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ORANGE REGIONAL MUSEUM
HERITAGE COLLECTION

ST131   **F22**

STRATEGIC POLICY

OBJECTIVES

1   To guide the ongoing development and care of the Orange Regional Museum's Heritage Collection by establishing the ethical and thematic framework for the collection's strategic development
2   To support the museum's exhibition program and its community initiatives around history, culture, collections and collecting
3   To meet national standards for museum and collection management
4   To inform potential donors and the community about the Museum's collections, policies and practices
5   To support funding applications and build sound relationships with stakeholders
6   To guide good practice around collections and collecting
7   To ensure compliance with Australian Taxation Office requirements in the event of distribution of surplus property on winding up or revocation of Deductible Gift Recipient status endorsement

GENERAL

1   This Policy and Procedure addresses the acquisition, care and use of the Orange Regional Museum Heritage Collection. The Policy clarifies the position of any material that will or will not be collected.
2   A museum collection is held in perpetuity, in trust for the community, for their benefit and enjoyment today and in the future. Developing a museum collection is an intergenerational commitment that requires careful decisions, based on awareness of the long-term obligations inherent in collecting.
3   This Policy applies to other sections of Orange City Council that may hold heritage objects or that may accept donations from the public.

PROCEDURE

A Procedure has been developed to assist in the operational management of the Collection.

RELATED POLICIES/DOCUMENTS

Orange City Council Purchasing Policy
Orange City Council Code of Conduct
Australian Taxation Office Deductible Gift Recipient requirements

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Responsible Area – Community, Recreation and Cultural Services

REVISION					
	DATE	**RESOLUTION**		**DATE**	**RESOLUTION**
1	21 August 2014	14/871	**6**		
2	6 February 2018	18/034	**7**		
3			**8**		
4			**9**		
5					
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SUMMARY OF AMENDMENTS

Amendment Date	Section/Reference and Amendment
November 2017	Objectives: Addition of point 7 to ensure compliance with the Australian Taxation Office requirements in the event of distribution of surplus property on winding up or revocation of the Deductible Gift Recipient status endorsement 4.16 Collection Policies: Council will ensure that if the deductible gift recipient status of the Museum is revoked or wound up, any surplus assets that had been gifted under that status will be transferred to an entity to which deductible gift recipient status applies. 10 Management of the Collection: Provisions relating to the employment of a Museum Manager and setting up a governance structure for the Museum have been deleted.
June 2014	New Policy and Procedure

ORANGE REGIONAL MUSEUM HERITAGE COLLECTION

Procedure

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1   Introduction and Context

1.1   A museum collection is held in perpetuity, in trust for the community, for their benefit and enjoyment today and in the future. Developing a museum collection is an intergenerational commitment that requires careful decisions, based on awareness of the long term obligations inherent in collecting.

1.2   Orange Regional Museum's Collection Policy establishes the ethical and thematic framework for the collection's strategic development. The collection supports the Museum's exhibition program and its community initiatives around history, culture, collections and collecting.

1.3   Orange Regional Museum's vision is to be a vibrant cultural hub where the rich history and heritage of the City and region is valued and celebrated through the dynamic programs developed by the Museum.

1.4   Orange Regional Museum will achieve this vision through exhibitions, collaborative programs and cultural partnerships with the community and other agencies and organisations, including the state and federal governments and the business sector.

1.5   The Collection Policy is based on community consultation about Orange City Council's museum plans and programs held in 2005 and 2011-12. These consultations underlined community support for a collection and exhibition program around key themes including Aboriginal history and culture, gold and mining, the environment and heritage of Orange, people and community collections. There was strong support for a regional museum that complemented the collections held in community museums in the region.

2   Purpose of the Collection

The purpose of the collection is to:

2.1   Enrich understanding of the history and heritage of Orange and district

2.2   Engage and educate the community

2.3   Document and interpret important themes and stories in the history and development of the district

2.4   Conserve significant heritage objects for the benefit of the community

2.5   Contribute to the development of an outstanding regional museum about Orange and the region

2.6   Interpret the Wentworth Mine Site and Lucknow's heritage

2.7   Document Council's work and service to the community

3   Key Collecting Themes

3.1   Evolution of the environment and landscape of the Orange region, including geology, water themes and issues

3.2   Aboriginal history and culture of the Orange region, past and present

3.3   Exploration and settlement of Orange and surrounding villages

3.4   Mining in the region, particularly gold and significant gold mining sites such as Ophir, Lucknow and the Wentworth Mine, and Cadia

3.5   Notable people, local businesses and industries, social, health and community services and cultural activities

3.6   The built environment of Orange; public buildings, homes and gardens, and items associated with significant heritage places and villages

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3.7 Wool, orchards, agriculture, food, wine and culinary history

3.8 Transport and communications in the region.

3.9 Council's work and services, particularly parks and gardens and water

3.10 Heritage objects made, designed or improvised in the Orange district including manufacturing.

3.11 Migration heritage objects and stories.

3.12 Orange Sporting Hall of Fame and significant items of sporting history associated with sporting clubs, facilities and notable individuals.

3.13 Significant events and activities, including war service and its impacts.

4   Collection Policies

Orange City Council will:

4.1 Maintain its heritage collections in line with national standards for museums and collections.

4.2 Acquire relevant objects and collections as donations, bequests, purchases, transfer, or commissions.

4.3 Only acquire objects that can be properly stored, documented and managed.

4.4 Provide community access to the collection.

4.5 Investigate options to place significant objects on the web.

4.6 Only acquire objects that are provenanced to area, or that help to interpret themes, places and people in the history of Orange and district.

4.7 Build unique historical records about local people and places, industries and environments through the Collection and associated projects.

4.8 Identify priority themes as a focus for research, strategic collecting and documentation. e.g: Lucknow and gold, water, food and wine, city development, migration heritage, garden history and heritage, villages of the district. Collect strategically not passively.

4.9 Develop non-collecting initiatives, such as temporary exhibitions and programs assisting the community to document and care for heritage collections in their original context of use.

4.10 Foster awareness of sustainable collections and collecting practice.

4.11 Work in partnership with other museums, galleries, libraries and heritage organisations in the region, and complement their collections and collection policies.

4.12 Where necessary seek professional conservation advice on the storage and care of the collection. Assess significance and consult a trained conservator before any restoration work on the collection.

4.13 Not acquire objects from significant heritage sites and buildings where acquisition and removal would diminish the significance of the place; except in circumstances where the object is at risk.

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4.14   Ensure all collecting activity and collection management processes is conducted in accordance with the International Council of Museums Code of Ethics[1] and within the framework of the NSW Heritage Office's Movable Heritage Principles.

4.15   Ensure no objects or collections are acquired with conditions or restrictions on the way they might be used or displayed in the future, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

4.16   Ensure that if the fund, authority or institution is wound up or if the endorsement of the organisation as a deductible gift recipient for the operation of the fund, authority or institution is revoked (whichever occurs first), any surplus assets of the gift fund remaining after the payment of liabilities attributable to it, shall be transferred to a fund, authority or institution to which income tax deductible gifts can be made.

5   Acquisition and Assessment Policies and Criteria

5.1   Council will keep accurate, up to date and detailed records.

5.2   Council will ensure that significance is the basis for considering possible acquisitions, and relevance to the Museum's mission, purpose and its collection themes.

5.3   Items must be relevant to the Museum's mission, purpose and collection themes

5.4   **Criteria**

The Collections Council of Australia's significance assessment method and criteria guides evaluation of potential acquisitions, and collection management.[2] The primary assessment criteria are:

a   Historic significance

b   Artistic or aesthetic significance

c   Scientific or research significance

d   Social or spiritual significance

The comparative criteria are:

a   Provenance

b   Rarity or representativeness

c   Condition or completeness

d   Interpretive capacity

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[1] ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums, International Council of Museums, 2002
[2] *Significance 2.0, a guide to assessing the significance of collections*, Roslyn Russell and Kylie Winkworth, 2nd edition, Collections Council of Australia Ltd, 2009

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5.5 **Assessment**

Objects will only be accepted or acquired if:

5.5.1 The item meets the collection themes Section 3 of this procedure.

5.5.2 The item is relevant to the mission and purpose of the Museum.

5.5.3 The Museum has the capacity to store, document, exhibit and manage the item

5.5.4 The donor can demonstrate clear legal title

5.5.5 The item is significant under the assessment criteria, including condition and provenance, and warrants inclusion in a permanent collection

5.5.6 Assessment substantiates the significance of the item in a statement of significance

6 **Acquisition Procedures**

6.1 A donor receipt form will be completed for objects submitted for possible acquisition.[3]

6.2 Where possible Council will request the donor to write down the history, associations, context and significance of the object they are donating. If there is no information this may indicate the object is of limited significance and should not be acquired.

6.3 Council will assess the significance of the item including a short statement of significance

6.4 If the item is approved for acquisition, a Gift Acknowledgement (Deed of Gift) form, with letter of acknowledgment, is sent to the donor. A copy is kept on the object file and in Council's Records System.

6.5 If the item is not accepted the item is to be collected or returned to the donor, noting the date of return on the receipt.

6.6 For items proposed for purchase, the cost will be evaluated against prices realised for comparable items, also considering condition, provenance and significance. In the case of major acquisitions a valuation may be commissioned.

6.7 Once an item is acquired it is registered in a bound accession register, numbered, described, photographed and catalogued. An object file is established to hold collection research and contextual information.

6.8 Council will maintain an index of donors with a list of items donated and their object numbers in Council's Records System.

7 **Deaccessioning Policy and Procedures**

7.1 Deaccessioning is the process of de-registering an object from the Collection for clearly stated reasons, and disposing of it in accordance with approved policies. Caution and transparency are essential in the deaccessioning process.

7.2 Deaccessioning recommendations are proposed by the Museum Adviser or Museum Manager.

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[3] The receipt book records the donor's name, address and contact details and a brief description of the item. The book has triplicate pages, the top copy is given to the donor, the second copy is kept with the item and later transferred to the object file if the item is acquired, and the third copy remains in the receipt book.

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7.3 To deaccession an object from the Collection, the item should be assessed against the museum's mission and purpose, the Collection Policy and themes, and the assessment criteria.

7.4 The criteria for deaccessioning include:

- Little or no significance – using the assessment process and criteria
- Poor condition and lack of provenance
- Duplication
- Inability to safely store and manage the object
- Lack of relevance to collection themes and policy
- Lack of relevance to the Museum's purpose

7.5 In exceptional circumstances, items may be deaccessioned where the object is of particular cultural significance and its return will support the maintenance and renewal of cultural traditions.

7.6 In rare cases items may also be deaccessioned and transferred to another museum of cultural institution where it has more relevance, or the institution is better able to care for the item. If transferring an item to another institution, it should be consistent with their collection policy and the organisation must have the capacity to manage and care for the item.

7.7 A short statement will be prepared indicating why the object is being deaccessioned

7.8 For items where there is debate about the merits of deaccessioning, a six month waiting period may be considered to allow for further debate or investigation.

7.9 Method of disposal:

- Return to the donor
- Transfer to another institution
- Destruction – send to the resource recovery centre
- Sale

7.10 Unless otherwise indicated, preference should be given to returning items to the donor, if known.

7.11 Council will note the reasons for deaccessioning in the register and catalogue and maintain records of all deaccessioned items.

7.12 No Council staff or volunteers may benefit, or in any way acquire objects that have been deaccessioned.

8   Loans

8.1 No objects will be accepted on indefinite or long term loan.

8.2 Loans may only be arranged for fixed periods and for specific purposes.

8.3 Before accepting any loans, Council will photograph and record a detailed description of the object's condition.

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8.4 All venues for inward or outward loans must provide safe environmental and security conditions for the item.

8.5 Inward loans are those objects or small exhibitions that may be borrowed from lenders (individuals or institutions) for a defined period. All inward loans need to be assessed on

- Transport costs and risks

- Display capacity of the Museum

- Condition of the object

- Capacity of the Museum to manage the loan

8.6 Outward loans are these loans where an object from the Museum Collection is lent for a defined period to another museum or organisation. All outgoing loans need to be assessed on:

- Transport costs and risks

- Display capacity, security and environmental conditions

- Condition of the object

- Capacity of the museum to manage the loan

8.7 All inward and outward loans will document in a formal loan agreement including a condition report, insurance, monitoring and duration of loan.

9 Exhibition and Education Policies

Council will

9.1 Provide well-researched, accurate and innovative exhibitions for visitors.

9.2 Offer programs that create opportunities for a high degree of community participation

9.3 Develop opportunities for interaction with local artists, writers, historians and community groups.

9.4 Collaborate where possible with other museums in the district and with libraries, galleries, heritage programs and community organisations.

9.5 Promote local heritage places, attractions and businesses where relevant

9.6 Develop strategies to ensure exhibition projects have long term benefits and a life after the exhibition has concluded, eg through publications and online exhibitions.

9.7 Work with local teachers to develop education programs and opportunities where possible

9.8 Develop a research and publication program as part of the Museum's Strategic Plan.

9.9 Explore opportunities to mark historical events, anniversaries, commemorations, and contemporary festivals and special events.

9.10 Develop a secondary education collection comprising objects of lower significance that may be used for demonstrations, hands on access and education activities.

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10   Management of the Collection

Council will

10.1   Provide appropriate training opportunities and resources to document and manage the Collection.

10.2   Regularly monitor the condition of the Collection.

11   Collection Linkages

- Orange Regional Gallery collection
- Local studies collection in the Orange City Library
- Orange and District Historical Society collection
- Other museums and historical societies in the district, including the Golden Memories Museum at Millthorpe
- Collections held by community organisations

12   Priorities and recommendations

12.1   Understand the collection scope in other museums in the district and consult with the Regional Museums Network on collecting plans and priorities

12.2   Where relevant acquire items for interpretation of the Wentworth Mine Site

12.3   Work with the community to record object stories and improve the documentation of local collections

12.4   Work with Orange, Cabonne and Blayney Councils on a sustainable collections plan for the region's collections

12.5   Identify appropriate storage and management arrangements before accepting items for the collection

12.6   Develop collaborative exhibitions and collection research projects

12.7   Seek recognition on the register of Cultural Organisation as public collecting organisation and tax deductible gift recipient status.