

SCREENSOUND AUSTRALIA
THE NATIONAL SCREEN AND SOUND ARCHIVE

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

This Collection Development Policy is one of a series of complementary policies that cover access and public programs, collection development, distributed national collection, indigenous materials, international, preservation and professional standards. Further context for these policies and the practical implications for their implementation can be gained through studying our three-year Strategic Plan, which is reviewed and published annually.

This document should be read in conjunction with the Archive's Introduction to Policy Documents.

1. COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT AIMS

The Archive aims to develop a collection of audiovisual (including new media) and related materials of enduring cultural significance.

A film, recording or program may have many attributes (for example, information content, entertainment value, historical content, creative or artistic work, political or social content, or technical achievement). The Archive recognises all these aspects equally and aims to collect materials that will help achieve one (or more) of the collection development aims set out in the accompanying guidelines. The principal aims are to build a collection that is:

- (a) a history resource;
- (b) a cultural resource;
- (c) a record of Australian creative achievement; and
- (d) a reflection of the role and nature of audiovisual media.

2. OUR COLLECTION

The Archive has a unique mandate to build a representative collection of Australian audiovisual material and to preserve and make accessible this shared audiovisual heritage. In doing so:

- (a) We do not intend to duplicate the preservation or access activities of other institutions, here or overseas. However, we want to maintain a representation of international audiovisual culture of the past century that is not readily available from other national or local sources.
- (b) We will collect international material selectively, as resources permit, and not at the expense of Australian material. International material may include content with a particular Australian or regional association, influence or context; material strongly influential here that would otherwise not be accessible; or the holding of material in trust for the region.

3. KEY COLLECTING PRINCIPLES

The following principles will apply to all collection development decisions:

- (a) Primary collection priority and preservation will be given to Australian material and the avoidance of unnecessary duplication.
- (b) The collection should reflect the diversity of Australian life, including different regions and eras.
- (c) Indigenous Australian material, both current and retrospective, will be collected in collaboration with other archival organisations and with recognition of the significant cultural issues involved (see our Indigenous Materials Policy for more information).
- (d) The collection may include a tightly defined representation of international production to assist the Australian public in the appreciation and interpretation of both contemporary and heritage audiovisual culture. These aspects of the collection would be supported for access purposes only, as preservation remains the responsibility of the originating nation. Such collection building would be discrete from all aspects of our commitment and responsibility to our Australian priorities and would not be at their expense.
- (e) Material will only be added if it improves total collection quality (for example, by filling an identified gap or providing a better example).
- (f) To the extent that audio and visual information is able to be copied, content is the primary focus of collection development and management and is independent of the limitations of a particular medium, format or carrier. The importance of the carrier itself is also recognised, and best practice is observed in its preservation.
- (g) In partnership with other agencies, we will select and preserve ‘born digital’ material and websites relevant to the audiovisual industries in Australia.
- (h) Supporting material (including scripts, posters, stills other documentation, equipment and artefacts) will be collected where it is integral to understanding Australia’s audiovisual heritage.
- (i) Where appropriate, external experts may be used to assist, for example, in determining priorities and the significance of proposed acquisitions.
- (j) As an active partner in the development and management of the Distributed National Collection, we will be mindful of collections in other institutions when seeking out material for our own collection and will generally seek not to duplicate holdings (see our Distributed National Collection Policy for more information).

4. COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

The attached Collection Development Guidelines are a practical guide to implementing the Collection Development Policy and provide information about the Archive's collection development priorities at a broader level. The Deselection and Disposal section outlines the Archive's position on the removal of items from our Collection, and the Selection Matrix provides a guide to factors influencing the selection decision-making process.

More detailed information about the implementation of the Collection Development Policy can be found in the following related documents:

- (a) **Selection and Acquisition Procedures** documents provide information about how material is acquired and which formats are preferred. When making selection and acquisition decisions, material is sought in the condition, formats and quantities best suited to preservation or access purposes. Depending on circumstances, donation, voluntary deposit, off-air dubbing or purchase may be the preferred method. Donations will only be accepted upon confirmation of their relevance under the Collection Development Guidelines. The Archive may pay or recompense for goods or services, or (where appropriate) market artefact value (although it is rare for the Archive to purchase collection materials). However, it will not pay for the right to acquire or to make preservation copies, nor will it provide free storage at public expense without a compensating commitment by the depositor.
- (b) **Deselection and Disposal Procedures** documents describe how and why materials may be removed from the collection for example because duplicate copies are held, better copies have been acquired, copies are worn, outmoded or physically deteriorated or, in hindsight, the content may not merit retention, or are readily available from other sources. We will dispose of such items responsibly by a due and accountable process.

The Archive welcomes comments that will assist in the periodic review and refinement of this policy.