



Office for the Arts
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development,
Communications and the Arts

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The Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the consultations on a new National Cultural Policy.

CAUL is the peak leadership organisation for university libraries in Australia and New Zealand.. The collections in Australian university libraries are immensely significant. Around 49 million books, 4.6 million journals and 6.4 million other resources support research into the arts, humanities and other disciplines and support the education. These collections are fundamental to the arts in Australia and are the digital laboratories for the arts communities and the nation.

The rich collections include physical and digital content, Prime Ministerial libraries, printed materials, audio visual materials and archives. The significance of these collections can be seen in the recognition of some works in the UNESCO Memory of the World Register and their use. With around 288 million items accessed in 2020 they are the lifeblood of knowledge for universities and the wider community in Australia.

National Cultural Policy Submission

Council of Australian University Librarians

Submitted: On behalf of an organisation with arts-components (e.g. community organisation, tourism, venue, health, education etc)

**What challenges and opportunities do you see in the pillar or pillars most relevant to you?
Feel free to respond to any or all pillars:**

First Nations

Connecting Indigenous Australians to records of their history, their language and ensuring access to resources about Australian history is a vital action for the nation. Australian indigenous history, Collections in Australian university libraries and archives contain an extraordinarily deep range of material including unpublished archives and audio visual material within collections in universities. Much is not described or is in collections that are only described at a high level and the material relating to Indigenous Australia is invisible.

Unless the works are Identified collections and described the nation cannot understand our past and create a better future. In terms of an Arts policy recognising and funding initiatives are vital to support research and the arts in the broadest sense. A new infrastructure is required to share this information to enable a nation connected to its history and contributing to new creativity, education and research

A Place for Every Story

University Library and archive collections contain the stories of Australians. The diversity of these stories in our research collections needs to be accessible to all Australians. Within universities, institutional repositories increasingly store digital collections including theses and digitised content from collections, making these stories open to all. Investing in infrastructure to provide access to these collections together with funding for digitisation is critical to developing a successful approach to the arts.

The Centrality of the Artist

University libraries support creators through acquiring their works, fostering research that improves artistic practice and providing resources to support creators. Libraries celebrate their role as the creators of culture. Developments in copyright legislation are needed to improve the capacity of creators, in particular as researchers. The Exposure Draft of the Copyright Amendment (Access Reform) Bill contains reforms that should be adopted to improve this area.

Strong Institutions

The national cultural institutions have an extremely important role to play in providing support across the spectrum of institutions that sustain our arts and culture. The National Library's Trove service and underpinning infrastructure are essential to make collections visible and accessible. Increasingly collections need to be in digital form to be able to support the community, research and education. It is time to consider establishing a new ecosystem that would connect both the collections across the nation, provide for a new means of improving access through digitisation and enhance the arts across Australia through a national digital preservation approach to ensure that the material is not "lost".

Reaching the Audience

All Australians, wherever they are, should have access to library and archive collections. At present University libraries provide digital access where there is funding and have local exhibitions. An expanded travelling exhibition program that enabled these collections to be visible through local communities would both improve access for First Nations people and increase the knowledge of

those in regions. It is time to develop a more linked up approach that brings collections to the audience in a more accessible and cohesive way as a national infrastructure issue.

Please tell us how each of the 5 pillars are important to you and your practice and why. Feel free to respond to any or all that are applicable to you:

First Nations

CAUL places a high priority on this pillar with university libraries actively working with their communities to develop ways to make collections more accessible and visible.

A Place for Every Story

CAUL places a high priority on this pillar with university libraries actively developing collections of research and stories from a diverse community.

The Centrality of the Artist

CAUL places a high priority on this pillar with university libraries actively working to acquire collections and improve copyright legislation.

Strong Institutions

CAUL places a high priority on this pillar with university libraries actively engaging in national discussions with national institutions to improve collection development, collection access, preservation and knowledge of collections.

Reaching the Audience

CAUL places a high priority on this pillar with university libraries engaging individually to seek to improve access, particularly for regional Australians to collections..

Are there any other things that you would like to see in a National Cultural Policy?

Collections in university libraries are a critical part of the arts landscape. Building a new policy that recognises these collections and proposes an investment to provide a national approach that will enable these collections to be known, promote access to arts research, and improve in particular national services such as Trove, is timely and important.