

Museum and Social History Collection Acquisition and De-accession Procedure

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The procedure documents the processes required to complete the acquisition of materials into the Museum and Social History collection and the de-accession of materials from the Museum and Social History collection.
- 1.2 A defined procedure:
 - reduces the risk of accidental loss of cultural material within a collection,
 - reduces the risk of administration duplication,
 - provides accurate information for insurance and risk management purposes,
 - reduces the risk of database errors,
 - ensures that all audit trails are complete and accurate,
 - ensures an objective and professional approach to collection management.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This procedure aligns with and supports the AlburyCity Museum and Social History Collection Policy and Uiver Collection Policy and applies to all moveable heritage materials that are managed by the Museum and Social History team.
- 2.2 This procedure applies to all Libraries and Museum team members and Acquisition and De-accession Committee members.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 Acquisition - adding materials to the collection through various means including purchase, donation and bequest.
- 3.2 Acquisition Log - an electronic register recording details about all materials offered for donation and the outcome of decisions.
- 3.3 Collection database - an electronic program used to catalogue, register and document the movement, condition, provenance and other information on individual material within the collection.
- 3.4 Cultural Gifts Program - an Australian Government program offering tax incentives to encourage people to donate cultural material to public art galleries, museums, libraries, and archives in Australia.

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- 3.5 De-accession - removing materials from the collection against agreed criteria and through a transparent legal and ethical process that has been approved by AlburyCity.
- 3.6 Donor - a person, family or institution that offers material to a cultural institution.
- 3.7 Museum and Social History Collection – the collection of materials that have been acquired and accessioned by the Museum and Social History Team, in a variety of forms and media.

4. References

- 4.1 AlburyCity Museum and Social History Collections Policy, draft, 2022
- 4.2 AlburyCity Museum, Social History and Archive Acquisition and De-Accessions Committee guidelines
- 4.3 AlburyCity Uiver Collection Policy, 2021
- 4.4 Cultural Gifts Program Guidelines, Attorney-General's Department. Authorised and published by the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department Ministry for the Arts. www.arts.gov.au/cgp
- 4.5 NSW Heritage Act (1977)
- 4.6 NSW State Heritage Inventory: The Uiver Collection, SHR 01995
- 4.7 ICOM (International Council of Museums) Code of Ethics for Museums, 1986, Revised 2004.

5. Acquisition Methods – Donation

- 5.1 Donation
A potential donor approaches the Museum and Social History team regarding a potential donation to the collection. This can occur in-person or by email, telephone or letter.
- 5.2 Bequest
Material is bequeathed to the Museum and Social History Collection. With this form of donation material can be bequeathed to an institution with no prior contact. Initial contact may be from the executor of the will, the family of the deceased or the deceased person's solicitor. The material must still meet the criteria listed in the Museum and Social History Collection Policy.
- 5.3 Cultural Gift
Donation through the Cultural Gifts Program.

6. Donation processes

- 6.1 Potential donors must be made aware of the Museum and Social History Collection Policy, and provided with a copy on request.

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- 6.2 Potential donors must be made aware that they will be required to sign a certificate of gift, and that this is a binding legal transaction. In return for accepting a donation AlburyCity agrees to care for the material, make it available for research purposes and potentially display it.
- 6.3 If the donor wishes to proceed, an Object Receipt Form is completed by a Museum and Social History team member. The donor leaves the material at the LibraryMuseum. The material may be retained for consideration without an Object Receipt Form provided another record is kept of the material, such as an email.
- 6.4 Museum and Social History team members complete an entry in the acquisition log.
- 6.5 An informal valuation of the material is undertaken by Museum and Social History team member based on research, valuation of similar material in the collection and established generic values for material formats. There may be the requirement to seek a formal valuation prior to a decision on acquisition being made.
- 6.6 Potential acquisitions under the value of \$500 will be considered for acquisition at a Museum and Social History Team Meeting. Assessments made include:
- The condition, storage, handing and display needs;
 - Provenance and other relevant research; and
 - Relevance to the Museum and Social History Collection Policy and Uiver Collection Policy criteria.
- 6.7 Potential acquisitions valued over \$500 will be considered for acquisition at the Museum and Social Acquisitions and De-accessions Committee following development of a detailed briefing paper. At times, potential acquisitions under the value of \$500 may be referred to consideration by the Museum and Social History Acquisitions and De-accessions Committee.
- 6.8 Material is assessed against the criteria in the Museum and Social History Collection Policy using the Collections Council of Australia assessment method and criteria

7. Materials acquired by gift from visiting delegations

- 7.1 The Mayor, Councillors and Executive may from time to time be presented with materials from visiting delegations or individuals.
- 7.2 These items will only become part of the Museum and Social History Collection if they meet the criteria set out in the Museum and Social History Collection Policy.

8. Materials acquired through purchase

- 8.1 An annual Museum and Social History acquisition fund provides an opportunity to purchase museum material. Collection purchases will be considered if they meet the

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criteria of the Museum and Social History Collection Policy and if sufficient budget is available.

- 8.2 Decisions on purchase of materials valued under \$500 will be considered at the Museum and Social History Team Meeting.
- 8.3 Potential purchase of materials valued over \$500 will be considered at the Museum and Social Acquisitions and De-accessions Committee following development of a detailed briefing paper. At times potential collection purchases under the value of \$500 may be referred to consideration by the Museum and Social History Acquisitions and De-accessions Committee.

9. Museum and Social History Acquisition and De-Accession Committee

- 9.1 The main purpose of the Museum and Social History Acquisitions and De-Accessions Committee is to objectively assess the significance of cultural material for acquisition or de-accession within the framework of the Museum and Social History Collection Policy and on behalf of AlburyCity.
- 9.2 The Acquisition and De-accession Committee shall be made up of representatives from:
- relevant academic backgrounds
 - professional museum or cultural heritage backgrounds
 - Albury & District Historical Society
 - local Wiradjuri or Aboriginal Communities
 - the local community (with relevant experience or knowledge).
- 9.3 Committee members will serve on the Committee for a period of three years with the opportunity to be appointed for additional terms.
- 9.4 The Committee will meet quarterly on request by the Libraries and Museum Team Leader (Chair). Other Council Officers can be invited to these meetings on request by members of the Museum & Social History Acquisitions and De-accessions Committee. Council Officers do not have voting rights.
- 9.5 The role of the Committee is to ensure an objective and professional approach to collection management, to ensure all audit trails are complete and accurate, and reduce the risk of accidental loss of cultural material.
- 9.6 The Committee operates under Council's Code of Meeting Practice.
- 9.7 The Acquisition and De-Accession Committee will have the authority to:
- accept or reject donor and purchase applications,
 - consider cultural material presented by the Museum and Social History Team,
 - give written feedback to the donor of acceptance or rejection,
 - delegate to the Libraries and Museum Team Leader any administration and reporting tasks on behalf of the Committee, and
 - authorise the de-accession cultural material if these objects do not meet the criteria of the Museum & Social History Collection Policy.

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- 9.8 All materials or collections of materials valued over \$500 will be considered at the Museum and Social History Acquisitions and De-accessions Committee meeting. Considerations will include the criteria in the Museum and Social History Collection Policy, their current condition, any potential storage difficulties and long term care requirements.
- 9.9 All offers of donation by Cultural Gift must be assessed by the Museum and Social History Acquisitions and De-accessions Committee, in addition to following the other steps as set out by the Cultural Gifts Program.

10. Outcome: Acceptance

If the decision of the Museum and Social History Team or Acquisitions and De-accessions Committee is to acquire the material the following steps will occur:

10.1 Purchase

Material purchased in line with AlburyCity procurement guidelines, and a copy of the transaction record kept in Council's records management system. Once all processes are complete and the material is in the ownership of AlburyCity the material will be catalogued onto the Museum Collection database.

10.2 Donation

Complete and collate all relevant documentation and send a Certificate of Gift to the donor. The Acquisition Log will be updated. Once complete, the material will be catalogued onto the museum collection database.

10.3 Bequest

Complete and collate all relevant documentation and send a Certificate of Gift to the donor's executor, authorised family member, or solicitor. Once complete, the material will be entered onto the museum collection database.

10.4 Cultural Gift

If an item is authorised to be acquired by Cultural Gift, additional documentation to formalise the process will be accessed through the Cultural Gifts Program website. Within the spirit of the Cultural Gifts Program, gifts should be accepted on the basis that they will form part of an institution's permanent collection. However, it is acknowledged that changes in collection policies may occasionally result in the need to de-accession material. If material is removed from a collection, this should be done in accordance with the the Museum and Social History Collection Policy and this procedure. Once all processes are complete and the material is in the ownership of AlburyCity the material will be catalogued onto the museum collection database.

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11. Outcome: Rejection

- 11.1 If the Museum and Social History Team or Acquisitions and De-accessions Committee rejects material, the Museum and Social History Team must contact the potential donor as soon as possible and negotiate return of the material. The reasons for the decision will be provided to the potential donor verbally and in writing.
- 11.2 The decision, outcome and actions must be entered into the Acquisitions Log to complete the audit trail.

12. De-accessioning

- 12.1 De-accessioning is a normal part of collection management. The removal of de-accessioned material from the collection will be handled ethically and with sensitivity.
- 12.2 De-accession applies to materials that are documented to have been;
- acquired without the free and informed consent of the custodian at the time,
 - acquired in contravention of tradition or custom,
 - acquired through a person legally or culturally unauthorised to have possession of materials,
 - acquired through an illegal act of war or aggression,
 - deemed by the Acquisitions and De-accession Committee to not meet the criteria of the Museum and Social History Collection Policy,
 - documented to be in an irretrievable condition, or
 - deemed to be a duplicate of similar materials in the Collection.
- 12.3 Only if one or more of the above elements can be met, will de-accession be considered.
- 12.4 De-accession will be considered against the above criteria by the Museum and Social History Acquisitions and De-accessions Committee. A detailed briefing paper will be completed by the Museum and Social History Team, and forwarded to the Acquisition and De-accession Committee prior to the meeting at which it is to be considered.
- 12.5 If the Committee authorises the de-accession, all of the information on the database will be archived for the prescribed period outlined in the AlburyCity Records Disposal Schedule.
- 12.6 The Acquisition and De-accession Committee will provide advice about the disposal method, in order of priority:
- Offered to the donor or donor's family,
 - Gifted to another institution,
 - Exchanged with another institution,
 - Sale, or
 - Destroyed (only as a last resort).
- 12.7 If the donor or family cannot be contacted within a three month period the next appropriate disposal method will be undertaken.

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12.8 Any proceeds of the sale of materials will be applied to new purchases or collection administrative purposes.

12.9 Gifts donated through the Cultural Gifts Program should not be returned to the donor as the donor has already received the benefit of a tax deduction for the gift.

13. Documentation

13.1 Gift Certificate with Permission to Reproduce (DOC20/36791)

13.2 AlburyCity Museum Social History and Archive Acquisition and De-accessions Committee Guidelines.

14. Authorisation

Owner	Directorate	Community & Place – Libraries & Museum
	Responsible Officer	Team Leader Libraries and Museum
Authorisation	Insert 'Approved Executive' or 'Adopted Council' Include date approved/adopted	
Review Date	Insert date four years from last issue date, or earlier if required	
Register	Public Policy and Procedure Register.	
Record of Amendments	Insert date	Provide brief description of the change.
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