

Publishing policy

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1. Title

Publishing policy

2. Introduction

The National Museum of Australia (the Museum) is a major cultural institution charged with researching, collecting, preserving and exhibiting historical material of Australia. The Museum focuses on the three interrelated areas of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture, Australia's history and society since European settlement in 1788 and the interaction of people with the environment.

Established in 1980, the Museum is a publicly funded institution governed as a statutory authority in the Commonwealth Arts portfolio. The Museum's building on Acton Peninsula, Canberra opened in March 2001.

3. Scope

3.1 Description

This policy outlines the approach to Museum publishing and the framework in which publishing will occur.

3.2 Purpose

The Publishing Policy provides a context for the Museum's publishing program, and guides the program's contribution towards strategic goals.

3.3 Rationale

The Museum aims to document and celebrate the distinctive characteristics and history of the nation. Supporting an active publishing program is one way in which the Museum achieves this. The key outcome of the Museum's publishing program is a greater knowledge and understanding of Australian history amongst the general public, education sectors and research communities.

3.3.1 Outputs

The outputs of the Museum's publishing program include:

- National Museum of Australia Press (NMA Press) publications for sale and/or distribution to the public through retail outlets and the internet. These include books, exhibition catalogues, research reports, conference proceedings, journals, e-publications published on the Museum's website, and future print or digital outputs.
- Corporate publications whose prime function is to meet legislative or corporate requirements and/or support specific Museum programs. These include annual reports, corporate plans, interpretation tools such as exhibition texts and guides, promotional materials and internal publications.

4. Principles or guidelines

4.1 The publishing program exists to deliver strategic priorities

The Museum's publishing program aims to:

- reflect the Museum's mission statement and contribute to the achievement of corporate goals
- disseminate Museum research and scholarship
- contribute to the standing of the Museum as a centre of excellence for research, scholarship and education
- promote awareness and understanding of the Museum's themes and collections
- support Museum programs such as exhibitions, education and outreach.

While the publishing program might raise revenue for the Museum, this is not its prime purpose. The program exists to deliver strategic, often non-financial, benefits.

4.2 Published content is relevant and of high standard

The content of publications is guided by best practice in research, scholarship and authorship, including peer review for research publications.

The Museum publishes quality works within the broad areas of:

- Australian social, environmental, and political history
- Australian identity, peoples and cultural heritage
- museology.

Specifically, the Museum publishes works that are:

- based on, documenting or substantially featuring the Museum's collections
- directly related to the Museum's content, themes, exhibitions or programs.

4.3 Publications are audience-focused

The content outlined above is produced within the structure of publication categories, defined by audience.

General audience

The Museum's general audience publications aim to engage a wide range of readers with the Museum's themes, exhibitions, collections and research. The target audience for most of these publications is adult readers, but publications may be developed specifically to engage children with Australian history and to support education outcomes.

Specialist audience

The Museum's specialist publications aim to engage discipline-based and/or subject-specific readers with the Museum's scholarship and professional activities.

Museum visitors

The Museum aims to enhance its visitors' experience and enjoyment of the Museum through quality communication and interpretation and promotional products.

Corporate, public sector and parliamentary

The Museum corporate publications meet governmental and legislative requirements and aim to support transparency, continuous disclosure, and world's best practice in corporate governance.

4.4 Support for internal authorship

The Museum supports the development of a culture of authorship within the institution, in particular as an output of the Museum's research, collection development and public programs. All staff may submit proposals for publication.

The Museum also publishes works by external authors through NMA Press. These are acquired through commissioned work, outputs of Museum coordinated events (for example conferences) and through partnerships with other publishers and/or institutions. The Museum also considers unsolicited manuscripts related to appropriate content areas.

4.5 Publications meet appropriate standards

The Museum's publishing program strives to maintain high standards of communication, interpretation and presentation, and best practice in research, scholarship, editorial process and production. For each publication, production is guided by the best and most appropriate production values for the target readership. All publications are written, edited, designed, printed and published to the highest professional standards. Electronic publications are also developed and maintained for easy use, quick access and currency of information.

4.6 Publications comply with legislative requirements

Intellectual property

Museum publications and publishing practices comply with Australia's copyright and moral rights legislation. All rights in material researched and developed by Museum staff as part of their work program, or otherwise within paid working time, are the property of the Museum.

Please refer to the separate Museum policy on Intellectual Property due for release in late 2008.

Other legal requirements

Museum publications comply with all Australian legislation related to publication. This includes defamation, privacy and use of personal information.

4.7 Publications are widely distributed

The Museum makes its publications available to the widest possible audience within Australia and internationally. This occurs through a range of marketing, distribution and sales strategies managed by the Publishing section.

5. Definition of terms

Publication

Refers to any published work and may include printed or electronic media.

Publishing program

Refers to the Museum's publishing activities.

Publishing section

Refers to the business unit within the Audience and Programs Division that coordinates and produces publications.

6. Definition of responsibilities

Executive team

Responsible for final decisions concerning the Museum's publishing program.

Publishing Steering Committee

Responsible for the strategic management and overall direction of the publishing program, and for making recommendations regarding the program to the Museum's Executive.

General Manager, Audience and Programs

Responsible for the high level management and oversight of the Publishing section.

Publishing Manager

Oversees the development and delivery of the publishing program.

7. References

National Museum of Australia Act 1980

8. Implementation

8.1 Coverage

This policy applies to all areas of the Museum.

8.2 Other related policies

Collections development policy
Intellectual property policy
Outreach policy
Research and scholarship policy

Temporary and travelling exhibitions policy

8.3 Exclusions

None

8.4 Monitoring

The General Manager Audience and Programs, with the assistance of the Publishing Steering Committee monitors the implementation of this policy.

This policy will be reviewed in 2010.