

**MU
SEA
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AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL
MARITIME MUSEUM

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

June 2024

Contents

1. Title.....	3
2. Introduction.....	3
3. The National Maritime Collection	3
4. What we collect.....	4
5. How we collect	5
A National Collection	5
Significance	5
Selective and balanced	6
Digital access.....	6
Open and inclusive.....	6
Whole of life commitment.....	6
Enriching the collection.....	6
Due diligence.....	6
6. Relationship with national and other collecting institutions	7
7. Deaccessioning objects from the National Maritime Collection.....	7
8. Relevant legislation, policies and guidelines	7
9. Exclusions	8
10. Policy Review and Approval	8

1. Title

Australian National Maritime Museum Collection Development Policy

2. Introduction

Australia is an island nation and our experience of the seas, rivers and lakes of the continent are at the heart of our national story. In so many ways, Australians are defined by their relationships to the oceans and inland waters of this land.

The nation's maritime heritage encompasses the stories of First Nations who have lived on the Australian continent for more than 60,000 years and the experiences of all who have come after and made this land their home. All these people have created a rich maritime legacy in which we share.

The Australian National Maritime Museum (the Museum) is Australia's museum of the sea. Established by an Act of Parliament in 1990, the Museum is the place where we can explore our connections to Australia's oceans and inland waters, and dive deeper into stories of where we have come from, who we are, and what we might be.

The Museum's mission is to collect and share stories about people, objects and events that enable us to know more about the nation's maritime history and heritage. We believe that these authentic and compelling collections are important to preserve, research, document and make accessible for all people.

Every object or story in the collection represents a journey, a passage across time and space, as much as travel across the seas. Our nation's journey began at the meeting place of land and sea - the coast - and is unending. Through journeys we come to know ourselves as we learn about the lives of others; so it is with the Museum. Our job is to create, interpret and amplify these reflections, to invite people to see themselves and their hopes, fears and joys in the multiple journeys of Australia.

3. The National Maritime Collection

The National Maritime Collection (the Collection) demonstrates the Australian community's long-term commitment to its tangible and intangible cultural heritage. The Museum specifically collects and preserves items, stories, images and cultural artefacts that document the traditions and achievements of all who have and continue to interact with the nation's waterways and surrounding oceans.

The Museum's foundation legislation, the *Australian National Maritime Museum Act* in 1990 (the Act), specifies that the Museum should 'develop, preserve and maintain the national maritime collection', which is defined as a 'national collection of maritime historical material' encompassing human, biological and geological history.

Objects and other items acquired for ongoing custodianship by the Museum constitute the National Maritime Collection, which now numbers more than 160,000 items. The ongoing development of this collection is the focus of this policy, although the Museum also maintains other collections, including a fleet of historic vessels, materials for educational programs and publications held by the Vaughan Evans Library.

Under the Act, the Museum's Council determines what 'maritime historical material that comes into the sole ownership of the Museum should be included in the national maritime collection'. The Council also decides which materials may be disposed of if they are no longer required or are unfit for the National Maritime Collection.

This Collections Development Policy is a high-level governance document that sits above the Museum's Collections Development Framework and Priorities. The Policy outlines criteria approved by our Minister that the Council uses to determine what is in the collection. Its decisions are also informed by the Museum's professional staff.

4. What we collect

The Museum's collecting activities are guided by six content pillars, or themes, which describe the breadth of Australia's maritime history and heritage. Each pillar deals with aspects of the nation's relationship to its oceans and inland waters and relates to focus areas of the National Maritime Collection.

The first content pillar relates to the histories and experiences of Australia's First Nations. We also seek to integrate First Nations perspectives in all that we do, ensuring that each of the other five content pillars includes objects and stories uniquely drawn from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The Collection is also home to artefacts detailing the maritime relationship between Australia and the USA, supported by a US Government gift to honour Australia's Bicentenary in 1988.

The six core content pillars of the Museum are:

- **First Nations**, focusing on the histories, knowledges and cultural experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- **Ocean Futures**, taking in marine science and technologies, marine conservation and sustainability;
- **Maritime Archaeology**, including the study of shipwrecks and underwater heritage sites;
- **Society and Water**, encompassing maritime trade, industries and tourism, and sport and leisure on water;
- **Migration and cultural diversity**, detailing the flows of people to and from Australia, from British colonisation to the successive waves of immigrants from the 18th century; and
- **Australia's role in the Indo-Pacific region**, incorporating the history of Australian naval ships and services, and the USA-Australia maritime relationship.

The Museum has established the concept of *Journeys* to promote common threads in

its storytelling across all six pillars. *Journeys* seeks to inspire audiences to understand and interact with Australia's maritime histories by exploring the motivations and challenges that unite multiple journeys across time and space, land and sea.

Object types and materials in the National Maritime Collection include cultural objects, boats, models, books, maps, paintings, photographs, sculptures and other works of art, archaeological artefacts, archival documents, oral histories, ship plans, records of intangible cultural heritage, digital video, and images. The Museum is committed to collecting items in the media in which they were created, including 'born digital and digitally embedded' objects.

5. How we collect

The Museum collects objects, materials and stories that are *nationally significant*, in line with its standing procedures and protocols. A series of acquisition principles describe how national significance is understood and detail a range of other key issues and obligations that must be addressed in acquiring material for the Collection.

Acquisitions are made by transfer from other public collections, by public and private donation, by purchase at auction and through private sale and through targeted commissions. While the Museum is grateful for offers of donation and sale, it reserves the right to refuse offers which do not meet its selection criteria or otherwise compromise its acquisition principles.

A National Collection

The National Maritime Collection is an expressly *national* collection. The Museum strives to document the nation's maritime history and experience by collecting objects and related information and stories that have national resonance. These stories may be universally recognised as 'national' in scope or public knowledge, or alternatively may be 'local' or 'personal' stories emblematic of key experiences or ideas in Australian life.

Significance

Fundamental to the Museum acquiring any object is its *significance*. In assessing an object's significance, the Museum is guided by industry standards, best expressed in *Significance 2.0*, published by the Collections Council of Australia. It defines significance as

the values and meanings that items and collections have for people and communities.¹

The primary criteria to assess the significance of objects are:

- Historic significance;
- Artistic or aesthetic significance;
- Scientific or research significance; and/or
- Social or spiritual significance.

¹ R. Russell and K. Winkworth, *Significance 2.0*, Collections Council of Australia, Adelaide, 2010, p.1

The Museum also considers each object's provenance (chain of ownership), rarity or representativeness, condition or completeness, and its interpretive capacity as secondary criteria.

Selective and balanced

The Museum holds extensive collections in certain fields but cannot represent every aspect of Australia's marine environments and heritage. Hence, its collecting is *selective* rather than *comprehensive*, and it chooses to focus on a range of maritime topics for future research, interpretation, and exhibitions. In doing so, it seeks to balance shorter-term operational needs with longer-term goals of building a strong and representative collection of Australia's maritime heritage for the future.

Digital access

The Museum is intent on ensuring all physical materials collected for the National Maritime Collection are digitised to promote access. Its collections development program will ensure it operates within nationally appropriate technical and ethical standards to create publicly available and useful digital records of collections and ensure 'born digital' collections are made available online.

Open and inclusive

The Museum is committed to ensuring that the National Maritime Collection is a collection for the people, open and accessible for research, exhibitions, and other programs. It aims to ensure the collection is reflective of Australia's culturally and linguistically diverse community, with the widest gender, age and geographical spread possible across Australia and its Territories.

Whole of life commitment

The Museum will only acquire collections and objects after it has considered the resources required for their assessment, cataloguing, digitisation, ongoing conservation, and safe storage. This evaluation includes determining the best medium for conserving the content and meaning of an object or other material and alternative sources of funds to support the proposed acquisition.

Enriching the collection

Developing the collection involves ongoing research and documentation. The Museum is committed to adding value to the National Maritime Collection over time by enhancing its knowledge and understanding of the objects, materials and stories that it acquires. This also ensures that the existing collection evolves and continues to grow in relevance and usefulness in any given age.

Due diligence

All objects formally acquired for the National Maritime Collection are assessed against several legal requirements, including the Commonwealth Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Act 1986 and the Underwater Cultural Heritage Act 2018. In addition, the Museum complies with the 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage, the 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the 1973 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), and the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property

in the Event of Armed Conflict. *The Museum also adheres to the requirements of the Protection of Cultural Objects on Loan Act 2013 to ensure it holds the fullest possible documentation for provenance, authenticity, and cultural and intellectual property associated with every object that comes into the Collection.*

6. Relationship with national and other collecting institutions

Other Australian Government bodies also hold objects relevant to Australia's marine environments, including the National Museum of Australia, National Library of Australia, Australian War Memorial, Royal Australian Navy Heritage Collection, Fleet Air Arm Museum, National Gallery of Australia, National Portrait Gallery, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Museum of Australian Democracy, National Archives of Australia, National Film and Sound Archive of Australia, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), and Australian Antarctic Division.

The Museum also acknowledges that there are other organizations and institutions around the country which collect materials related to maritime history and heritage. These institutions have their own collection strengths that contribute to the breadth and diversity of the entire national cultural heritage estate. Recognising the role of these bodies helps shape what the Australian National Maritime Museum chooses to collect, especially where the National Maritime Collection overlaps with other institutional collections. To that end, the Museum supports the work of the Distributed National Collections program of the Office of the Arts.

7. Deaccessioning objects from the National Maritime Collection

The development of collections is an inherently comparative exercise which requires review and re-evaluation of holdings over time. The Museum is committed to periodic review of the National Maritime Collection to ensure that it remains relevant and representative of national interests. Given that there are nearly 160,000 objects held in the Collection, the Museum recognises that over time some items and themes are no longer as relevant as they once were, or that better representative examples have been acquired in the intervening period. Moreover, some objects may become too fragile, degraded or hazardous to justify ongoing storage and preservation. Therefore, in line with the Museum's Act, objects deemed unsuitable to remain in the National Maritime Collection will from time to time be recommended to the Museum's Council for deaccessioning and disposal.

8. Relevant legislation, policies and guidelines

This Collection Development Policy is informed by the following legislation and guidelines:

- Commonwealth of Australia, *Australian National Maritime Museum Act 1990*
- Commonwealth of Australia, *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984*
- Commonwealth of Australia, *Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Act 1986*
- Commonwealth of Australia, *Protection of Cultural Objects on Loan Act 2013*
- Commonwealth of Australia, *Underwater Cultural Heritage Act 2018*
- Museums Australia Incorporated, *Code of Ethics, 1999*
- Museums Australia (Victoria), *Collection Policy Template, 2014*
- Collections Council of Australia Ltd, *Significance 2.0, 2010*
- International Council of Museums, *Code of Ethics for Museums, 2017*

- Australian Museums and Galleries Association, *10-Year Indigenous Roadmap*, 2018
- Ministry for the Arts, *Australian Best Practice Guide to Collecting Cultural Material*, 2015.

Internally, the Collections Development Policy relates to other policies and plans that govern aspects of the Museum's work. These include:

- The Museum's Strategic Framework 2023-27;
- The Museum's Corporate Plan 2022-25;
- The Reconciliation Action Plan 2021 -23;
- Collection Acquisition Procedures 2021;
- Provenance and Due Diligence Research Policy 2021-24;
- Provenance and Due Diligence Research Procedures 2021;
- Deaccession and Disposal Policy 2019-22;
- Collection Digitisation Strategy 2021 -24;
- Maritime Archaeology Policy 2019;
- Library Collection Policies 2004; and
- Bequest Procedure 2021.
- Council of the Australian National Maritime Museum, *Instrument of Delegation*, 2023

9. Exclusions

This Collections Development Policy relates to collecting activities undertaken to develop the National Maritime Collection. Separate policy and procedures govern the operations of the Museum's Historic Boat Fleet and its Education, Archival and Library Collections.

10. Policy Review and Approval

This document was approved by the Australian national Maritime Museum Council at Meeting #156 on 5 June 2024.

The document will be reviewed in seven years from the date of adoption. Where there are changes to statutory or other compliance obligations that necessitate a review outside of this biennial cycle, a review will occur as soon as is practicable after those changes take effect.

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COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

June 2024

Contents

1. Title.....	3
2. Background.....	3
3. Overview of the National Maritime Collection	3
4. Structure of the National Maritime Collection.....	4
5. Future Development	6
5.1 Assessment of collection and future development.....	6
5.2 First Nations – Indigenous Communities.....	6
5.3 Ocean Futures.....	7
5.3.1 Environment.....	7
5.3.2 Maritime Technology	8
5.4 Maritime Archaeology	8
5.5 Society and Water.....	9
5.5.1 Shipping, Trade and Industry	9
5.5.2 Travel, Tourism, Sport and Leisure	10
5.6 Migration and cultural diversity.....	10
5.6.1 Exploration and Colonisation	10
5.6.2 Immigration.....	11
5.7 Australia’s role in the Indo-Pacific region	12
5.7.1 Australian Naval History	12
5.7.2 USA-Australia Maritime Relations.....	13
6. Special collection opportunities	13
7. Collection media and object type	14
8. Documentation.....	14
9. Approval and review	14

1. Title

Australian National Maritime Museum Collection Development Framework

2. Background

The National Maritime Collection is the nation's premier record of its maritime history and heritage, encompassing a wide range of materials and information spanning thousands of years of human history on the Australian continent and its islands.

In essence, the Collection is an act of memory, reminding us that our relationships to the continent's seas and inland waters are fundamental to our lives.

The Framework is an operational document which:

- organises the Museum's collecting activities in a clear structure
- identifies collecting interests and priorities of the Museum for the interested public, the museum community and government
- provides a thematic framework by which Museum staff can assess offers of material, and
- provides a context for researching and developing the Museum's Collection.

The Collections Development Framework is a companion document to the Museum's Collection Development Policy and the Collection Development Priorities.

3. Overview of the National Maritime Collection

The *Australian National Maritime Museum Act 1990* established the legislative framework and protection for the National Maritime Collection. Since that time, the Museum has built a collection of more than 160,000 items of remarkable diversity.

The Collection now includes boats, models, books, maps, paintings, photographs, sculptures and other works of art, archaeological artefacts, archival documents, oral histories, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander objects and art, ship plans, digital video and images, and more. It also has a strong collection of materials representing the USA-Australia maritime relationship, courtesy of an endowment fund gifted to the Museum by the US Government to mark Australia's Bicentenary in 1988.

In building the Collection, the Museum recognises that it cannot be all things to all people, given its finite resources and other natural limitations. It also acknowledges that other institutions and organisations around Australia hold and develop important collections of maritime history and heritage. While the Museum aims to be broadly representative of the nation's maritime history in its collecting, it is necessarily *selective* in making new acquisitions.

In acquiring objects, the Museum seeks to balance the needs of its research, exhibitions and other programs with longer-term responsibilities to build a rich and purposeful collection to serve the nation's interests for all time. This means that the Museum continues to develop inherent strengths in the National Maritime Collection, while also collecting to address relative shortfalls or 'gaps'. Such an approach allows the Collection to grow and develop in a way that complements other major collections of the nation's heritage held elsewhere.

Development of the National Maritime Collection relies on two sets of criteria. An object under consideration for acquisition should have ***national significance*** and it should be ***thematically relevant*** to the work of the Museum. While both concepts are outlined in the related Collections Development Policy, this Framework focuses upon the Collection's strengths and weaknesses to address the Museum's thematic content pillars and identify areas for future development.

4. Structure of the National Maritime Collection

Collecting for the Australian National Maritime Museum commenced in 1986, well before the museum's building opened in 1991. A Collection Policy Review in 2011 categorised the museum's collections into 10 major focus areas:

- Australian Naval History
- Environment
- Exploration and Colonisation
- Immigration
- Indigenous Communities
- Maritime Archaeology
- Maritime Technology
- Shipping, Trade and Industry
- Travel, Tourism, Sport and Leisure.
- USA-Australia Maritime Relations

More recently, the Museum has adopted six content pillars to underwrite its collecting activities, research, exhibitions and other programs. These content pillars are:

- **First Nations**, examining the histories, knowledges and cultural experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- **Ocean Futures**, taking in marine science and technologies, marine conservation and sustainability;
- **Maritime Archaeology**, including the study of shipwrecks and underwater heritage sites;
- **Society and Water**, encompassing maritime trade, industries and tourism, and sport and leisure on water;

- **Migrations and cultural diversity**, detailing the flows of people to and from Australia, from British colonisation to the successive waves of immigrants from the 18th century; and
- **Australia’s role in the Indo-Pacific region**, incorporating the history of Australian naval ships and services and the USA-Australia maritime relationship.

While the *First Nations* content pillar includes the collection focus area of Indigenous communities, the Museum is committed to integrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and experiences in all content pillars. It collects objects and stories to amplify the place of First Nations in every aspect of the museum’s work.

To aid clarity and transparency, this Framework makes explicit the links between focus areas and content pillars. Hence, each collection focus area relates to one of the content pillars listed above.

CONTENT PILLAR	COLLECTION FOCUS AREAS
First Nations	Indigenous communities
Ocean Futures	Environment Maritime Technology
Maritime Archaeology	Maritime Archaeology
Society and Water	Shipping, Trade and Industry Travel, Tourism, Sport and Leisure
Migration and cultural diversity	Exploration and Colonisation Immigration
Australia’s role in the Indo-Pacific region	Australian Naval History USA-Australia Maritime Relations

The overarching narrative concept of *Journeys* has been developed as a unifying principle for the Museum’s collections and content programs. The *Journeys* concept connects the content pillars and collection focus areas, ensuring they do not become isolated silos. *Journeys* will also speak directly to audiences and motivate them to learn about our relationship to the oceans and inland waters, revealing the common threads of multiple journeys – materially and metaphorically – across the maritime world.

5. Future Development

5.1 Assessment of collection and future development

The National Maritime Collection's current holdings in each collection focus area were analysed according to two sets of criteria:

- an assessment of the Collection's existing strengths (coded 0-4), and
- potential for future acquisition (coded 0-4).

Definition of codes

Collection strength

0 = out of scope for current CDP period or closed collection

1 = minimal level, outline of subject only represented

2 = basic level, introduces and defines a subject

3 = study level, adequate for exhibition and program purposes

4 = representative level, distinctive collection strength, for all purposes

Development potential

0 = out of scope for current CDP period or closed collection

1 = exceptional acquisitions only

2 = occasional acquisitions

3 = regular acquisitions

4 = active priority with regular acquisitions

5.2 First Nations – Indigenous Communities

The Museum holds one of the world's premier Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander maritime collections. This contemporary collection represents our long-term policy of ethical and collaborative creation, acquisition and custodianship of cultural and creative works associated with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander relationships with the nation's coast and waterways. There is a strong focus on sculptural and ceremonial objects, in addition to tools, attire and traditional and figurative graphic works. The Bardi dance objects (Ilma) collection, Yolngu saltwater bark paintings and Blue Mud Bay Sea Rights Flag are all highly significant materials entrusted to the Museum. Some of the objects in this collection have restricted access in line with relevant lore, custom, the creators' wishes and best practice approaches to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement.

Development potential

Areas for acquisition include historical records of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and watercraft, as well as graphic and photographic materials. At the request of recognised and authorised community representatives, selected acquisition of

pre-contact and archaeological objects may also be collected. Where appropriate, proactive recording of performances and practices can document and preserve knowledge and customs, while targeted acquisitions will help ensure that language groups from around our continent are suitably represented. Where possible, items will be purchased directly and/or commissioned from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and commercial entities, such as art centres.

Object type	Collection strength	Development potential
Vessels	3	3
Models	3	3
Photographs	1	3
Paintings, drawings and sculpture	3	2
Printed matter and manuscripts	1	3
Clothing and textiles	2	2
Animal artefacts	2	3
Miscellaneous	0	2

5.3 Ocean Futures

5.3.1 Environment

At present, this area is not well represented in the National Maritime Collection. Areas of existing strength include artefacts derived from marine life (especially scrimshaw and shark teeth) and the Valerie Taylor photographic collection.

Development potential

Reflecting a strong audience interest in sustainability issues, there are many areas for potential growth in this focus area. They include the histories of our use and understanding of inland waterways, drought and floods, ocean pollution and acidification, natural history and biology, oceanography and ocean science, ecosystems and habitat monitoring, popular representations and protest materials, research vessels and expeditions.

Object type	Collection strength	Development potential
Vessels	2	1
Models	1	3
Photographs	1	3
Paintings, drawings and sculpture	1	3
Printed matter and manuscripts	1	4
Clothing and textiles	1	2
Animal artefacts	2	1
Miscellaneous	0	2

5.3.2 Maritime Technology

This focus area incorporates texts, plans and models of vessels and associated maritime technologies. It includes a representative selection of maritime art, navigational equipment, shipwright's tools, underwater breathing apparatus, small craft and technical models. Notable inclusions are the Rod and Valerie Taylor collection of diving and underwater photography equipment, Ben Lexcen's drafting materials and plans, and ocean science instrumentation donated by CSIRO.

Development potential

The objects in this focus area should be re-allocated to other focus areas, notably Environment, Maritime Archaeology, and Shipping, Trade and Industry. This re-allocation process will occur in the Museum's collection management system over 2024–26.

Object type	Collection strength	Development potential
Vessels	1	0
Models	2	0
Photographs	1	0
Paintings, drawings and sculpture	1	0
Printed matter and manuscripts	3	0
Clothing and textiles	2	0
Coins, medals and metal artefacts	2	0
Animal artefacts	1	0
Miscellaneous	0	0

5.4 Maritime Archaeology

This collection comprises a considerable number of artefacts recovered from underwater cultural heritage sites, particularly material culture from the *Batavia*, *Vergulde Draeck*, *Zeewijk*, *Zuytdorp* and MV *Sanyo Maru* shipwrecks (noting that the museum's HMB *Endeavour* and *Dunbar* artefacts are categorised elsewhere). Coins, weapons, construction materials and elements of attire predominate in the assemblage. The collection also includes a small number of documentary records and images relating to shipwrecks.

Development potential

The Museum may add highly significant objects and/or small assemblages of artefacts recovered from future surveys and excavations, in line with relevant legislation and permits. Additional collecting areas include primary sources related to wreck events, particularly 19th-century commercial vessels, 20th-century naval vessels, aircraft and submerged Indigenous cultural sites. Objects and recollections of the development of maritime archaeology in Australia, including oral or video interviews, are also sought.

Object type	Collection strength	Development potential
Photographs	1	3
Paintings, drawings and sculpture	1	2
Printed matter and manuscripts	2	3
Clothing and textiles	1	2
Coins, medals and metal artefacts	3	2
Animal artefacts	1	2
Miscellaneous	0	2

5.5 Society and Water

5.5.1 Shipping, Trade and Industry

Based on the number of objects, this is the largest focus area in the National Maritime Collection. Its scope is accordingly broad, including maritime art, models, plans, photographs, apparel, flags, tools, and considerable quantities of ephemera and shipboard material culture (primarily 20th century). Additional primary sources include logbooks, business records, individual documents and diaries. Highly significant elements include the Cape Bowling Green Lighthouse, Sydney Cove anchor chain, Samuel J Hood Photographic Studio collection of Sydney Harbour shipping, McIlwraith McEacharn corporate collection and the Maritime Union of Australia's 'Wharfies' mural.

Development potential

This collecting area is comprehensive in scope and future acquisitions will be highly selective. Areas of interest include pre-1880 and post-1980 shipping and port infrastructure, national representation of ports, sovereign shipbuilding enterprises, tugs and barges, ferry services, inland navigation, small working boats, indentured workers, maritime worker collections and oral histories, quarantine and customs, coastal signals and radio, search and rescue operations, and flying boats.

Object type	Collection strength	Development potential
Vessels	1	1
Models	4	2
Photographs	4	1
Paintings, drawings and sculpture	3	1
Printed matter and manuscripts	3	2
Clothing and textiles	4	1
Coins, medals and metal artefacts	4	1
Animal artefacts	3	1
Miscellaneous	0	2

5.5.2 Travel, Tourism, Sport and Leisure

This focus area was a major priority in the initial decades of the Museum, and the collection is consequently extensive. It includes a considerable number of vessels and recreational watercraft, plus associated equipment, trophies, regalia, apparel, ephemera, photographs, publication cuttings, club records, oral history recordings, and vessel plans and calculations. Strongly represented fields include coastal tourism, beach culture, surf lifesaving, sail racing, the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race, and selected Olympic Games. Significant elements include America's Cup materials, equipment from *Blackmore's First Lady*, swimming costumes, beach culture, Lou d'Alpuget correspondence and publications, P&O promotional imagery, and the Andrews, Hall, Nossiter, Purcell and Stannard photography collections.

Development potential

Although already a large collection, there remain many areas worthy of further development including rowing, surfing, windsurfing, water skiing, snorkelling, spearfishing, angling, Pacific tourism and cruising, post-1970 coastal and lake tourism, music, families and toys, learn to swim programs, water safety and drownings, wider national representation, and a more comprehensive representation of Olympic Games and Australian Sailing Hall of Fame materials.

Object type	Collection strength	Development potential
Vessels	3	1
Models	3	2
Photographs	4	1
Paintings, drawings and sculpture	3	2
Printed matter and manuscripts	4	1
Coins, medals and metal artefacts	3	1
Clothing and textiles	4	1
Animal artefacts	2	1
Miscellaneous	0	2

5.6 Migration and cultural diversity

5.6.1 Exploration and Colonisation

The Museum's main holdings in this area comprise published accounts (often rare editions in English and other languages), maps and lithographs. Other notable strengths include Indonesian/Makassan maritime artefacts, models, navigational instruments, archaeological artefacts from VOC wrecks including the *Vergulde Draeck and Batavia*, and an anchor and ballast from HMB *Endeavour*. Several sets of Antarctic photographs also create a coherent base for a more comprehensive survey of this topic.

Development potential

The exceptional objects in the Museum’s collection, such as the Blaue globe and the Charlotte Medal, can be enhanced by targeted, high-significance colonial acquisitions such as pre-1800 maps, colonisation manuscripts and artworks, and convict artefacts. Additional areas of value include relics of early maritime infrastructure, anti-transportation literature, non-English 19th century accounts of Australia and the Pacific, missionary objects and archives, and Antarctic research manuscripts and artefacts which also relate to the ‘Environment’ focus area.

Object type	Collection strength	Development potential
Vessels	3	0
Models	3	1
Photographs	2	3
Paintings, drawings and sculpture	2	3
Printed matter and manuscripts	3	3
Coins, medals and metal artefacts	3	2
Clothing and textiles	1	3
Animal artefacts	1	2
Miscellaneous	0	2

5.6.2 Immigration

This area has been a major collecting focus for the Museum throughout its history. It incorporates a variety of primary and secondary sources, particularly in post-1945 immigration. The manuscript collection is rich and varied, albeit primarily written in English. There is a very strong selection of imagery (original and reproductions), material culture (personal and corporate), ephemera and apparel. Specific collections of note include the *Dunbar* shipwreck material, Oskar Speck’s life journey, the P&O publicity collection, and replacement objects that represent the refugee voyage aboard *Tu Do*.

Development potential

Pre-1850s immigration artefacts and manuscripts would be welcome, as would any 19th century objects representing non-British immigrant cultures, shipboard publications, the shift from maritime to airborne voyaging, the diversity of ports of arrival, the intergenerational maintenance of immigrant identities and cultures, refugee and asylum seeker experiences (including refusal or deportation), prisoner of war and enemy alien experiences, the role of religious communities in facilitating immigration, artistic responses to cultural heritage, correspondence linking immigrants with their homelands, immigrants who returned home or subsequently emigrated outside of Australia, and communities not well represented in the collection.

Object type	Collection strength	Development potential
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Vessels	2	2
Models	3	2
Photographs	3	1
Paintings, drawings and sculpture	3	1
Printed matter and manuscripts	3	3
Coins, medals and metal artefacts	4	1
Clothing and textiles	4	1
Animal artefacts	2	2
Miscellaneous	0	2

5.7 Australia's role in the Indo-Pacific region

5.7.1 Australian Naval History

In conjunction with the Australian War Memorial, Royal Australian Navy Heritage Collection and Fleet Air Arm Museum, the Museum is a repository for the artefacts and stories of the Royal Australian Navy and its predecessor naval defence forces. This collection was vigorously built up in the Museum's first decades and has strengths in maritime art and lithographs, apparel, personal weapons, heraldry, ceremonial artefacts, models, photography to 1945, HMAS *Sydney* (I) and SMS *Emden*, MV *Krait* and Operation Jaywick. It is also home to three naval vessels, HMAS Vampire, Onslow and Advance.

Development potential

There is scope to build the collection in ships' logs and working charts, diaries (particularly of ordinary sailors), anti-blackbirding activities, the merchant navy, troop transports, amphibious operations, humanitarian missions, naval aviation, ISTAR (intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance) capabilities, enemy naval materials, Cold War and subsequent deployments (especially submarines), the HMAS *Voyager* (II) tragedy, hydrography, Antarctic deployments, interceptions of suspected irregular entry vessels, female and Indigenous naval personnel, gallantry awards, and personal stories and objects representing the families of naval personnel.

Object type	Collection strength	Development potential
Vessels	3	1
Models	3	2
Photographs	3	2
Paintings, drawings and sculpture	2	2
Printed matter and manuscripts	2	4
Coins, medals and metal artefacts	3	1
Clothing and textiles	3	1
Miscellaneous	0	2

5.7.2 USA-Australia Maritime Relations

In recognition of the shared maritime histories of our two nations, the Museum was endowed with a Bicentennial Gift by the United States Government in 1988. This fund has supported the collection of a wide range of materials, including maritime artworks, whaling, the gold rushes, clipper ships, US-Australian defence relations (notably the 1908 visit of the Great White Fleet), apparel, surfing, beach culture and yacht racing (particularly the America's Cup and the Sally Samins photographic collection).

Development potential

This collection is reasonably strong overall, but targeted collecting could be undertaken in the interlinking of US independence and the British decision to colonise New South Wales, 19th century slavery and labour trade, the floating museum vessel 'Convict Ship *Success*', 20th century Pacific tourism (especially shipboard diaries), post-1945 (especially post-Cold War) defence relations, scientific endeavours, commercial and technological exchanges, and the transition from maritime to aviation transport across the Pacific Ocean.

Object type	Collection strength	Development potential
Models	2	2
Photographs	4	2
Paintings, drawings and sculpture	3	2
Printed matter and manuscripts	2	3
Coins, medals and metal artefacts	3	2
Clothing and textiles	3	1
Animal artefacts	2	1
Miscellaneous	0	2

6. Special collection opportunities

The Collections Development Framework provides a structure and outlines priorities for future collecting activities but should not be seen as wholly prescriptive. Objects or collections may be offered to the Museum from time to time that do not fit easily within the Framework but are of such intrinsic cultural worth or high value that they should be considered for acquisition to the National Maritime Collection.

7. Collection media and object type

The Museum's approach to collection media is set out in its Collections Development Policy. It will collect physical objects, ephemera, images, documents, born digital material and records of intangible cultural heritage for the National Maritime Collection.

8. Documentation

Statements of Significance are prepared for all acquisitions proposed for the National Maritime Collection. These Statements establish the argument for the subject's national significance and its relevance to one or more content pillar and collection focus areas.

9. Approval and review

The Collection Development Framework was approved in June 2024.

The Collection Development Framework will be reviewed five years from the date of its adoption.

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COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES 2024-2026

June 2024

Contents

1. Title.....	3
2. Background	3
3. Operational Context.....	3
4. Collecting Priorities	4
First Nations.....	4
Oceanic exchanges in the 19th century.....	5
Inland marine environments.....	5
Ocean science and health	5
Contemporary immigrant and refugee experiences	5
Australia and the Indo-Pacific.....	6
Significant vessels and destination objects.....	6
Deaccessioning.....	6
5. Approval and Review	6

1. Title

Australian National Maritime Museum Collection Development Priorities 2024-2026

2. Background

The National Maritime Collection is an active, dynamic collection that is developing all the time. Like all museum collections, it is maturing and becoming more complex and compelling with every acquisition that it makes.

Since collecting began, the Australian National Maritime Museum has acquired a diverse range of materials and records that details the breadth and extent of maritime history and heritage in Australia. The Museum seeks to balance its longer term aims for the Collection with shorter-term operational requirements in any given period.

This document outlining the collecting priorities for 2024-26 is the third in the Collections Development suite and complements the Collections Development Policy and Framework. The Museum's collecting priorities emerge from review of the development areas outlined in the Framework, with an emphasis on the operational needs of the institution over the coming three years.

3. Operational Context

As a Federal Government agency, the work of the Australian National Maritime Museum is informed by the National Cultural Policy, *Revive: A Place for Every Story, a Story for Every Place*. *Revive* places storytelling at the centre of the nation's cultural life. Moreover, the policy's five pillars, *First Nations First, A Place for Every Story, Centrality of the Artist, Strong Cultural Infrastructure* and *Engaging the Audience*, demonstrate the key interests of Government and the wider community.

The Museum's *Strategic Framework 2023-27*, is informed by *Revive* and emphasizes four key areas of focus for the institution:

Storytelling and Voice, putting visitors at the heart of all programming, reworking a gallery to tell 'shaped by sea' stories, celebrating the migration story and integrating First Nations stories in all activities;

Research, knowledge and education, leveraging content linked to schools' curriculum, developing research partnerships, maximising impacts and opportunities and strategically refining the collection to tell stories and preserve cultural memory;

Collaboration and thought leadership, collaborating strategically to maximise impact, creating platforms for visitors' voices, developing a framework for measuring impact and attracting highly motivated and capable people to our team; and

People, Site and Systems, investing in a staged masterplan to develop and make accessible our story, upgrading visitor amenities, establishing fit for purpose organisational infrastructure, developing a capacity to generate funds, and employing effective systems that enable us to do our best.

While each of these strategic priorities will influence the next three years of the Museum's collecting activities, the first two – *Storytelling and Voice*, and *Research, Knowledge and Education* – require particular attention. It is clear the Museum needs to focus on collections which tell strong stories, especially in content pillar areas of *First Nations*, *Ocean Futures* and *Migrations*.

At the same time, the Museum will maximise the value of its Collection through research partnerships, nationally and internationally, and schools' programs, online and onsite. Supporting digital acquisition, as well as digital access to collections, will also be important, given the current societal revolution underway in emerging digital tools and communications technologies.

To deliver on its five-year Strategic Framework, the Museum has established a new *Journeys* project to create greater continuity in storytelling across its content pillars and collection focus areas. *Journeys* seeks to inspire audiences to understand and interact with Australia's maritime histories by exploring the motivations and challenges that unite multiple journeys.

In truth, the oceans are both a pathway and a moat. It is the Museum's job to examine this reality and communicate it to visitors to enhance a shared understanding. We do this as a place people trust, as a site where challenging – though ultimately unifying – discussions can be held, where multiple viewpoints are encouraged. To do this, we pose fundamental questions: when we look out to sea, what is reflected? What do we see of ourselves and our community? What unites us, what challenges us?

The *Journeys Project* will prompt these questions -- and many more -- by harnessing the power of storytelling across the Museum's permanent galleries and exhibitions. It will establish narratives of journeys across the Museum, harnessing the power of storytelling to connect permanent galleries, exhibitions and other programming. In emphasizing the power of objects to tell stories, the project will have a clear impact on the collecting activities of the Museum over this period.

What follows are collecting priorities for the next three years, shaped by the existing strengths and opportunities of the National Maritime Collection and the Museum's operational environment outlined above. They have been developed after the recent review of development opportunities for the Collection outlined in the Framework and informed by the policy emphasis on *national significance*.

While these priorities will determine much of the Museum's collections development work over this period, they do not preclude collecting high value, 'destination' or special acquisitions which may be identified from time to time. Such opportunities are rare, and the Museum must retain the capacity to respond as appropriate in these cases.

4. Collecting Priorities

First Nations

The Museum holds a strong collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sculptural and ceremonial objects that speak to their long and complex cultural connections to the seas and inland waters of the continent. Areas for acquisition include historical records and photographs of people, communities and watercraft, works of art and customary artefacts, and materials detailing the history of key land and sea claims around the continent. Where possible, and with the interest of the

communities, the recording of intangible cultural heritage related to the oceans and inland waters, such as performances of dance, song and story are essential. The Museum seeks to acquire materials from communities across the country, not limited by geographical area. Also, the Museum recognises that acquisition of First Nations material should be undertaken through co-working and collaborative exercises, and where possible a cultural and/or financial dividend should be returned to partner communities.

Oceanic exchanges in the 19th century

Throughout the 19th century, numerous cultures came into contact in the Indian and Pacific Oceans via maritime commerce, colonialism and military operations. The Museum will acquire objects, manuscripts, images and published accounts that depict these encounters, including items in languages other than English. These sources help us better understand the maritime world of the Australian colonies before 1901 and their place in global trade. Specific interests include the growing European presence in the Pacific after 1840, naval and commercial competition, missionary activities, the introduction of new technologies and infrastructure, harvesting of natural resources, indentured labour and anti-blackbirding practices.

Inland marine environments

Although the Museum holds some impressive Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal objects related to our lakes and inland waterways, overall, these environments are not well represented in the National Maritime Collection. The Willandra Lakes (including Lake Mungo), Murray-Darling River system and the Snowy Mountains Hydroelectric Scheme are barely represented. Nor are issues of water scarcity, conflict over water resources, irrigation, flooding, inland navigation and commerce, or recreational use of rivers and lakes. As a national museum, we will connect with a far larger proportion of our population by building a cross-sectional collection in all these areas.

Ocean science and health

The Museum has built a representative collection of marine science artefacts, primarily via our relationships with CSIRO and the Defence Science and Technology Group. Looking forward, we anticipate strong audience demand for expertise, collections and exhibitions in the areas of ocean science and sustainability. It is also the case that contemporary issues, such as climate change and environmental loss and degradation, should also be represented in the Collection.

This priority area will entail working with external partners to document recent and emerging technologies for acquisition. It will also include collecting materials related to commercial and community engagement with the blue economy and national sustainability priorities, in line with the Museum's commitment to the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development over 2021–30.

Contemporary immigrant and refugee experiences

The Museum retains significant relationships with many communities of immigrant heritage, as expressed through the National Monument to Migration. However, immigration and refugee experiences since 1990 have rarely involved a waterborne voyage to Australia.

Our collecting focus will therefore expand to include the exploration of what it has meant for recent immigrants and refugees to build a new life and community over the seas from their original

homeland. As a contemporary issue, this priority will involve developing the resources to collect and preserve born-digital objects, including online expression and social media content.

Australia and the Indo-Pacific

Australia's relations with its Indo-Pacific neighbours are at the forefront of its geopolitical interests. The impacts of climate change are already being felt across the region, from which Australia draws large numbers of migrants and guest workers. In addition, it is a region that is of growing interest geopolitically, where national interests intersect in maritime environments.

Collecting in this area should support key regional themes including natural resource husbandry, the impacts on people and infrastructure of rising seas in the Pacific and changing security alliances and the preservation of unique cultural traditions threatened by modernity. Moreover, it is an area for contemporary collecting that would also allow for innovative partnerships and collaborations to be struck with like organisations across the region.

Significant vessels and destination objects

In 2021, the Museum gratefully accepted the replica 1606 Netherlands East Indies vessel, *Duyfken*. This sailing vessel complements the existing collection of historic and replica voyaging craft, from Indigenous watercraft to a recreation of *HMB Endeavour*. The Museum is also home to three Australian Naval vessels, *Vampire*, *Onslow* and *Advance*.

Except for the pearling lugger *John Louis* and the Carpentaria lighthouse ship *CLS4*, working vessels such as tugs, ferries, coastal steamers and work boats are not well represented in the Collection. A significant research vessel would also complement the Museum's floating assets if suitable berthing, maintenance and operational funds accompanied the acquisition. The Museum should also continue to seek out vessels, small craft and artefacts that highlight Australian innovation.

At the same time, the Museum recognizes it would benefit from identifying and acquiring 'signature' and/or highly significant objects that are destination objects in their own right. While such objects are generally costly and dependent on adequate financing, making this a priority for future acquisition will help realise the ambition of the Museum's Strategic Framework, with its emphasis on visitor-focused programming and strong public engagement.

Deaccessioning

The Museum's Strategic Framework indicates that a deaccessioning program is required to 'strategically refine our collection to tell stories and preserve cultural memory'. Therefore, a collecting priority for this period is to review collection holdings which may no longer be required for the Museum's operational needs, and which no longer meet the criteria established for *national significance*. Subject to funding, the Museum will undertake a collections review and propose materials for deaccessioning and disposal – after consultation and in line with its legislation – to ensure that the National Maritime Collection is purposeful, and that Museum resources are not expended in storing and maintaining objects that are no longer regarded as relevant to its mission.

5. Approval and Review

The Collection Development Priorities were approved in June 2024.

The Collection Development Priorities will be reviewed three years from the date of their adoption.