Research Library collection development policy

POL-G-022

Version 3.0 17 August 2021

Contents

ID	POL-G-022
Version	3.0
Version date	17 August 2021
Type	General operational (POL-G)
Approval dates	Originally approved by Council in 1996
	This version approved by Executive Management Group 23 November 2021
File	19/1202
Availability	Public and all staff
Keywords	Research Library, Library Collection Management, Library Resources
Responsible officer	Research Library Manager
History	Library collection development policy (version 1, 1996) [approved 6 Dec 1995]
	Library collection development policy (version 2, June 2009) [Draft only]
Review date	September 2024
Related documents	POL-C-005 Collections development
Contact	National Museum of Australia
	GPO Box 1901
	CANBERRA ACT 2601
	Tel: (02) 6208 5000
	Email: information@nma.gov.au
	Website: www.nma.gov.au

1. Title
Research Library collection development policy

2. Introduction
The National Museum of Australia is charged with researching, collecting, preserving and exhibiting Australia's national historical material. The Museum focuses on three interrelated themes: First Nations 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 provides a framework and guidelines for the ongoing development and maintenance of the collections managed by the Museum's Research Library.

3.2 Purpose
The purpose of this policy is to:
- outline the structure and management of the Research Library collections
- describe the selection criteria the Research Library uses to acquire collections
- support planning and maintenance activities of Research Library collections
- provide guidelines for retaining and/or deaccessioning of collection items.

3.3 Rationale
The Museum's Research Library acquires and maintains collections and resources to support the Museum's activities, including curatorial research, exhibition planning and programming activities.

4. Principles or guidelines

4.1 Background to Research Library collections
Established in 1984, the Research Library acquires contemporary published works relating to Australian life, people, culture, environment and history, as well as museum and conservation practice, providing a balanced and informative collection on Australian history.

The Research Library also collects relevant historical publications and maintains limited archival collections of private papers, and material representing the Museum's corporate and exhibition history.

4.2 Access to Research Library collections
The Research Library makes its collections accessible to Museum staff and external researchers. The collection is discoverable via an online database and holdings are contributed to Libraries Australia and Trove.

Lending services are available to all Museum staff for material available from borrowing collections. Alternative methods of access, such as scanning and viewing, are arranged for special collections.

Limited lending is available to government departments, educational institutions, public, and other private libraries, who participate in Trove Collaborative Services resource sharing and inter-library lending scheme.

The Research Library does not lend directly to individual members of the public.

4.3   The Research Library's collections
The Research Library maintains three collections comprising library collections and archival collections material. This is determined by the nature of the material, predominantly either books or papers, or the way in which the material was assembled prior to its acquisition. The material is processed to its applicable standards consistent within library or archives management.

4.3.1 Library collection
The library collection is made up of discrete items of primarily published resources. Items are arranged by format and type into the following main categories:

- general, reference and folio book collections
- serial collection
- ephemera and poster collections
- electronic media collections
- rare and special collections.

The special collections represent assembled collections of discrete works acquired from private libraries. These works usually have a specialised subject area and are kept together to preserve the provenance and connection of the material to the creator of the collection. Maintaining the integrity of these collections is often further enhanced through connection with papers held in the archival collections.

Emphasis is placed on acquiring modern and contemporary resources for developing a strong collection that supports research reflecting the Museum's themes, collections and exhibitions.

4.3.2 Research Library Archive
This material comprises papers and other purposefully assembled collections related to the Museum's themes which has been accumulated by individuals or groups. These collections contain largely unpublished material relevant to the history of museums in Australia, Indigenous art and cultures, Australian social history and natural history, as well as records with a connection to the Museum's collections.

Emphasis is placed on records that are unique, comprise evidential and research value, and that will support and assist the interpretation of material held in the National Historical Collection and the development of exhibitions and programs.

There is often a strong connection between the archival and special books collections.

4.3.3 Museum Corporate Archive
This archive comprises material that represents different aspects of the Museum and its activities. The Archive is a repository for preserving print and other physical material, particularly non-circulating, grey literature and ephemeral items, that offer enduring value and assist in documenting the corporate memory of the Museum. The material contains a diverse range of material, which is not part of the Museum's official files, that relates to the Museum's history. It

includes council minutes (pre-digital), papers about the building and site, curatorial workbooks, publications by the Museum and assorted ephemera.

It does not include digital-born records or digitised paper files that can be stored in Museum digital repository systems.

4.4   Deaccessioning and disposal
Material may be deaccessioned from the Research Library's collection and disposed of when:

- reference works of no historical interest are replaced by a new edition
- print books that hold no physical significance are replaced with electronic formats
- duplication copies of material that hold no physical or historical significance are removed from the collection.

5.   Definition of terms

Acquisition
The process by which the Research Library obtains collection material; by purchase, gifts from donors or deposit from other Museum business units.

Museum Corporate Archive
Comprises paper-based material (excluding official records) and electronic media related to the Museum's corporate history, produced by, or in connection to, the Museum, and preserved for its enduring value and record of Museum activities.

Research Library
Library that develops its collections and services in commitment to ongoing research activities.

Research Library Archive Collections
Papers and other material produced or assembled by private individuals or organisations that are acquired for their historical value and research of Australian history.

Resources
This term encompasses all collection material formats acquired by the Research Library.

Electronic media
Media carriers that require electronic technology and devices to access the content, such as VHS, DVD, CD-ROMs, slides, reels.

Museum Archive Collection
The Archive Collection comprises historically important documents, audio and/or visual records that are associated with material held in the National Historical Collection. It also includes archival material relevant to the Museum's areas of research activity or other program interest.

Australian history
Australian history encompasses the political, economic, social and environmental history of Australia. Material documenting Australia's history includes contemporary material.

Museum Collection
The Museum Collection includes material which does not meet the high-level criteria for inclusion in the National Historical Collection. Material in the Museum Collection is periodically reviewed either for disposal, retention in the Museum Collection or for inclusion in the National Historical Collection.

National Historical Collection
The National Historical Collection is defined by the National Museum of Australia Act 1980 as comprising historical material owned by or in the possession of the Museum. The National Historical Collection does not include material held in the Archive Collection, Museum Collection or Education Collection.

6. Definition of responsibilities

Head Collections Development and Information
- approves expenditure on resources that are above the delegation of the Research Library Manager

Research Library Manager
- responsible for developing Research Library collections
- responsible for purchases managed against an allocated budget

All Museum staff
- actively provide suggestions of new acquisitions for the Research Library
- actively contribute to the NMA Corporate Memory Archive

7. References

National Museum of Australia Act 1980

National Museum of Australia Strategic Plan 2018–2022

ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums, 2017

Australian Society of Archivists Code of Ethics, 1993

IFLA Code of Ethics for Librarians and other Information Workers, 2012

National Archives of Australia AFDA Express Version 2 – Publication, 2019

National Archives of Australia Administrative Functions Disposal Authority (AFDA), 2010 (superseded)

8. Implementation

8.1 Coverage
This policy applies to the collection development activities of the Museum's Research Library.

8.2 Other related policies
Collections development policy, National Museum of Australia, POL-C-005, 2020

8.3 Exclusions
Issues related to the Integrated Library Management System, description and cataloguing standards, access, circulation, storage and preservation of the Research Library collections, as well as non-ongoing subscriptions and memberships, are dealt with separately.

8.4   Superseded policies

This policy supersedes:

Former policy/ies title	Version number	Version date	Council approval date
Library collection development policy	1.0 (approved first release)	6 March 1996	6 December 1995
Library collection development policy	2.0 (draft only)	June 2009	(draft only)

8.5   Monitoring

The Research Library monitors the implementation of this policy. The policy is scheduled for review in September 2024.