedures](#).

6. De-accessioning and Disposal

6.1 De-accession

The Collection will be subject to periodic review in order to assess its ongoing relevance. Works will be considered for de-accessioning on a case-by-case basis according to the following criteria:

- relevance to the Collection Policy
- low artistic merit
- duplication
- theft or loss, damage or serious deterioration in condition
- absence of clear legal title

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- repatriation of cultural material
 - the possibility of upgrading by exchange.

Strict guidelines for de-accessioning will follow industry standards.

6.2 Disposal

Disposal will be carried out in accordance with the University's [Property, Plant and Equipment Assets Policy and Procedures](#).

All items for disposal will be considered and approved by the Museum Director and will require the final approval of the Vice Chancellor or nominee.

The Museum will ensure all legal and cultural issues are observed.

Works will be disposed of in a manner beneficial to the Collection and may include sale, exchange, gift or destruction.

Proceeds from any sale arising from de-accession will normally be used for purposes of collection development. Proceeds arising from the de-accessioning of work acquired through gifts or bequests will be used to acquire replacement works which will carry the same credit line.

Pursuant to the *Resale Royalty Right for Visual Artists Act 2009*, when artworks are commercially resold for over \$1000, five per cent of the sale price will be paid to the visual artist.

7. Loans

The Museum will lend and borrow works of art and other material on a short-term basis to meet the purpose of the collection as per clause 2 of this policy.

All loans will be documented and bound by way of Loan Agreement.

7.1 Inward Loans

Inward loans will normally only be accepted for specific exhibitions or research and for fixed periods of time.

Works of art offered on a long-term loan basis will only be accepted where there is clear intent to donate the work to the University at a future date as specified in the 'Long-Term Loan Agreement'.

Inward loans will be recorded in the Museum's Collections Management System.

The Museum Director and the lender will be required to sign an agreed inward loan agreement. This form will record conditions of the loan and the period of the loan.

The Museum will exercise the same care with respect to loans as it does for its own collection.

Loans will remain in the possession of the Museum for the time specified in the loan agreement.

The Museum can request to renew loans if required. Documentation recording renewal must be signed by the Museum Director and the lender.

7.2 Outward Loans

The Museum will lend objects to other museums and organisations holding collections. It will not lend to private collectors.

Borrowers and the Museum Director will be required to sign an outward loan agreement. This agreement will record condition of the loan and the period of the loan.

The borrower must exercise care in the handling, storage and display of the loan object and must be prepared to meet the conditions outlined in the outward loan agreement.

The borrower will provide a secure display and/or storage area.

The maximum loan period is 12 months. Applications for extension of this period must be made prior to the loan expiry date.

Objects cannot be treated or altered in any way without the written permission of the Museum.

Loans will remain in the possession of the borrower until returned to the Museum.

8. Access, Exhibition and Display

The Collection and associated records located at Bedford Park are accessible to students, staff and the wider public by appointment. General information about the Collection is available on the World Wide Web.

The Collection will be given prominence through exhibitions, publications and public programs.

Works from the Collection will be made available for display on campus according to the terms and conditions of the Art Rental Program.

9. Review

This Policy will be regularly reviewed by the Responsible Officer and amended as required in accordance with the [Policy Development and Review Procedures](#).