

# Wagga Wagga Art Gallery Collection Management Policy

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**Approval date:** 21 July 2025  
**Policy owner:** Manager Community Services  
**Next review:** September 2029

Wagga Wagga Art Gallery was first established in 1975 and is a cultural facility of Wagga Wagga City Council. Its programs are also supported by Create NSW, and other funding bodies. The Gallery's mission is to promote a rich and vibrant culture, dedicated to serving the widest possible audience as a centre of excellence for the collection, preservation, documentation, interpretation and display of Australian, including Aboriginal art, education and the exchange of ideas.

Wagga Wagga Art Gallery's collection has a particular emphasis given to the visual art of Australia in the medium of glass and print, the development of the collection is essential to ensure that the Gallery remains vibrant and engaging with contemporary audiences. The Collection Management Policy will guide the development, maintenance and care of Wagga Wagga Art Gallery's permanent collections (including the National Art Glass Collection and the Margaret Carnegie Print Collection).

## Purpose

This policy determines the parameters and guidelines for the acquisition, deaccession, and management of all artworks within the permanent collection of Wagga Wagga Art Gallery.

## Scope

This policy is to be applied to all artworks acquired by and accessioned into the Wagga Wagga Art Gallery permanent collection.

## Policy Provisions

### 1 Policy Statement

#### 1.1 Professional ethics

The Wagga Wagga Gallery recognises and supports National and international guidelines, procedures and associated documents including:

- Creative Australia, First Nations Cultural and Intellectual Property in the Arts, 2019
- Australian Government, Attorney General's Department, Ministry for the Arts, Australian best practice guide to collecting cultural material, 2015
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), 1973, as amended 1979 and 1983
- Museums Australia, First Peoples: Connecting Custodians (under review)
- ICOM, Code of Ethics for Museums, 2017
- Ministry for the Arts, Cultural Gifts Program guide, 2013
- Museums Australia, Code of Ethics, 1999 (under review)
- UNESCO, Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, 1970

These guidelines inform professional museum and gallery practices and cover the following areas of activity:

- acquires works of art that fit within the Gallery's collecting priority areas
- display of collection works
- deaccessioning of the collection
- avoids any act or omission that may compromise the Gallery's position and reputation for integrity in public administration.
- Supporting the moral and intellectual property rights of artists within our collection

#### 1.2 Acquisition

##### 1.2.1 Collection priorities

Wagga Wagga Art Gallery acquires artworks of the highest professional standard of national and regional significance, with a particular focus on collecting the work of Australian artists with a proven record of practice and development of their art form and who are represented in public collections.

The Wagga Wagga Art Gallery will acquire artworks that fill gaps and build upon strengths within the existing collections, including the development of a well-balanced representation of the work of individual artists, to create a comprehensive collection of modern and contemporary Australian artworks centred on Australian glass art and printmaking.

##### 1.2.2 Principles

The Art Gallery Director is responsible for the acquisition of artworks for inclusion in the Wagga Wagga Art Gallery's permanent collections, in consultation with the Manager, Community Services and Director Community.

The Gallery acquires artworks that fit within identified collecting areas and works are selected based on the significance of the artist and/or the specific quality of the artwork. All acquisitions are subject to Council's approved budget allocations.

The Gallery will ensure that all acquisitions are negotiated and managed on terms that are ethical, responsible, and visible to public scrutiny and will maintain the Gallery's reputation for collecting excellence both nationally and internationally.

In developing its collection, the Gallery will make every effort to ensure that it acquires artworks with valid title and established provenance and that are authentic. One or more of the following criteria are required for the selection of artwork into the permanent collection: The artist/s:

- are of significance within Australian art;
- are of significance within the medium or area of their practice;

The artwork:

- is considered an outstanding artwork by the artist
- is representative of the artist's practice
- is an outstanding artwork within the medium
- is relevant to the development of the Gallery collection areas
- the artwork builds upon existing areas and media with the permanent collection including glass, prints, painting, sculpture, digital and textiles
- the work is in good or excellent condition and is suitable for display purposes
- the Gallery's conservation and storage facilities are adequate for the care of the artwork
- for purchases, there is funding available for the purchase of the artwork for print and glass artworks
- the terms of donation or gift are acceptable (if the artwork is to be acquired by donation or gift)
- the work does not replicate works already held in the collection
- display of the artwork poses no public liability issues

All of the following criteria must be fulfilled for the selection of artworks will be selected for the Wagga Wagga Art Gallery's permanent collections:

- the vendor or donor must have legal title to the artwork
- the artwork must be legally unencumbered
- must be in good or excellent condition;
- consider whether to consult with individuals, groups or communities, where the cultural material may relate to them ie Aboriginal artworks.

### **1.2.3 Methods of acquisition**

The Wagga Wagga Art Gallery may acquire artworks for its collections by the following means:

- donation from individuals, groups or incorporated bodies;
- gift through the Australian Tax Office's Cultural Gifts Program;
- purchase through the Gallery's budget, fund raising, grants or sponsorship;
- bequests;
- transfer from other agencies;
- commission

## **1.3 Management and Care**

### **1.3.1 Accessioning process**

Immediately upon the physical receipt of artwork acquired by the Gallery, the artwork will be accessioned into the Gallery's collection database by a trained staff member.

The database entry upon accessioning must include the following details:

- accession number consisting of the year of acquisition (in full) followed by a number in chronological order of acquisition within that year (e.g.2012.1)
- artist name
- title and date of the artwork
- medium description
- measurement description
- condition report
- Deed of Gift (donations)
- inscriptions
- edition number (if the artwork is an editioned print)
- acquisition information (provenance, vendor or donor name, means of acquisition, date of acquisition)
- price or donation value
- location within the collection storage area
- photograph of the work sufficient for identification

The following details should be added to the database entry as soon as possible:

- high quality photograph of the work suitable for reproduction
- biographical and contact details of the artist
- description of the work
- copyright information and approval
- exhibition history
- external references
- relevant information for the installation and displays of the work
- artist's statement if available

### **1.3.2 Storage and access**

Artworks within the Gallery's collection must be stored in such a way as to ensure their preservation and conservation to the highest standards. All artworks not on display or on loan must be stored within the Gallery's collection storage area.

Artworks must be stored in the following ways at all times when not on display or being documented or cared for:

- glass and other three-dimensional works must be stored on shelves that have been lined with archival quality materials
- unframed prints and works on paper must be stored in solander boxes, phase boxes folders or lined with archival quality materials
- framed prints and other two-dimensional works must be stored on vertical racks
- textile works and other works made from sensitive organic materials must be wrapped in archival quality materials and stored on lined shelves or in solander boxes

Access to the collection storage area is generally restricted to trained Gallery staff solely for the purposes of documenting, researching, or caring for the collections. Other Council staff, or members of the public, may be allowed access when accompanied by trained Gallery staff for suitable purposes only. Small groups from educational institutions may be allowed access for educational purposes only when accompanied by trained Gallery staff.

### **1.3.3 Conservation and care**

Artworks within the Gallery's collections shall be maintained to the highest possible standard of conservation. Preventative conservation measures will be undertaken by staff trained to work with the collection, this includes archival packing, storage options, pest control and other preventative conservation measures. Conservation work required to maintain the condition of the artworks must be carried out by a professional conservator.

### **1.3.4 Display**

While on display, all artworks must be accompanied by a clearly legible label indicating the following details:

- name of the artist
- title and date of the artwork
- medium and measurement descriptions
- accession number
- credit line including the acquisition source

Further details and educational information may be included in labels where such information will add to the viewer's appreciation of the work in itself and within the context of the exhibition.

### **1.3.5 External loans**

Upon request from external collecting institutions for the short-term loan of artworks from the Gallery collections, the Art Gallery Director may approve such loans upon the following terms:

- a contract outlining the terms of the loan to be signed by both parties
- the term of the loan to be clearly defined
- costs of freight and insurance to be covered by the borrowing institution
- conditions of freight and display to be approved by the Gallery
- modification, repair or adaptation of the work by the borrowing institution shall not be permitted without prior approval by the Gallery

Long term loans to external institutions may only be approved by the Art Gallery Director in consultation with the Manager, Community Services and Director Community.

Loans of any duration to private individuals or external institutions other than collecting institutions (e.g. art galleries, museums, libraries or archives) shall not be considered or approved.

### **1.3.6 Internal loans**

Upon request, the Art Gallery Director may approve the loan of artworks from the Gallery collections to other divisions within Wagga Wagga City Council upon the following terms:

- consultation with Manager Community Services
- conditions of display to be approved by the Gallery
- the Gallery reserves the right to remove or replace the work with notice to the borrower
- the Gallery reserves the right to conduct regular inspections of the condition of the artwork

## **1.4 Deaccession and Disposal**

### **1.4.1 General principles**

The Art Gallery Director may recommend the deaccession of works of art from the permanent collections in order to improve the collections by:

- removing artworks determined to be unfit or inappropriate for the collections;
- reducing storage and conservation costs;
- rationalising, consolidating and focusing the collections; and
- generating income for further collection development.

As per standard museum and gallery practice, the physical disposal of a work of art is only recommended under extreme circumstances ie. following irretrievable damage or breakage.

Staff of Wagga Wagga City Council, Friends of the Gallery, Gallery volunteers, Councillors of Wagga Wagga City Council, or the families of these persons, are prohibited from acquiring any deaccessioned artwork.

Funds obtained from the sale of deaccessioned works of art will be applied exclusively to the purchase of other works, preferably for the same or related collection area.

### **1.4.2 Deaccessioning criteria**

Artworks that are recommended for deaccessioning must be assessed against one or more of the following criteria:

- lack of relevance to the collection
- poor condition or in a state of serious deterioration (not presentable for display)
- theft or loss or damage
- inferior example of an artist/s work
- erroneous inclusion in the collection
- repatriation of cultural property

### **1.4.3 Deaccessioning process**

Any proposal to deaccession a work of art will be initiated by the Art Gallery Director. A formal written recommendation including a description of the artwork and known history of its acquisition and subsequent care by the Gallery, the reasons for its deaccessioning, and the proposed method of disposal will be submitted to the Manager, Community Services and Director Community for approval.

Consideration will be given to any special conditions pertaining to its acquisition into the collection area. Only artwork to which the Gallery have clear legal title will be considered for deaccessioning.

#### 1.4.4 Disposal of deaccessioned artwork

Once the deaccessioning of an artwork has been approved by the Manager, Community Services and Director Community , it will be disposed of by one of the following processes:

- offered to the artist, or family representative if deceased
- sale through a reputable established dealer
- sale by public auction
- sale or exchange to another public gallery, museum or collection
- upgraded by exchange for a comparable artwork by the artist
- returned to the donor (note: not possible if donor received tax advantage ie through Cultural Gifts donation)
- donation to another institution
- destruction

Destruction of an artwork will be considered only if the artwork is damaged, inherently unstable, has deteriorated beyond repair. Wherever possible the artist will be informed beforehand of the Gallery's intention to destroy the artwork.

An official record of the deaccessioning and disposal of artworks from the permanent collection must be kept in Wagga Wagga Art Gallery collection management systems.

### Legislative Context

- NSW Local Government Act 1993

### Related Documents

- Council's Code of Conduct
- Council's Community Strategic Plan
- Council's Cultural Plan 2020-2030
- Council's Combined Delivery Program and Operational Plan
- Council's Wagga Wagga Art Gallery - Exhibitions Policy (POL 005)
- Museums Australia, Code of Ethics

### Definitions

Term	Definition
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander art	Means artwork by an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander artist or containing Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander themes or content.
Accession	This term refers to the mechanism by which an artwork is formally registered into a Gallery collection.
Acquisition	Means the process of obtaining valid title to an artwork through gifts, donations, purchase and subscription.
Artwork	This term refers to all works of a creative and visual arts nature produced by artists and/or craft workers.



Term	Definition
Council	Wagga Wagga City Council
Deaccessioning	Deaccessioning is the administrative process whereby an item is removed from the permanent collections of Wagga Wagga Art Gallery. It is distinct from disposal which is the physical act of disposing an item.
Director	Means the Art Gallery Director, Wagga Wagga Art Gallery
Collection	Means works of art in various media that are Gallery property and have been formally accessioned. The collection also includes other material acquired and accessioned by the Gallery for the purpose of research and enhancement of the collection, including: the - National Art Glass Collection and - Margaret Carnegie Print Collection
Deed of Gift	Means a formal, legally binding document that establishes that title to an artwork is given to the Gallery as a gift by the donor(s). The deed of gift also outlines the terms and conditions of the gift and its acceptance.
National Art Glass Collection	This term refers to artworks in the medium of glass within the permanent collections of Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, which were produced by Australian glass artists, glass artists working in Australia or contemporary artists working in the medium. Established in 1979, the collection surveys the studio glass movement in Australia from the 1970's to the present. As the most comprehensive public collection of Australian studio glass, it reflects diversity in style, subject and technique in contemporary practice. It is a continuous record of the glass community's achievements and evolution. The significance of the collection was acknowledged in 1992 when it was officially designated the National Art Glass Collection.
Margaret Carnegie Print Collection	This term refers to all artworks in the medium of printmaking within the permanent collections of Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, which were produced by Australian print artists or print artists working in Australia. In 1980, Margaret Carnegie AO OAM generously donated to the Wagga Wagga Art Gallery a collection of 120 contemporary Australian prints. Since 1980 the Wagga Wagga Art Gallery has shaped and developed the Margaret Carnegie Print Collection to provide a rich and representative overview of the development of contemporary printmaking in Australia from the 1960's to the present.
General Collection	Encompasses Australian art, regional artists and international artwork generally acquired through a donation or gift.



## Revision History

Revision number	Council resolution	Council meeting date
1	Res No: 87/347	23 February 1987
2	Res No: 03/238	24 March 2003
3	Res No: 04/243	23 August 2004
4	Res No: 09/077	27 July 2009
5	E Team	11 December 2012
6	Res No: 13/224.1	26 August 2013
7	E Team	19 January 2016
8	Res No: 17/279	Res No: 17/279
9	Review approval by General Manager under delegated authority	24 June 2021
10	Res No: 22/169	22 May 2022
11	Res No: 22/354	17 October 2022
12	Review approval by General Manager under delegated authority	24 June 2025
13	Res No: 25/215	21 July 2025