AIATSIS

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF ABORIGINAL
AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDIES

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S INSTRUCTIONS

Collection Development Policy

Version No	Issue Date	Authored by	Reviewed by	Next review*
V01	August 2016	Collections	Council	August 2018

*Note this review date is the minimum date by which this policy must be reviewed. If there are significant changes in the area of this policy prior to the next scheduled review date, a full review must be performed at that time.

Craig Ritchie

Chief Executive Officer (a/g)

Date ___30/ 1 / 2017___

Collection Development Policy

Table of Contents

1.   Introduction

The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) has a unique history and place within Australia's national cultural institutions. For more than 50 years, AIATSIS has strengthened and promoted understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and heritage. It has done this through supporting research, collecting materials, recording knowledge and safely caring for and making accessible its dynamic and diverse collection, which has been described as "the most extensive and best contextualised collection of Indigenous Australia in the world" (Significance International 2014, *Whole AIATSIS Collection, Statement of Significance*).

The AIATSIS Act provides a strong and clear focus on the core activities of collecting, preserving and providing access to AIATSIS' national collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage.

2.   Vision and Scope

This policy provides guidance for the selection of the AIATSIS Collection and informs clients, donors and stakeholders about **how** AIATSIS undertakes its work.

It outlines how we collect and will be complemented by the Collection Development Strategy that will articulate strategic priorities for what we collect. The Strategy will be released in 2017.

Through the development of its collection, AIATSIS will continue to build pathways that recognise, respect and value all Indigenous peoples' cultures and knowledge.

This policy will be reviewed in 2018. However, it may be updated at any time to reflect strategic direction or policy changes.

3.   Governance

AIATSIS is an independent Commonwealth statutory authority, established by the AIATSIS Act 1989. The AIATSIS Council, which has a majority Indigenous membership, provides strategic direction and oversight across AIATSIS operations.

The Collections Advisory Committee, established in 2016, has the role of advising the AIATSIS Chief Executive Officer and Head of Collections about strategic matters relating to collection development, management and access.

The AIATSIS Act was amended in 2016 to strengthen the governance arrangements and refocus on the core activities of collection and preservation of Indigenous culture and heritage.

Appendix A lists AIATSIS's functions as legislated in the *AIATSIS Act 1989 (Cth)*.

4. Ethics

AIATSIS is at the forefront of the development and promotion of ethical approaches to caring for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collections and research methods.

AIATSIS is a key collaborator in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library Information and Resource Network (ATSILIRN) Protocols for Libraries, Archives and Information Services, that set out best practice for managing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collections.

The AIATSIS Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies (GERAIS) establish a process of meaningful engagement and reciprocity and are best standards of ethical research and human rights.

Appendix B lists cultural protocols, legislation and guidelines as they apply to the AIATSIS Collection.

5. Future Directions

AIATSIS is part of the national key research infrastructure. It is committed to growing the collection so that it responds to and inspires Indigenous communities and individuals and all Australians.

AIATSIS is committed to engaging and employing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the development, management, preservation, discoverability and accessibility of the collection.

From the beginning AIATSIS has developed its collection in response to changing political, cultural and technological landscapes. Relationships and collaborations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, organisations and keeping places, other collecting institutions, the academy and professional bodies in Australia and internationally are central to informing our practice and future directions.

In the context of the growth of distributed collections and community-based maintenance and preservation of Australian Indigenous cultural heritage, AIATSIS aims to provide coordination, guidance and capability development as a part of our leadership charter.

Appendix C lists memberships and affiliates of the AIATSIS Collection.

6. How we collect

The AIATSIS Collection is built through research, engagement and specialist knowledge.

Engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations as owners of culture is at the heart of our strategy to expand, safely keep and share the collection.

6.1 Criteria for acquisition

In the collection we seek to represent the broadest possible range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, knowledge and experiences.

Strategic priorities for the development of the collection, including geographic and temporal spread, as well as its relationship with other collections of Indigenous cultural heritage will be articulated in the Collection Development Strategy.

All materials acquired for the AIATSIS Collection should contribute to the knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and heritage.

AIATSIS will normally only acquire materials that can be appropriately stored and managed.

6.2 Methods of acquisition

AIATSIS acquires materials by:

- donation, gift or bequest
- contract of deposit
- purchase (particularly of published materials for the library collection)
- contract of commission
- creation of original materials.

The sources may be individuals, organisations, communities, academics, researchers, filmmakers, photographers, oral historians, linguists, musicians, artists, anthropologists and others.

AIATSIS encourages donations of materials as this ensures preservation, management and access in the longer term.

AIATSIS participates in the Commonwealth Government Cultural Gifts Program, which provides tax incentives to donors.

6.3   Assessments

Prior to acquisition all unique and original materials undergo assessment.

Assessments are conducted by AIATSIS staff and discipline experts.

Assessment considerations include:

- cultural significance
- relevance to the existing collection
- uniqueness and rarity
- conservation and preservation requirements
- access conditions
- provenance
- supporting documentation
- presence of secret/sacred materials and other sensitive information
- monetary value
- method of acquisition
- availability of authority to allocate reproduction and/or copyrights.

AIATSIS requests donors, owners and/or agents of materials under assessment to alert staff of potentially sensitive content, including secret/sacred materials, to ensure it is handled appropriately.

AIATSIS staff will undertake due diligence to establish and verify, where possible, the provenance of materials.

6.4   Authority and Delegation

Collection managers and specialist staff have primary responsibility for the acquisition of collection materials under this policy and in line with formal delegations. The process is coordinated by the Collection Development Manager.

For acquisitions involving monetary transactions, Collections follows AIATSIS policies for procurement and financial delegations.

7.   Deselection

To ensure that the quality and content of the collection reflects and supports the functions of AIATSIS, materials may be relocated or removed from the collection through deselection.

Funds generated from the deselection of materials from the AIATSIS Collection may only be used to purchase new items in accordance with this Collection Development Policy, or to upgrade the preservation or conservation of objects already in the Collection.

AIATSIS staff and Council members, their families and other individuals formally associated with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies may not purchase or otherwise acquire a deselected object or collection, nor may they benefit personally in any way from the deselection of an object or collection.

Appendix D lists deselection and disposal processes.

Appendix A: AIATSIS Act 2016 (Cth) – Section 5: Functions of Institute

The Institute has the following functions:

(a)   to develop, preserve and provide access to a national collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage;

(b)   to use that national collection to strengthen and promote knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage;

(c)   to provide leadership in the fields of:

(i)   Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research; and

(ii)   ethics and protocols for research, and other activities relating to collections, related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; and

(iii)   use (including use for research) of that national collection and other collections containing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage;

(d)   to lead and promote collaborations and partnerships among the academic, research, non government, business and government sectors and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in support of the other functions of the Institute;

(e)   to provide advice to the Commonwealth on the situation and status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage.

Appendix B: Cultural protocols, legislation and guidelines

Cultural Protocols

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library Information and Resource Network (ATSILIRN) Protocols for Libraries, Archives and Information Services

AIATSIS Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies (GERAIS)

Museums Australia, Continuous Cultures, Ongoing Responsibilities.

Legislation

AIATSIS Act 2016 (Cth)

Australian Public Service Act 1999 (Cth)

Copyright Act 1968 (Cth)

Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Cth)

Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)

Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Act 1986 (Cth)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984 (Cth)

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.

Guidelines

Association of Moving Image Archivists Code of Ethics

Australian Library and Information Association Statement on Professional Conduct

Australian Society of Archivists Code of Ethics

Collections Council of Australia, Significance 2.0

Indigenous Australian Art Charter of Principles for Publicly Funded Collecting Institutions

International Council of Archives, Code of Ethics

International Council of Museums, Code of Ethics for Museums

International Federation of Library Association Code of Ethics for Librarians and other Information Workers

International Federation of Film Archives Code of Ethics

Ministry for the Arts, Australian Best Practice Guide to Collecting Cultural Material

Museums Australia, Incorporated Code of Ethics

National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries.

Appendix C: Memberships and affiliations

Arts Libraries Society – Australia and New Zealand (Arlis-ANZ)

Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA)

Australasian Association for Digital Humanities (AA-DH)

Australasian Sound Recordings Association (ASRA)

Australian Government Libraries Information Network (AGLIN)

Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material (AICCM)

Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA)

Australian and New Zealand Society of Indexers (ANZSA)

Australian Society of Archivists (ASA)

International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives (IASA)

Foundation of Endangered Languages

Museums Australia

Oral History Association of Australia (OHAA)

Presto Centre

Society of Motion Picture & Television Engineers (SMPTE)

VALA: Libraries, Technology and the Future

Appendix D: Deselection and disposal processes

Collection managers and specialist staff are responsible for deselection. At times, the CEO or delegate will be consulted or advised, and in some instances, advice will be sought from relevant Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander groups or communities.

Collection materials may be considered for deselection if some or all of the following apply:

- a request is made by Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples for the withdrawal of the materials under the *AIATSIS Act* s 41;
- it is subject to stringent access conditions that contradict the wishes of relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, which cannot be amended and is therefore unable to be properly administered;
- a request for withdrawal is made by the owner and/or depositor;
- repatriation which is not covered by Return of Materials to Indigenous Communities (ROMTIC) is requested by an individual or community and may be repatriated following consulation, evaluation and with theapproval of CEO or delegate;
- it has become a danger to the safety of staff and/or other materials in the collection, in which case every effort will be made to preserve the content by migration to a stable format and/or relocation;
- it has deteriorated to such an extent that content cannot be recovered and copying or restoration is not practicable;
- it duplicates other items in the collection and is in excess of any requirement for duplicates;
- it is a copy that has been superseded by superior copies and is in excess of any requirement for additional copies;
- after research, consulation, evaluation materials may be deselected if provenance is uncertain and may compromise the Institute, with approval by CEO or delegate;
- if there is no reasonable expectation of making the item discoverable in the future;
- has no relevance to the Collection;
- it does not comply with the Collection Development Policy.

Deselected materials may be removed or disposed of in the following ways:

- transfer to the owner and/or depositor;
- donation to an Indigenous organisation; galleries, libraries, archives and museums (GLAM); community or charitable organisation;

- sale to a public institution;
- sale to a private buyer; or
- destruction.

Conditions that applied at the time materials were acquired may legally prevent AIATSIS from disposing of it. The legality of disposal will be ascertained on a case-by-case basis. AIATSIS cannot legally return materials to donors who received tax benefits as a result of their donation.

Appendix E: Glossary of terms and acronyms

Acquisition: acceptance of materials into the collection.

AIATSIS: Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies

ATSILIRN: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library, Information and Resource Network

Contract of commission: whereby materials are created under a contract of commission and/or deed of grant so ownership of the material is transferred to AIATSIS.

Contract of deposit: whereby materials are cared for as part of the collection but the depositor maintains ownership of the physical property.

Copyright: the exclusive right, granted by law for a certain term of years, to make and dispose of copies of, and otherwise to control, a literary, musical, dramatic, or artistic work.

Creation of original materials: whereby materials, including writings and recordings, are created by AIATSIS staff in the course of their work.

Cultural significance: the meaning and values of an item or collection, or what makes it important. Significance is the historical, aesthetic, scientific and social value that an item or collection has for past, present and future generations.

Deselection: the process to enable the removal materials from the collection.

Donation, gift or bequest: whereby ownership of materials is transferred to AIATSIS via direct donation, donation through the Cultural Gifts Program, or bequest.

GERAIS: Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies

Provenance: the history of an item's ownership.

Purchase: whereby ownership of materials is transferred to AIATSIS via a monetary transaction