



National Trust of Queensland

POLICY

COLLECTIONS ACQUISITION AND DEACCESSION

JULY 2006

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National Trust of Queensland

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This document commenced in 1999 and was first approved by Council in 2002 for inclusion in the *Policy and Management Manual*. The policy was last updated in 2006.

This document should be read in conjunction with any Museum Plan or Interpretation Plan for a property.

## **1 Purpose**

The objectives of the National Trust laid down in the National Trust of Queensland Act are:

- (a) *The preservation and maintenance for the benefit of the public generally of land, buildings, furniture, pictures and other chattels of beauty or national, historic, scientific or architectural interest.*
- (b) *The protection or augmentation of the amenities of such land, buildings and chattels and their surroundings.*
- (c) *The access to and enjoyment of such land, buildings and chattels by the public.*

Within a context of ensuring sustainability for properties, the objectives and purpose of the Trust museum properties are:

1. To conserve properties and collections of cultural significance, including buildings and outbuildings, gardens and settings, associated furnishings, equipment and machinery, for the benefit of the general public.
2. To maximise public access to and use of properties and collections of cultural significance within the constraints of conservation requirements through public programs and appropriate media.
3. To educate and inform the public through the provision of appropriate conservation and interpretation.
4. To promote widespread interest and enjoyment in and understanding of buildings, interiors, their contents and settings in their social and cultural context.

This policy also generally serves to provide consistency across Trust properties for the collection of objects.

All National Trust collections should be fully catalogued and assessed for their significance.

## 2 Policy for the acceptance of objects

- 2.1 The Trust should only collect those objects that are relevant and consistent with the objectives and purpose of each property. There must be good provenance information available.
- 2.2 The following policy is in order of priority:
- (a) Material provenanced to a Trust property from first construction to the present day which will assist in the recreation and/or evocation of a culturally significant environment
  - (b) Objects which are not directly related to a Trust property but which will assist in the recreation and/or evocation of a culturally significant environment at a Trust property in accordance with the conservation and interpretation policies for that property
  - (c) Objects which are not directly related to a Trust property but which will assist in the installation of a thematic museum display at a Trust property in accordance with the conservation and interpretation policies for that property
  - (d) Material pertaining to any person, family or group who has a close association with a Trust property
  - (e) Material useful for comparative research or to broaden the comparative base of an established permanent collection, eg. archival material such as inventory documents, pictorial records of interiors, exteriors, gardens and families etc.
  - (f) Objects which will strengthen the collection areas in which the Trust has a current specialisation and recognised expertise, ie. Chinese history, gold mining history, domestic interiors, shops
  - (g) Replicas, reproductions and props used for interpretive or educational purposes which will help the public to understand some aspect of a Trust property and its collection
  - (h) Subject to individual museum plans and/or collection policy, material directly related to the district in which a Trust property is located
- 2.3 The Trust should not collect costume unless this can be used as props in Trust museums without damaging any intrinsic value of the costume
- 2.4 The Trust should not accept objects in poor condition or requiring conservation as gifts unless funds are made available for conservation.

### 3 Loans

3.1 The general guidelines for the Trust to manage loans are:

- (a) No material on loan should be entered into an accession register
- (b) All objects entering or leaving the collection on a temporary basis should be accompanied by appropriate documentation stating the responsibilities of both the lender and the borrower concerning the use, care, maintenance and insurance of the objects
- (c) A condition report should be prepared at the time of making or accepting a loan as the basis for determining appropriate responsibilities for the care and maintenance of an object and for resolving any dispute concerning damage to the object during the period of the loan. When a condition report is prepared any special requirements regarding environmental controls or travel should be stated
- (d) A time limit for the period of the loan should always be nominated

3.2 Short Term Loans

- (a) Short term loans should generally be associated with exhibitions or specific research projects
- (b) Objects entering the collection on short term loan should be listed in a short term loans register
- (c) The documentation required by the general guidelines should also be prepared.

3.3 Long Term Loans

- (a) Long term loans should generally be objects to be displayed in permanent room settings or thematic exhibitions
- (b) Long term loans should only be accepted for a fixed term which can be renegotiated on termination
- (c) Objects entering the collection on long term loans should be listed in a long term loan register, and documented as required in the general guidelines for loans.

### 3.4 Permanent and Indefinite Loans

- (a) Permanent and indefinite loans are not permitted
- (b) In cases where permanent loans already exist, consideration should be made to determine whether it is in the Trust's interest to continue the loan and to evaluate the options for managing the material on loan.

### 3.5 Loans to Accredited Bodies and Institutions

- (a) The Trust may lend to accredited bodies and organisations on a stipulated short or long term basis, provided that adequate care and conservation, insurance at current valuation and security are guaranteed and where it furthers the aims of the Trust or gains publicity for the Trust.
- (b) Loans from the Trust will be recorded in an outward register.
- (c) Documentation should be prepared as for the general guidelines.

## **4 Acquisition policy**

- 4.1 Objects may be acquired through gift, bequest, exchange, purchase, field collection or loan.
- 4.2 Gifts and bequests from individuals should be encouraged. These should be considered as unconditional outright gifts unless otherwise stipulated.
- 4.3 The Trust should only acquire objects if it can provide adequate resources and procedures for their documentation, care and conservation.
- 4.4 The Trust should not guarantee to exhibit any object, either now or in the future, which enters the permanent collection
- 4.5 All objects entering the permanent collection should be accompanied by a legal document transferring full title of ownership to the Trust, without restriction as to use, future disposition or deaccession
- 4.6 All objects entering the permanent collection should be listed in the register of the property at which they are to be located.
- 4.7 The Trust should document and retain records of accession for all objects acquired for its collection
- 4.8 The Trust should encourage maximum utilisation of its collection provided that the preservation of the objects is not compromised and their use is consistent with the overall goals and ethics of the Trust. It should be acknowledged that the deterioration and destruction of some objects may occur within the course of normal museum use. In this regard, the Trust should endeavour to obtain

supplemental materials, such as models or replicas to protect important and valuable items in the collection

- 4.9 The Trust should cooperate with other museums, conservation organisations, libraries and agencies with similar or overlapping interests and collection policies in order to avoid duplication to achieve an integrated plan for preservation and interpretation.

## 5 Deaccession Policy

- 5.1 The Trust should only deaccession objects if they meet at least one of the following criteria:
- (a) The object is outside the Trust's statement of purpose and its acquisition policy
  - (b) The object no longer meets the requirements of an Interpretation Plan for the place in which it is located, and is not original to the place.
  - (c) The object's provenance is unknown, and the object lacks significance.
  - (d) The object lacks physical integrity
  - (e) The object has failed to retain its identity or authenticity
  - (f) The object is a duplicate
  - (g) The Trust is unable to provide adequate care and conservation for the object
  - (h) The object has deteriorated beyond usefulness or requires conservation disproportionate with its significance
  - (i) The object is an isolated piece out of context with other holdings
  - (j) The object is dangerous or hazardous to the health or safety of staff, the public or the collection

## 6 Implementation

### Acquisitions

- (a) Acquisitions must be decided by a relevant committee, and must be in accordance with this policy. The current committees are the Townsville Branch, the Charters Towers Museum Steering Committee.

- (b) If a committee is not in place at a property, the staff must consult with the Director on the acceptance of objects.
- (c) Acceptance of bequests must be decided by the Council of the National Trust.

#### Deaccessions

- (a) The Council of the National Trust is the decision-making body in regard to deaccessions, unless it delegates any of that role to a committee or an individual.
- (b) Noting item 4.2 above, where objects were acquired or conserved with financial support from an outside source, disposal may require the consent of all parties who contributed to the purchase or controlled the bequest.
- (c) The disposal of deaccessioned objects may be by sale, donation or exchange with a recognised body or institution.
- (d) Material that cannot be disposed of by sale, donation or exchange may be destroyed. Cultural material should only be destroyed if the original donor cannot be traced and the Trust is unable to locate a suitable museum, public institution or similar body to accept the material.
- (e) In the past certain objects have been left at Trust properties with no provenance and no documentation on the donor. Such objects may have no significance and be in very poor condition. If this is the case, Council may delegate disposal of such material to a staff member.



NATIONAL TRUST

**Gift Acknowledgement Form**

***Gift to the National Trust of Queensland***

Donor: I/We.....  
of.....

(hereinafter called "the Donor") hereby give to the

***National Trust of Queensland, 95 William Street, Brisbane***

the goods and/or property described in the schedule below and do hereby:

1. Warrant that I am/we are the sole/joint owner/s of the goods and property in the schedule held by me/us free from all claims and encumbrances.
2. Give, convey, dispose and deliver to the National Trust of Queensland all my/our right title and interest in the goods and property in the schedule hereto, including rights of copyright, if applicable, to the National Trust of Queensland, absolutely.
3. Declare that this gift shall not be determined upon my/our death and shall bind my/our legal personal representatives.
4. Declare that this gift shall ensure for the benefit of the National Trust of Queensland, its successors and transferees in perpetuity.
5. Agree to the National Trust of Queensland selling the gift/s at any point in time for the benefit of the Trust.

Dated this .....day of.....20....

Signed by the Donor.....

In the presence of ....

.....  
Witness

.....  
Donor

**Schedule of Goods and property**  
(attach pages if necessary)