

# BUNBURY MUSEUM AND HERITAGE CENTRE AND LOCAL STUDIES COLLECTIONS COUNCIL POLICY

## POLICY STATEMENT

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This policy guides the development and management of the Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre and Local Studies collections, including acquisition, deaccession, conservation and loans.

## POLICY SCOPE

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This policy applies to City of Bunbury employees.

## POLICY DETAILS

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The Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre and Local Studies collections are owned and managed by the City of Bunbury, through the Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre, on behalf of the people of the City of Bunbury.

The Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre will apply professional museum standards of best practice to develop and manage the collections, as guided by the *National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries* (Version 1.5, September 2016) and *Spectrum 5.0 Collection Management Standards* (2017).

Acquisitions will be made by purchase, commission, donation, gift, bequest, or transfer. Any deaccession recommendations will be made by the Curator Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre with approval of the Manager Community Facilities and presented as a report to Council for consideration and endorsement.

Objects will be identified for potential acquisition by the Curator Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre.

Items identified for potential acquisition fall into two categories:

- Category 1: Minor items with a value up to \$1,000; and
- Category 2: Substantial items with a value of \$1,000 or more.

Category 1 items will be assessed under the criteria detailed within the Policy for relevance to the collections and can be acquired by the Curator Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre within the adopted budget.

If a category 2 item has been identified as a potential acquisition under the criteria detailed within the Policy, an acquisition proposal form will be completed as soon as possible detailing the rationale for inclusion against the selection criteria within the adopted budget for consideration.

Acquisition of objects for the collections will be enabled through an annual acquisition budget allocation by the City of Bunbury and, where possible, by corporate, private and public sources.

## **POLICY PROCEDURE**

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### **1. The Collections**

#### **1.1 Mission**

The Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre seeks to inspire, entertain, and educate visitors and the local community about the social history and cultural heritage of the Bunbury region on Wardandi Noongar Boodja.

The Museum is committed to developing, managing and enriching its unique collections as an accessible and lifelong educational and research resource, for community participation through exhibitions and public programs, to encourage a local sense of belonging and place, and to engage and provoke visitors and residents to consider how aspects of the past relate to their present and future.

#### **1.2 The Collections**

The Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre collection was established in 2013. The collection initially focussed on objects and documents that supported the first planned permanent exhibitions of the museum, which opened in 2016. The museum collection encompasses 'primary' and 'secondary' (or handling) sub-collections, which are comprised of objects and artefacts.

The Local Studies collection was established as a response to the interest in Australia's history at the time of Bicentenary celebrations in 1988, before Bunbury had a city-focused Museum and Heritage Centre. This collection contains paper-based and digital items including archival records, photographs, Council documents, oral history recordings and transcripts, maps, books and other ephemera.

#### **1.3 Scope**

This Policy applies to material owned and managed by the City of Bunbury as part of the Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre Collection and the City of Bunbury Local Studies Collection.

This Policy does not apply to items held in the other City of Bunbury collections such as the City of Bunbury Art Collection and the City of Bunbury Sister Cities Collections.

### **2. Policy Guidelines**

#### **2.1 Acquisition and Collection Development**

##### **2.1.1 Acquisition Criteria**

A wide variety of material relevant to the key collection themes below, demonstrating change over time, will be collected in order to tell the stories of Bunbury up to the present day. Exploration of these themes may cross current local government boundaries.

##### **Key Collection Themes**

The Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre has developed a primary collection based on the following three (3) key themes, each with sub themes:

##### **Land and Environment**

- Environmental context and change;

- Indigenous communities; and
- Explorers, early settlers and land use.

#### ***Developing Bunbury***

- Agriculture and rural history;
- Growth of Bunbury;
- Local business and industry including the Port, maritime and shipwrecks;
- Secondary industries including, tourism, communications; and
- Governance and Authority.

#### ***Community***

Domestic life including

- Arts and Culture;
- Schools, education and religion;
- Health and Hospitals;
- Recreation, Sport and Holidays;
- Family Life;
- Retail and Shopping;
- War service;
- Migration;
- Contemporary events and subjects; and
- Significant people, business or social groups.

Additional themes may be developed and prioritised as specific gaps are identified and active collecting strategies will be reviewed regularly.

The Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre will not seek to collect items that:

- Are well represented in other public collections;
- require storage, display or conservation beyond the City's capacity;
- are duplicates of items already in the collection unless these are suitable for:
  - the 'secondary' or handling collection
  - for spare parts; or
  - are of superior condition and/or historical value and therefore replace the original item.

## **2.2 Acquisition Guidelines**

All collection acquisitions will be subject to a process of due diligence to ensure that material acquired for the collection:

- is consistent with one or more of the key collection themes;
- has clear legal title (proof of ownership and provenance) to enable full transfer of title to the Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre;
- is able to be appropriately stored and cared for by the City of Bunbury and is available for research and display;
- is in good condition, or is able to be conserved and stabilised;
- is unlikely, in the future, to result in major expense (for conservation, storage, display and security) unless such likelihood is identified and considered in the approval process;

- is unlikely to cause occupational safety and health problems in the course of handling, storage, display and accessibility; and
- complies with the *ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums* (2004) .

Acquisitions will also be assessed according to the following criteria laid out in *Significance 2.0* (2009) before being accepted into the collections;

- Significance;
- Provenance and documentation;
- Rarity or representativeness;
- Condition, and;
- Interpretive capacity.

The Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre also maintains a ‘secondary’ or handling collection, which contains materials of low significance that still link to the key themes of the collection policy. The items in this collection may be used as educational resources, and for research, outreach, or repair purposes.

The City of Bunbury and Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre will be mindful of religious and/or cultural sanctions attached to objects and will not acquire or exhibit an object in breach of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

In accordance with *First Peoples A Roadmap for Enhancing Indigenous Engagement in Museums and Galleries* (2018), the City will commit to engaging meaningfully with the appropriate individuals, groups and organisations with regards to Aboriginal cultural material.

All donations will be accompanied by a Deed of Gift, completed and signed by the donor.

All acquisitions will be subject to consistent museum standard registration procedures before they are stored or displayed.

### **2.3 Acquisition Approval Process and Procedures**

Items will be identified for potential acquisition by the Curator Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre, with advice from other staff of the Museum.

Items identified for potential acquisition fall into two categories:

- Category 1: Minor items with a value up to \$1,000; and
- Category 2: Substantial items with a value of \$1,000 or more.

Category 1 items will be assessed under the criteria detailed in this Policy for relevance to the collections and can be acquired by the Curator Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre within the adopted budget.

If a Category 2 item has been identified as a potential acquisition under the criteria detailed within the Policy, an acquisition proposal form will be completed as soon as possible detailing the rationale for inclusion against the selection criteria within the adopted budget for consideration.

The proposal form will be forwarded to and discussed with the Department Manager for approval.

## **2.4 Donations and Bequests**

Bequests and donations are encouraged to further enhance the collections but must comply with the acquisition criteria, processes and guidelines detailed in this policy.

All proposed donations and bequests must be examined by the Curator before deciding on acceptance of the item. If physical examination is not possible, photographs accompanied by information on the item may suffice.

The museum will not accept donations with conditions attached such as permanent display, as an entire collection only, or for the donor to recall at will.

Long term loans will not be considered.

## **2.5 Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status from the Australian Tax Office**

Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre will maintain endorsement for Deductible Gift Recipient DGR status with the Australian Tax Office for the Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre collections to enable donors to obtain a deductible tax incentive.

As a pre-requisite for DGR status the City of Bunbury will establish and maintain a gift fund for any monies or artworks to be accountable and separately identified and be for the sole purpose of the Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre collections.

Winding up clause: In the unlikely event of the gift fund being wound up, or revoked, any surplus assets of the gift fund remaining after the payment of liabilities attributed to it, shall be transferred to a fund, authority or institution with similar objectives to the Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre and under the guidance of the Australian Museums and Galleries Association to which income tax deductible gifts can be made.

## **2.6 De-accessioning and Disposal of Collection Items**

De-accessioning should only occur in rare cases, consistent with the role of a public museum collection as a valuable community resource.

A recommendation to deaccession an item must include the item's catalogue information, a statement of justification, proposed method of disposal and, if the item has been lost or stolen the date it was last seen, by whom, and steps taken to locate the item.

Any recommendation to deaccession an item(s) will be presented as a report to Council for consideration and endorsement.

Items may be considered for removal from the collections under the following criteria:

- The item does not meet the acquisition criteria for the collections;
- The item does not have historical merit as determined by appropriate experts;
- The item is in poor condition and is considered to be of insufficient merit to allocate the resources to ensure its conservation;
- The item is irreparably damaged or destroyed, or is missing or stolen without hope of return;
- The item lacks any supporting information to enable proper identification or to establish its relevance to the collection, or is of insignificant historical or archival value;
- The item poses a hazard to other items in the collections;
- The item is a duplicate or forgery that serves no specific cultural function;
- The item proves to be not authentic;
- A substantiated request for the return of the item to its owner/donor is received; and

- In this instance the donor may be required make restitution of any unreasonable financial loss to the collections.

After deaccessioning the following shall be maintained:

- Record of deaccession against the object in the accession register; and
- A record of all previous documentation, including catalogues, cards, correspondence and research, to be placed in a separate deaccession file housed with the accession and registration records.

## **2.7 Method of Disposal**

Disposal of collection materials will only be considered once they have been formally deaccessioned.

The proceeds of items/objects sold should be used for further acquisitions or maintenance of other items/objects as indicated and placed in the reserve.

Items/objects acquired by donation will be offered in the first instance to the donor or the family of the donor if deceased.

Other than above, disposal shall be carried out in line with the disposal of asset legislation under the *Local Government Act 1995* and the City of Bunbury Disposal of Minor Assets Management Policy.

Disposal will be approached in the following order of priority:

- offered to the donor or the family of the donor if deceased;
- offered to another not-for-profit museum or collecting institution;
- sold as per the City's Disposal of Minor Asset Management Policy and the Local Government Act (1995); and
- thrown away.

City of Bunbury Staff and their families, are prohibited from purchasing or otherwise acquiring de-accessioned items due for disposal (other than auction).

## **3 Collection Management, Care and Conservation**

Collection objects will be exhibited, stored, and otherwise maintained in accordance with the *National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries* (2016) and shall not be stored in situations where conditions are detrimental to the objects or have the potential to be harmful to the public.

The display of items with cultural and/or religious significance will be in accordance with the *Code of Ethics for Art, History and Science Museums* (1999).

Where items are held or displayed outside of Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre or Local Studies facilities the ambient environment and the works shall be closely monitored.

Only personnel trained in museum materials handling will handle Collections items.

Professional registration procedures and appropriate records of the collection will be maintained, including cataloguing, documentation, continued research and loans management. All items will be documented in a suitable database system.

A conservation management plan will be established using the expertise of an appropriate conservator(s) and maintained to ensure necessary work is completed in a timely manner. The conservation management plan will be regularly reviewed.

Only appropriately trained and accredited conservators will be contracted to advise or work on the collections.

Collection storage facilities will be climate monitored and maintained at appropriate established industry levels of temperature and humidity.

Storage facilities will be inspected at least once every quarter for security, damp, pests, and any other condition that may pose a risk to the collection items.

A Collection Disaster Management Plan will be prepared, and a fully equipped disaster management kit will be maintained in an appropriate location.

#### **4. Loans**

##### **4.1 Rights and Responsibilities**

Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre will consider requests for loans in accordance with this Policy and the Department shall have authority to approve requests which comply with the Policy.

The museum requesting the loan will be responsible for all costs associated with the loan, including all packing, transport and insurance requirements during the term of the loan.

When making any decision on requests for loan of items from the collections, the Curator will take into consideration the physical condition of the item and its ability to withstand the rigours of travel. This consideration must also be made in relation to loans which include touring.

##### **4.2 Parameters**

Any requests for loans which are outside the guidelines of this Policy will be referred to the CEO.

##### **4.3 Procedure**

Consideration for outgoing loans of items will be undertaken in the context of the development of meaningful reciprocal arrangements that are in the best interests of Council.

Requests will be considered and approved by the Department Manager, subject to an Outward Loan Agreement being signed by the applicant.

Appropriate transport, packing and courier services are to be approved by the Curator and will be detailed in the Loan Agreement.

Prior to an agreement being signed, applicants must provide a satisfactory facilities report detailing the conditions under which the loaned item will be handled and exhibited including environmental control (climate), security and display standards.

Applicants must also provide documentation proving adequate insurance cover for the borrowed item for the loan period including when in transit, during exhibition preparation and display period.

Before a loaned object leaves the City a condition report will be completed by a suitably trained staff member. The borrower(s) will also complete a condition report supplied by the Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre on arrival and unpacking and immediately before packing and return to Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre. Copies of these reports will be forwarded to the Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre as soon as possible.

#### 4.4 Inward Loans

As part of the Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre exhibition program, the City of Bunbury may enter into arrangements with other institutions and/or individuals to borrow items to complement public exhibitions of the Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre.

All borrowed items will be covered by an extended insurance through the City of Bunbury.

All lenders will be acknowledged in any public display, marketing and promotions.

A formal loan agreement, including the Terms and Conditions of the loan must be completed by both the Lender and the City of Bunbury. This agreement will record the conditions of the loan and the period of the loan.

## COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

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### LEGISLATION

- *Local Government Act 1995*
- *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997 Division 376 – Gifts or Contributions*
- *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*
- *Copyright Act 1968*
- *Underwater Cultural Heritage Act 2018*

### INDUSTRY

- *Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program Guide (2019)*
- *ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums (2004)*
- *National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries (Version 1.5, September 2016)*
- *Continuous Cultures, Ongoing Responsibilities: Principles and guidelines for Australian museums working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage (2005)*
- *First Peoples: A Roadmap for Enhancing Indigenous Engagement in Museums and Galleries (2018)*
- *Spectrum 5.0 Collection Management Standards (2017)*
- *Significance 2.0: a guide to assessing the significance of collections (2009)*

### ORGANISATIONAL



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