

Collection Acquisition Policy



Version: 2.0

Last Amendment: 24 November 2015

Approved by: Executive Committee

Policy owner/sponsor: Executive Director, Library & Information Services and Dixson Librarian

Policy Contact Officer: Collection Strategy Specialist

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1. Summary

The aim of the *Collection Acquisition Policy* is to provide a framework to manage acquisitions ethically, consistently and systematically across all collection categories and formats including published, original, online and digital material.

The Library acquires collection material in the following ways:

- Purchase
 - Vendors of current and retrospective material
 - Commissioning
 - Auction
- Legal Deposit
- Transfers
- Donations
- Bequests
- Government deposit
- Cultural Gifts Program.
- Harvest
- Creation
- Reformatting

The State Library manages its collection within the framework of the content management lifecycle. The lifecycle comprises policy development, selection, acquisition, provision of access, storage, preservation, and review. Collection acquisition is a core function within the lifecycle. This policy provides guidance on acquiring collection material.

2. Policy Statement

The State Library's collection documents the heritage of Australia and the south west Pacific and serves as the major reference collection for the state of NSW. By building, preserving and delivering its collections, including today's born digital materials, the Library enables Australians to interrogate the past and imagine the future. As a member of the National and State Libraries of Australasia (NSLA), the State Library participates in NSLA programs such as The Australian Libraries Collaborative Collection (TALCC) program and collection management decisions may be informed by the collaborative work of NSLA.

All potential acquisitions are assessed for:

- significance to the Australian and particularly New South Wales documentary record
- relevance to the Collection Development Policy and the Library's existing holdings
- physical condition of the material
- permission to provide access to the material
- resource implications such as staffing, conservation treatment, IT infrastructure required to make the contents accessible to clients and storage requirements
- value for money

The State Library acquires collection material:

- cost-effectively, efficiently and in a timely manner
- fairly, transparently and accountably
- consistent with the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*
- consistent with best practice guidelines for collecting identified in the 2014 publication, *Australian Best Practice Guide to Collecting Cultural Material*.^{1 2}
- consistent with the NSLA National Position Statement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library Services and Collections³ and the ATSLIRN Protocols

There is no obligation for the Library to:

- purchase collection material offered by individuals, organisations or estates
- take material on long term or permanent loan
- acquire or retain collection material offered by donation or through a bequest
- accept entire collections when only a proportion may satisfy the criteria for acquisition

The Library may acquire collection material through the Cultural Gifts Program (CGP). In this case:

- The minimum value of material to be considered by the Library through the CGP is \$5,000
- All material accepted by the Library through the CGP must be treated in accordance with conditions and processes of the [Ministry for the Arts Cultural Gifts Program](#).

The Library may by negotiation draw on State Library Foundation or bequest funds to acquire collection material. If so, specific conditions attached to the use of the funds must be observed.

Material to be purchased for the Mitchell Library will normally be examined by Library staff to assess status and condition prior to making recommendations on purchase. The period for evaluation will be negotiated with the vendor.

Material to be commissioned for the collection will be acquired consistent with the Commissioning Material for the Collection guidelines.

Agents may be commissioned to view the material on behalf of the Library and report on its condition. Agents may represent the Library at auction.

¹ Australian Government. Attorney-General's Department, Ministry for the Arts (2014) *Australian Best Practice Guide to Collecting Cultural Material*. Canberra, Ministry for the Arts. 2014

² This policy statement is applied to acquisitions after 2014. During the long life of a public cultural heritage organisation such as the State Library, acquisitions practices have changed in response to changes in ethical standards. Previous acquisition practices at the Library were appropriate at the time of purchase, and past acquisitions decisions will not be re-visited.

³ NSLA National Position Statement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library Services and Collections. NSLA, Canberra. http://www.nsla.org.au/sites/www.nsla.org.au/files/publications/NSLA.Indigenous_position_statement_2014.pdf

Material acquired for the collection is subject to the Library's Collection Retention and Withdrawal Policy.

Information sources and supplier requirements are in [Appendix 1](#).

3. Legislative and Policy Framework

Most relevant legislation

- [NSW Copyright Act 1879](#) (*Legal Deposit Provision, ss5-7*)
- [NSW Library Act 1939](#)
- [NSW Public Finance and Audit Act 1983](#)
- [NSW State Records Act 1998](#)

Relevant State Library and government policies

- [Ministerial memorandum 2013-09 Production Costs of Annual Reports](#)
- [Premier's Memorandum 2000-15](#) Access to published information – Laws, Policy and Guidelines (library deposit)
- [State Library Code of Ethics and Conduct](#)
- [State Library Collection Development Policy](#)
- [State Library Collection Donations Policy](#)
- [State Library Digital Collecting Strategy](#)
- [State Library Financial Delegations Policy](#)
- State Library Outgoing Loans Policy (approved but not yet on website)
- [State Library Retention and Withdrawal Policy for Collection Material and Donations](#)

Standards and guidelines

- [ATSILIRN Protocols for Libraries, Archives and Information Services](#).
- Australian Government. Attorney-General's Department, Ministry for the Arts (2014) [Australian Best Practice Guide to Collecting Cultural Material](#).
- Australian Government. Attorney-General's Department, Ministry for the Arts (2013). [Cultural Gifts Program Guide: Tax incentives for cultural gifts to Australia's public collections](#).
- [NSLA National Position Statement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library Services and Collections](#)
- [Significance 2.0: A Guide to Assessing the Significance of Collections](#) by Kylie Winkworth and Roslyn Russell. Collections Council of Australia Ltd. 2009.

4. Responsibilities

The State Librarian & Chief Executive is responsible for:

- Approving acquisition of material consistent with financial delegation

The Executive Director, Library & Information Services and Dixson Librarian is responsible for:

- ownership of the policy
- approving acquisition of material consistent with financial delegation
- assessing and acting on serious breaches of the policy
- tabling serious breaches of this policy to the Executive Committee
- ensuring that the policy is reviewed every two years

The Executive Committee is responsible for:

- ensuring the policy is communicated effectively to managers, supervisors and coordinators
- reviewing serious breaches of the policy and determining a course of action.

The Collection Management Group is responsible for:

- Considering options for managing potential acquisitions
- Considering the recommendations from the Manager, Collection Strategy & Development, on acquisitions of high value or requiring high levels of resourcing.

The Mitchell Librarian and Director, Education & Scholarship, is responsible for:

- referring potential acquisitions from the community to the Manager, Collection Strategy & Development, for further consideration
- providing advice on acquisitions of heritage material
- implementing the policy and related procedures

The Managers, Collection Strategy & Development, Research & Discovery, and Collection Access & Description are responsible for:

- implementing the policy and related procedures
- ensuring staff in these branches understand and comply with this policy.

The Manager, Collection Strategy & Development is responsible for:

- managing processes relevant to this policy
- ensuring the policy is communicated effectively to managers, supervisors and Library staff
- approving acquisition of material consistent with financial delegation

State Library staff are responsible for:

- understanding and complying with this policy

5. Approval

This policy was approved by NSW State Librarian & CE on 24 November, 2015. This policy is implemented on 1 February 2016.

6. History

This policy replaces the Collection Acquisition Policy, 2012.

7. Prepared by:

Collection Strategy Specialist – Valuation Project; Manager, Collection Strategy & Development

8. Document History and Version Control

Version	Date approved	Approved by	Brief description
2.0	24 November 2015	NSW State Librarian & CE and Executive Committee	Incorporates structural changes within the collection management function, simplified the policy by removing procedural information, and added references to <i>Australian Best Practice guide to collecting Cultural Material: Principles for Best Practice</i> ; ATSLIRN protocols and <i>Significance 2.0</i> .
1.0	12/7/2012	NSW State Librarian & CE	The Acquisition Policy for Collection Material was revised in 2004 to reflect the entire range of categories of material acquired. The 2012 revision included updates relevant to the acquisitions process and incorporated procedural changes in the appendix such as advances in electronic acquisition practices.

Appendix 1: Sources and Supplier Requirements

Sources

Material is acquired through:

- Direct offers to the Library by commercial or private vendors; sale catalogues (bookseller or antiquarian dealer); auction catalogues (with subsequent bidding at public auctions); private individuals; Cultural Gifts Programs; collecting projects; transfers and repatriation from NSW government departments and other collecting organisations; or individual approach by the Library to a potential donor or vendor
- Country of origin supply is preferred for material published overseas
- New material published overseas required urgently may be obtained through a local retailer
- Local supply is preferred for online resources where standards and licenses are consistent with the local environment
- Heritage and original material must be purchased where and when it is identified and available
- Commissioning of original works such as oral histories or photographs.

Suppliers

A range of suppliers is selected, where possible, to ensure cost-effective fulfilment of orders.

- The Library will give preference to consolidating purchases through library suppliers, subscription agents and specialist suppliers
- When appropriate the Library will use auction houses, second-hand and antiquarian suppliers to supply unique or rare heritage materials
- Suppliers must provide an appropriate range of value-added services based on current standards
- Suppliers are reviewed annually and evaluated against criteria appropriate to the type of supplier and material supplied.

In addition, the Library considers offers from donors and from individuals who self-publish or who offer heritage material to the Library for purchase.

Selection criteria for suppliers

Suppliers must provide a range of flexible and efficient services to support cost-effective use by Library staff. The following selection criteria are arranged in the order of importance.

Capacity to meet the Library's basic requirements

- Reliability, integrity and business record are critical
- Provide current information about services and policies
- Process orders using a range of suitable technologies
- Communicate effectively with Library staff
- Invoice correctly and as specified by the Library
- Report correctly on overdue orders at negotiated intervals
- Use a range of appropriate bibliographic and research sources
- Provide accurate supply: high fulfilment rate with low error rate
- Material received in excellent condition
- If supplying heritage material, can effectively describe the material on offer and provide factual information about provenance and condition.

Effective customer service

- Individual point of contact for most inquiries

- Process requests and claims efficiently and report results
- Communicate effectively to resolve supply issues and problems
- Provide responsive and ongoing customer support, particularly critical in the case of electronic resources.

Cost

- Make current pricing policy available
- Pricing policy clearly outlines freight and handling charges, special charges or surcharges for specific services and any other factors affecting the cost of material such as policy on exchange rate
- Pricing policy is understandable in application
- Pricing is competitive.

Timeliness

- Speed of supply appropriate to category of material and competitive in the Australian environment
- Meet agreed deadlines for special purchases, renewal invoices or renewal lists.

Range of services complementary to the Library's requirements

Specific services may include:

- Urgent order service
- Selection support, including profiled, blanket, approval and standing order services
- Capacity to obtain special formats or types of resources
- Inspection, valuation and reporting on heritage material
- Bidding at auction on heritage material
- Consolidation services for books and serials
- Electronic invoicing
- Cataloguing and processing services as specified
- Local staffing, representation or visits
- Identifying and locating out of print material.

Allocation of orders to suppliers

Allocating orders to individual suppliers is managed to achieve

- Correct suppliers for particular formats and categories of material
- Appropriate channels with regard to country of origin
- Minimum staff time spent following up orders
- Basis for comparison between suppliers where realistic
- Regular processing ensuring continuous throughput and meeting commitment goals
- Where realistic sufficient orders will be allocated to individual suppliers to ensure custom is valued and appropriate service level will be provided.

Communication with suppliers

Communication with suppliers is ideally managed on a number of levels including formal written documentation about services and pricing and less formal telephone or e-mail discussions about individual items, claims, and deliveries.

Prospective suppliers may be asked to send information about their terms and conditions to be placed on the prospective suppliers file to be submitted for review by the Collection Development Specialist.

Monitoring and evaluating supplier performance

Supplier performance is monitored through formal supplier evaluation and through continuous informal assessment during daily processing.

Individual members of staff are required to report their observations to supervisors, particularly in the case of poor supplier performance or a change in supplier performance.

In the integrated library management system environment, substantial information about supplier performance may be accessed as required. From time to time it is gathered, interpreted and placed on file to support discussions with suppliers about their performance.