



**NFSA RESPONSE TO  
DISCUSSION PAPER  
ON THE NATIONAL  
CULTURAL POLICY**

**NATIONAL  
FILM  
& SOUND  
ARCHIVE**

A U S T R A L I A

**Front cover image acknowledgments**  
**Clockwise far left to right**

NFSA research fellow Matt Cornell breakdancing at the NFSA, Canberra  
Courtesy of *The Canberra Times* and Marina Neil

Still from *Gallipoli* (Peter Weir, 1981)

*The Story of the Kelly Gang* (1906) montage

'Les Fleurs Animées' (Pathé, France, 1906, 'Living Flowers') NFSA: 717497

Angus Young, AC/DC

National Cultural Policy  
Office for the Arts  
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet  
PO Box 6500  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

*By email: [culturalpolicy@pmc.gov.au](mailto:culturalpolicy@pmc.gov.au)*

Dear Sir/Madam

**NFSA SUBMISSION ON OFTA DISCUSSION PAPER  
NATIONAL CULTURAL POLICY**

Following is the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia's (NFSA) response to the discussion paper on the National Cultural Policy. The response represents the views of the Board and Chief Executive Officer.

If you have any questions about this submission, please contact  
Bronwyn Coupe, Collection Access Manager by phone on 02 6248 2042 or by email at  
[bronwyn.coupe@nfsa.gov.au](mailto:bronwyn.coupe@nfsa.gov.au).



Michael Loebenstein, Chief Executive Officer, NFSA



Chris Puplick AM, Chair NFSA Board



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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As Australia's premier audiovisual collecting institution the National Film and Sound Archive plays a key role in documenting, preserving, interpreting and making accessible Australian voices and stories past and present. Ensuring the long-term accessibility of Australia's audiovisual cultural heritage is critical for the development of future creative production. Providing pathways to exploring the nation's culture as captured in recorded sound and moving image strengthens the wellbeing of communities and contributes to an inclusive society.

The NFSA supports the development of a National Cultural Policy (NCP) and it applauds the Government's commitment to articulate the fundamental importance of culture, cultural heritage, and the arts to Australia. However the NFSA has identified several issues with the goals and priorities in the Discussion Paper, addressed in detail in this response specifically:

- An emphasis on economic and instrumental factors
- An approach that privileges art over diverse modes of cultural expression
- Unbalanced distribution of funding across the creative industries and the heritage sector

The NFSA is well aligned with the goals and strategies outlined in the discussion paper and actively contributes to them by:

- Developing and sharing a collection that represents the diversity of audiovisual production and that reflects the diversity of Australian cultures — past, present and future.
- Making audiovisual culture available on-site in all State capitals, on-line via a wide range of websites, via touring programs to regional areas, as well as promoting contemporary works and Australian audiovisual heritage internationally.
- Supporting, protecting and promoting Indigenous culture through preservation, advice to Indigenous communities, and the repatriation of cultural materials to their owners.
- Embracing emerging technologies and innovation, and pursuing excellence and international leadership in dealing with original formats.
- Inspiring learning and providing curriculum support through educational programs via a range of platforms and delivery channels.
- Stimulating interdisciplinary research into audiovisual culture and history, its social uses and its technology.
- Enabling the use of audiovisual materials for the creation of new works, educational and informational materials, and for keeping cultural memory alive across generations.
- Providing excellent services to the creative industries, Australian communities as well as to disadvantaged collections in Australia and overseas.

To underline the important role the cultural heritage sector plays in supporting the aspirations of a National Cultural Policy, the NFSA proposes the inclusion of an additional goal:

**To ensure that all Australians, now and in the future, have access to material that is culturally and historically relevant to them and their communities.**

## 2. ABOUT THE NFSA

The National Film and Sound Archive of Australia (**NFSA**) is a statutory authority established by the *National Film and Sound Archive of Australia Act 2008*. It is Australia's national audiovisual archive, responsible for collecting, preserving, interpreting and providing access to the nation's moving image and recorded sound heritage (**national audiovisual collection**).

As Australia's premier audiovisual collecting institution, it plays a key role in documenting, preserving, interpreting and making accessible the Australian experience by actively contributing to the development of Australia's audiovisual cultural heritage.

### **3. SUPPORT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NATIONAL CULTURAL POLICY**

The NFSA supports the development of a National Cultural Policy (NCP) and applauds the Government's commitment to articulate the fundamental importance of culture, cultural heritage, and the arts to Australia and to establish a plan for the next 10 years.

The Australian Government's release of Creative Nation, combining a policy overview with funded cultural and arts initiatives, successfully set and supported new cultural directions that integrated well with broader Government reforms and stimulus to emerging service and knowledge industries.

The NFSA's mission is to excite people's curiosity and inspire their creativity through development, preservation and an informed understanding of Australian film, sound and emerging new media heritage, its cultural diversity and significance. This mission is highly compatible with the aims of Government in formulating a new national cultural policy at this time.

The NFSA welcomes further opportunities to discuss and provide further details of its views on the NCP to the Minister and the Office for the Arts.

### **4. VIEWS ABOUT THE DISCUSSION PAPER AND THE GOALS**

The four proposed goals are all underpinned by the work of the cultural institutions as the 'memory banks' of Australian culture. Archives, galleries, libraries, and museums are the stewards of the culturally significant collections of our nation. They reflect back to communities, and forward to the future, their history, art – both high and popular, stories, ideas, experiences, feelings and dreams. Art and cultural industries do not come into existence in a void. If art is the content, culture is the context – it defines us, precedes us and mediates the way we understand the world around us. Safekeeping, sharing and facilitating cultural engagement is the business of the cultural institutions.

The NFSA is actively engaged in preparing for key changes in the Australian cultural environment. In addition to providing traditional means of outreach (i.e. screenings, touring programs, exhibitions and expanding access to collection items on-site), the NFSA has been exploring pathways for stakeholder engagement in a converging environment. This involves digitisation and online publishing of Australian and international content, preparation of education and curriculum resources, participation in research to drive innovation, and working in partnerships with industry, the three tiers of government and the cultural and academic sectors to enhance and share our expertise and collection.

The NFSA's collection captures a part of Australia's memory that can actually be experienced in living vision and sound. It is the most complete collection of Australian knowledge, creativity, achievements and history, in an audiovisual form dating, back to origins of moving image and sound recordings in the 1870s.

Audiovisual documents, such as films, radio and television programmes, audio and video recordings, contain the primary records of the 20th and 21st centuries.

Transcending language and cultural boundaries, appealing immediately to the eye and the ear, to the literate and illiterate, audiovisual documents have transformed society by becoming a permanent complement to the traditional written record.<sup>1</sup>

Importantly, the NFSA holds a wealth of material made by and about Indigenous people, a storehouse of information about family, ancestors, traditions and ways of living that may have been lost or are being rebuilt. For Indigenous people, our collections represent power and potential, recovery and knowledge – a treasure trove for the cultural survival of future generations.

In the 21st century, where converging technologies and a converged approach to knowledge empowers users, audiovisual and digital literacy will be among the most important skill-sets. Audiovisual records and works of art integrate a multitude of traditional forms of expression – stimulating a critical and exploratory look at technology, knowledge, history and society<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Website of the United Nations <http://www.un.org/en/events/audiovisualday/index.shtml>  
<sup>2</sup> As articulated by Davis Baird, *Thing Knowledge*, University of California Press 2004

This is of fundamental importance to the 'C' generation – the segment of our society not driven by age but by their thirst for technologically assisted creativity: content creation and manipulation; control; communities; co-creation; connectedness; , and use of converged technology. The 'C's value the cultural institutions – the GLAM<sup>3</sup> sector, as they call it – and lobby hard for the digitisation of collections.

As an example - one of the first contributions to the Australian Government's Diculture consultation was this addition to the wiki:

My vision is this. All resources held by the GLAM sector will be accessible online. Each resource has a persistent URL ... There is a framework that allows any resource/resource-let to be tagged, commented, have a discussion around, link to other resources/resource-lets. That way all of our culture can be meaningfully linked together to enjoy, explore, and extend. Impediments to my dream: need for a shared IT infrastructure, need for funding for digitisation, solutions to copyright problems like orphan works (which will otherwise severely limit what works can be put in the public domain).<sup>4</sup>

Yet most of the collection of the NFSA is preserved in its original analogue formats and our mandate requires us to preserve the original objects, their physical carriers, the technologies involved in producing and distributing them and the cultural practices associated with their use. As the steward of Australian sound and vision it is our duty to not only provide content for today's and tomorrow's audiences, but to act as a source of authentic information.

The National Cultural Policy provides an unprecedented opportunity meet Australian cultural aspirations. The provision of the resources necessary for NFSA to digitise the works in its culturally significant collection, to invest in the long-term preservation of digital collection items, along with provisions for expanding our established 'real-world' access pathways, would allow us to deliver on all of the goals of the NCP.

## 5. ISSUES

The NFSA has identified several issues with the goals and priorities in the Discussion Paper.

### 1. Emphasis on economic and instrumental factors

The NFSA appreciates the importance of the arts' current and future economic activity in Australia. The NFSA currently contributes to this economic activity through the development and employment of its own professional, technical and administrative staff. Research undertaken by staff and the artists and scholars hosted as Fellows or partnering with us on external research projects further drives innovations in a variety of disciplines. The preservation and access services provided by the NFSA enable creative industries and enhance industrial productivity.

The NFSA also believes that the understanding, expression and sharing of Australian culture has profound impacts on social cohesion and the health and well being of all Australian communities. The arts provide stimulus, entertainment and contribute to our ability to look at the world in new ways. These instrumental impacts of the arts and culture may be more difficult to measure, or value in economic terms, but the discussion paper also asserts the importance of the impacts. Innovative and creative people are drawn to live in places where they can experience the most innovative and creative culture<sup>5</sup>: and conversely, cities and smaller regional centres, will suffer population and brain drains if they fail to provide cultural stimulation, just as surely as if they fail to provide employment opportunities, services or schools<sup>6</sup>.

This is particularly important at the time in which we have seen the '2 speed' economy developing in Australia. The extensive wealth generated in the mining boom areas result in towns and regions where the economy becomes largely dependent upon a single source and people other than those engaged in mining related jobs, particularly artists and other creative participants, are priced out of residing in such places. This certainly leaves critical parts of Australia vulnerable to cultural poverty and social disintegration that can only be countered by Government targeting programs that encourage cultural participation.

<sup>3</sup> Wikipedia – the massive voluntary knowledge enterprise of the C generation defines GLAM: GLAM is an acronym for "Galleries, Libraries, Archives, and Museums". [1] More generally, GLAMs are publicly-funded, publicly-accountable institutions collecting cultural and heritage material. The term GLAM emerged as these institutions began to realise their roles and goals were converging, creating the need for a wider industry sector grouping. This became especially apparent as they placed their collections online—artworks, books, documents, and artifacts all effectively become equal 'information resources' when they are online. As collecting institutions, GLAMs preserve and make accessible primary sources valuable for researchers.

<sup>4</sup> <http://diculture.wikispaces.com/CulturalInstitutions> as at 16 September 2011

<sup>5</sup> The arguments put by Richard Florida (specifically in *The Rise of the Creative Class*, and *The Flight of the Creative Class*) supports the statements in the discussion paper

<sup>6</sup> John Daley and Annette Lancy, *Investing in the Regions: Making a difference*, Grattan Institute Report NO. 2011-4, May 2011.

The NFSA agrees that a strong cultural life creates broad economic benefit – directly through creative industries and indirectly through quality of life. However the NFSA would like to see the policy acknowledge the value above and beyond the economic. As Senator the Hon Kim Carr (Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research), has stated:

I believe the creative arts – and the humanities and social sciences – make a terrible mistake when they claim support on the basis of their commercial value. Whatever they may be worth in the marketplace, it is their intrinsic value we should treasure them for. We should support these disciplines because they give us pleasure, knowledge, meaning and inspiration. No other pay-off is required.<sup>7</sup>

Research into, and refining methodologies to measure, the direct economic impact and instrumental social benefits of cultural activities are useful practices, but we should not lose sight of the intrinsic worth of arts and culture to us and future generations.

## 2. The value of cultural expression as well as art

The discussion paper seems to largely address the desire of Government to support the arts, the creative industries and (Indigenous) heritage as it provides a unique selling point for cultural tourism. While the paper references many other Government reviews and recent reports outlining a broader Government agenda, the NFSA is concerned that its narrow arts focus has meant that the discussion paper is not on the radar of many individuals and organisations, large and small, that are significant drivers of the cultural activity of the nation.

Cultural expression takes a variety of forms outside of the arts, which is recognised by the Australian Government at its Australia.gov and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade websites<sup>8</sup>. These include information on Australian identity, history, cuisine, Indigenous culture, and the latter states:

Australia's culture is diverse and vibrant, expressed through its customs, folklore, language and traditions, reflected in the natural and built environment, and captured in the objects created and collected.

The discussion paper's narrower scope and language may be due to the lack of input from a peak body representing the breadth of the cultural sector. Unlike the education, welfare, environment, legal, tertiary and sports sectors, who have peak representative bodies to advocate on their behalf<sup>9</sup>, there is no recognised national body speaking on behalf of the cultural sector as a whole. The need for a GLAM sector representative body was expressed repeatedly at the Digital Cultural Sphere consultation. However, an effective body would need to go beyond the GLAM sector to bring together the widest possible constituency in support of Australia's arts and cultural heritage.

The NFSA suggests that Government broaden its language to encompass the activities associated with broader cultural expression, as well as the arts, in its National Cultural Policy.

## 3. Distribution of Funding

The Office for the Arts (OFTA) has outlined its current investment in supporting a strong and creative culture and its understanding that this needs review. Just using OFTA's broad figures it can be seen that there is an imbalance in the proportion of funding devoted to archiving different sectors.

There is relatively little funding put to the complex and expensive task of collecting and preserving the rapidly growing number creative works of Australia's screen, sound and new media industries. And even less to ensuring that the content of these priceless materials are made available broadly for Australians and the world to learn from, enjoy and interact with.

<sup>7</sup> Speech to the National Press Club 3 September 2008, <http://minister.innovation.gov.au/Carr/Speeches/Pages/THEARTOFINNOVATION-ADDRESSTOTHENATIONALPRESSCLUB.aspx>

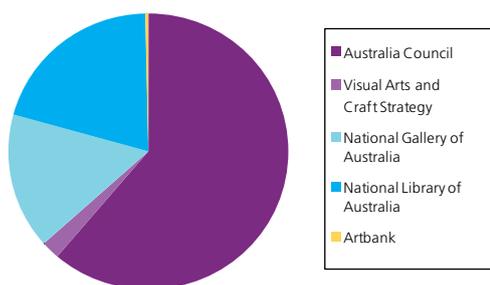
<sup>8</sup> <http://australia.gov.au> and [http://www.dfat.gov.au/facts/people\\_culture.html](http://www.dfat.gov.au/facts/people_culture.html)

<sup>9</sup> As argued by NFSA Chair Chris Puplick in *Achieving an effective arts advocacy*, Currency House Platform paper, No. 18, 2008

In raw figures, the NFSA receives the smallest amount of funding of any of the major cultural institutions (aside from the specialist Museum of Democracy) yet it has to collect, store, curate and manage the largest pool<sup>10</sup> of most popular forms of work<sup>11</sup>.

Further, there is an imbalance in the ratio of Government funding spent on investing in the production of visual arts and literature to the amount invested in collecting, interpreting and exhibiting it, versus the ratio of funding spent on the production of screen works to the amount invested in collecting, interpreting and exhibiting (including screening) these works.

**Figure 1: Proportion of arts grants and promotion to collections funding**



**Figure 2: Proportion of screen production and promotion to collections funding**

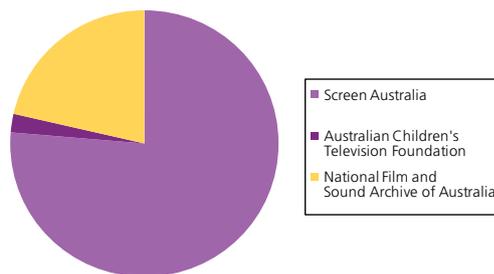


Figure 1: Shown in purple is the Government funding of the production of visual arts and literature, whilst shown in blue and yellow is the funding for the collection, preservation and exhibition of this art

Figure 2: Shown in purple is the funding of screen production, whilst shown in yellow is the funding for the collection, preservation and exhibition of these productions

At its most simple, in 2011-12, the Australian Government invests \$177<sup>12</sup> million in grants to produce and promote the arts and a further \$6.2 million on its Visual arts and crafts strategy. It then invests \$105.6 million in collecting, preserving, displaying and making available works of visual art and literature through the National Gallery of Australia and the National Library of Australia alone. This is a ratio of approximately 1.8: 1 of 'production' to 'collection' of these works. The ratio is actually lower as the Australia Council funds a broad range of performing as well as visual art and literature. By contrast, the Australian Government spends a total \$94.6 million through Screen Australia and the Australian Children's Television Foundation on screen production yet only \$25.8 million on collecting, preserving, screening and making accessible its national collections of audiovisual works through the NFSA – a ratio of 3.7:1 of 'production' to 'collecting' (See Figures 1 and 2). This ratio is actually far larger, if you consider the fact that this does not include Government investment in the production of recorded sound, nor its additional investment in elite training and student productions through AFTRS.

Of course the other aspect of this comparison that is misleading is that much of the resources of the NFSA are devoted to caring for the far greater output of the *commercial* Australian audiovisual industries. Total investment in Australian narrative screen content – drama and documentary – alone was worth in excess of \$700 million in 2009/10<sup>13</sup>. While some audiovisual producers archive portions of their own work, historically this has not been the case. This is evidenced by the remaining photographs or newspaper reviews of now lost films and songs and by the habit of broadcasters to reuse video and audiotape and hence destroy much of their daily output.

With effectively decreasing funding (due to the impact of efficiency dividend) the NFSA is struggling to completely fulfil its mission and legislated mandate. However with additional funding the NFSA could deliver on its core responsibilities as well as on all four of the goals of Governments' new cultural agenda.

<sup>10</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics surveys have consistently showed that Australians most frequently attend the cinema above other cultural activities and venues. In the most recent survey this was followed by popular music concerts, which had the highest attendance rate, with 25% of Australians aged 15 years or more attending at least one concert in the 12-month period. <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/1C677F8B8CFF562D4CA2577C00013B44F?opendocument>

<sup>11</sup> In terms of time spent on cultural activities, watching or listening to TV was found to be the activity which took up most people's leisure time. The total time spent by all Australians on visiting entertainment and cultural venues (1.3 million person hours per day) was similar to the time spent on religious activities and listening to records, tapes and CDs (1.3 million person hours per day and 1.1 million person hours per day respectively). <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/942BC08E9D375AF2CA2577C00013B43D?opendocument>

<sup>12</sup> All figures from National Cultural Policy discussion paper, p8.

<sup>13</sup> Convergence 2011: Australian Content State of Play, Screen Australia, p7

## GOAL 5

In line with the issues the NFSA has identified above, and based on forums in which we have exchanged views with like cultural agencies, the NFSA proposes the following additional Goal 5:

**To ensure that all Australians, now and in the future, have access to material that is culturally and historically relevant to them and their communities.**

*We will know that this Goal has been reached if:*

- *Australian individuals, communities and industry benefit from access to significant digital and real world cultural experiences*
- *Digital and audiovisual literacy for all increases through engagement with culturally and historically relevant resources*
- *Our national cultural policy is broadly supported by the sector and effective in delivering Government's agenda*
- *Creative Industries and cultural organisations are better able to archive materials they create so they remain available to future generations*
- *Australia is recognised as a world leader in access to, promotion of and preservation of its arts and culture*

*What Strategies Can We Use To Get There?*

- *Resource cultural and arts organisations to digitise and provide online access to cultural and artistic material*
- *Establish an NBN project that harnesses the resources of the Government's cultural institutions by funding innovative online community and education projects*
  - Eg: Seniors are well represented as volunteers in community heritage organisations, trial projects could test the feasibility of improving seniors' engagement and online skills through working to identify and interpret material of local significance
- *Encourage the formation of a peak body representing the cultural, including arts, sector and provides it with the same degree of support that it accords like organisations.*
- *Support communities and cultural institutions to work together to identify, share, and respond to works that have particular relevance and use to them*
  - Eg: Expand research into the NFSA's Indigenous collection by working with communities to identify, preserve and repatriate significant materials, including through assisting with Indigenous community archives and secure online access.
- *Extend deposit legislation to cover audiovisual and digital works to ensure the diversity of a 21st century art and culture is continuously available to Australians now and in the future*
- *Support the collaboration and sharing of expertise in digital preservation including through the development of standards and strategies for digitisation of analogue and born digital works and ways to enable discoverability and long term storage*

## NFSA RESPONSE TO PROPOSED GOALS

*Goal 1: To ensure that what the Government supports — and how this support is provided — reflects the diversity of a 21st century Australia, and protects and supports Indigenous culture*

### NFSA's alignment with Goal 1

The NFSA is aligned well with Goal 1, the strategies proposed by the discussion paper and has already contributed to its aims as illustrated below.

#### A diverse collection

The NFSA's national audiovisual collection is a good exemplar of the importance of diversity. It strives to create a collection that represents the diversity of audiovisual creativity and technical achievement and that is an accurate reflection of the diversity of Australian cultures — past, present and future. In accordance with the NFSA Collection Development Strategy, curators ensure that acquisition programs place emphasis on breadth and inclusiveness, as well as acquiring works in their original language where possible. Works representing different perceptions and perspectives of other cultures are also part of the collection.

The beauty of audiovisual works is that often they can provide a bridge that transcends language and cultural experience and have the potential to communicate values, emotions and information that it is not possible to fully communicate in words. In this way they are powerful tools for expanding all peoples' understanding of and empathy for the diversity of our multicultural nation.

Archives enable the long view of history and the joy of rediscovery and reinvention. Archives only reveal some of their greatest worth through sustained, systematic investigation and assembling of findings. For example, in 2007 research revealed that rather than 4,000 audio recordings, films and images NFSA's collection held nearly 7,000 items related to Australia's then 26 Prime Ministers.

Archives hold the evidence of our past in both complete and incomplete forms, sometimes even mere traces of the past. However, in the research and creation of new works, records that in one era might be considered of limited value can in another be regarded as highly significant. Likewise, the value and significance of even a single image or a partial voice recording may be of immeasurable value to one person or community. Film and sound recordings about Australia's Prime Ministers have been less well recognised as important original sources, by comparison to more conventional paper-based records. but with increasing publication of rich media, a clear trend has emerged over the last ten years where these recordings are increasingly sought to develop and communicate new and better understanding of Australian democracy and culture.

Archival collections must be as open and publicly accessible as possible in order to most effectively contribute to national development and productivity. Only a small proportion of the nearly 7,000 records relating to Australia's Prime Ministers can be viewed or listened to online, because the resources, including for digitising and rights clearing, are not available. This limits their utility and public value benefit.

The digital revolution has led to changes in patterns of media consumption, methods of distribution, and access to means of production which are in turn challenging traditional business models. There has been an explosion of independent productions and self-publications taking advantage of low cost processes and innovative distribution channels. There has been a rise in multi-platform works, using multiple delivery technologies to provide alternative means to access the works, and delivering complementary content that adds to the consumer's overall experience.

New audiovisual technologies often introduce pathways to better archival practices. A seamless transfer of content, metadata and format is a probable future scenario. Opportunities for collaborative collection management with other archives will naturally follow. Many individuals and organisations will also see audiovisual content as an asset with almost infinite uses for repurposing and create their own archives. The NFSA has a role to play in the active preservation of these works by assisting others in their own archiving practices.

However, the massive increase in digital production, formats and distribution channels challenges the NFSA's capacity to connect to, collect, store and preserve these works. The extension of deposit legislation to audiovisual and digital material would greatly simplify the NFSA's task. In addition to individually approaching and negotiating the collection of materials from different producers, such legislation could enable the NFSA to more easily and effectively harvest works distributed by broadcast and the internet. It could also ensure that the NFSA is legally able to undertake the preservation copying of materials that may otherwise be prevented

by legal or technical piracy protections.

The extension of deposit legislation to audiovisual and digital material would greatly enhance the NFSA's ability to ensure that a diverse and representative collection of Australian audiovisual materials is available for all Australians to engage with.



Tiwi dancers performing at the NFSA in Canberra

### Indigenous audiovisual creativity and culture

The NFSA holds and provides access to Indigenous Australian material, both current and retrospective, and has provided assistance to Indigenous communities over many years.

The NFSA supports, protects and promotes Indigenous culture through preserving significant materials, developing and applying cultural Indigenous protocols, providing advice and workshops to Indigenous community archives and keeping places, and through the repatriation of cultural material to Indigenous communities. It supports and celebrates contemporary Indigenous filmmakers and gets their work back to communities through the Black Screen touring program as well as to broader Australia through screening at our Arc cinema and through making Indigenous works available globally through our [nfsa.gov](http://nfsa.gov) and [australianscreen](http://australianscreen) websites (ASO).

The NFSA also partners with – and funds – Indigenous organisations to take programs to a wider audience. We helped Blackfella Films deliver a national and regional tour of the 2010 and 2011 *Message Sticks* Indigenous Film Festivals, including a schools program. And we collaborated with Wawili Pitjas in Broome WA, to deliver a Black Screen screening tour to seven remote Indigenous communities in the Kimberley region of Western Australia.

In 2007 our staff visited Kaniyirninpa Jukurpa (Martu History and Archive Project) in Newman, Western Australia to advise on setting up their archive. Contact with the Martu people then also led to the NFSA repatriating copies of Martu related collection content to the elders during a visit by them to NFSA. Our preservation experts have travelled to spend time with PAW Media at Yuendumu, CAAMA Library, Alice Springs and and Pitjantjatjara Women's Council Collections, Alice Springs. The NFSA provided technical/preservation advice and undertook a preservation survey of these 3 collections in April 2008 and returned to Yuendumu for the Remote Indigenous Media Organisations (RIMO) festival in October 2008, to conduct a workshop on preservation for the festival, helping explain archival measures and how Indigenous organizations can best protect their own collections. In 2008 we also returned copies of audiovisual materials to Mornington Island, Palm Island, Arra Irritjja archive (in South Australia) and to nine Arnhem land communities in the Northern Territory.

The NFSA also supports Indigenous people who visit us in search of important cultural materials that will strengthen and maintain their traditions and cultural identity. In 2008 the NFSA supported the visit of a group of Arnhem Land elders which resulted in the identification, enhanced description and repatriation of significant cultural material to a number of Indigenous communities. The cultural and information exchange also enabled the NFSA to better understand and classify a number of works to ensure that they are appropriately managed and accessed in the future.

In November 2009 a group of Tiwi elders visited NFSA, among other Canberra cultural institutions, seeking recordings of their Tiwi culture. The NFSA was able to provide copies of films and audio recordings along with relevant catalogue information. This included a 1912 Baldwin Spencer film of dance/Pukamani ceremony and recorded sound recordings of songs.

This was a moving experience for the group. All saw family members, either at a time before they were born or when they themselves were young men or women...Viewing the footage taken by Baldwin Spencer in 1912 was fascinating for all present. A number of points of dance and ceremony were discussed in terms of similarity to current practice and some which have passed out of use.....<sup>14</sup>

The NFSA contracted the Tiwi visitors to give a performance of singing and dancing in the Acton courtyard which attracted about 100 people.

In the context of the discovery of the archived dance and song this performance gave the group the opportunity to show the strong continuity of song and dance traditions. The men commented on the impact that having just watched their ancestors dancing (in the old films) had on their performance that day.<sup>15</sup>

This visit underlines the importance to communities of being able to access their preserved cultural materials. However, these visits are rare as they are difficult to arrange and are expensive – especially for the community participants. Their success is also reliant on the NFSA having appropriate materials in its collection.

Cultural restrictions and the high cost of transporting collections means that many important Indigenous collections are dispersed in communities, where they often have been, and are continuing to be, stored under extremely poor environmental conditions. High temperatures and either high relative humidity or very dusty conditions in local storage facilities causes the rapid deterioration of the recording carriers, such as films, audio tapes, and video tapes. This, coupled with the fact the original machines used to create these recordings may no longer be available or in a useable condition, means these collections are also not available to communities.

The NFSA would like to do more to assist in preserving and making Indigenous audiovisual materials available to Indigenous communities for their own interpretation and cultural support as well as, where appropriate, to innovative artists and media makers and the broader public.

### Celebrating the Sounds of Australia

The *Sounds of Australia* Registry celebrates the unique and diverse recorded sound culture and history of Australia. Launched in February 2007, public nominations are called each year and at least 10 recordings are added to the Registry. The selections are determined by a panel of experts from the recorded sound industry and cultural institutions and announced as part of *Sound Day* each August.

The registry includes recognisable Australian songs, jingles; contemporary music selections, speeches from Prime Ministers, sportspeople and explorers and recorded Indigenous songs and language. This program is important because it enables the community to tell us what is significant to them. It encourages participation – inspiring communities across Australia by making the works available online and engaging communities through online discussion. With additional funding from the NCITO Program, the NFSA was able to develop the *Sounds of Australia* register into the *Cooee Cabaret* – a national program which tours the experience to regional centres and further engages them online.

“... let me congratulate you on a fantastic show. It was involving from start to the finish, all of it was interesting. The idea of using local talents was a true inspiration.....Cooee Cabaret was an excellent way of celebrating this essence of Australian culture and identity. I loved your show.”

Local audience member/theatre director, Drysdale, Vic

<sup>14</sup> Report on Tiwi Elders' visit to Canberra November 2009, Genevieve Campbell, Tour Leader and group contact, Nguiu  
<sup>15</sup> Report on Tiwi Elders' visit to Canberra November 2009, Genevieve Campbell, Tour Leader and group contact, Nguiu

In 2010-11 Cooee Cabaret visited eight regional locations, delighting audiences across four states. Local groups and performers take part in these Cooee shows, including choirs and acapella groups, folk and country performers, theatre groups and actors, and Indigenous and emerging singer-songwriters. A number of these guest performances were videoed and uploaded to the NFSA YouTube site.

This extends the live show experience and allows audiences to further explore the Sounds of Australia online and nominate their own most popular Australian recordings.

### Conclusion - Goal 1

The NFSA *reflects the diversity of a 21st century Australia, and protects and supports Indigenous culture*. However, the NFSA is concerned that the Government's focus on building and reaching audiences for arts ignores other important benefits of engaging the Australian people with broader culture. As detailed above, diverse communities benefit from engagement with the audiovisual heritage and experiences available through the NFSA.

Stimulating and resourcing cultural activity across Australia can be much more effectively managed if significant proportions of our heritage and contemporary culture can be made available, discoverable and understandable through digital technologies – including through technologies that overcome barriers of language or disability or distance. There is no doubt that digital access would provide particular benefit to rural, regional and remote communities. The economic value of digitally releasing knowledge of all kinds, subject to the restraints of copyright and intellectual property rights, has been documented and validated by the Australian Government in its Web 2.0 taskforce.

By investing in digitising the collections of the NFSA, the Government would add considerable value to the Australian economy, as well provide significant Australian content to engage and sustain our communities.

### Additional Strategies

- *Resource cultural and arts organisations to digitise and provide online access to cultural and artistic material*
- *Support communities and cultural institutions to work together to identify, share and contextualise works that have particular relevance and use to them*
  - Eg: Expanding research into the NFSA's Indigenous collection by working with communities to identify and repatriate significant materials, including through secure online access.
  - Eg: Supporting NFSA's leadership in advising community archives on preserving audiovisual materials
- *Extend deposit legislation to cover audiovisual and digital works to ensure the diversity of a 21st century art and culture is continuously available to Australians now and in the future*

**Goal 2:** *To encourage the use of emerging technologies and new ideas that support the development of new artworks and the creative industries, and that enable more people to access and participate in arts and culture*

### NFSA's alignment with Goal 2

The NFSA supports the goal while noting that it makes the most of both emerging and established technologies. In the current period of increasingly rapid shifts in technology there is no hard cut off between old and new technology. Nor is there a point at which an artwork produced in an older medium ceases to be innovative or stops being relevant. The NFSA recognises the urgent need to secure the future of many of the analogue audio-visual formats in our collection but it is also aware of the many short lived technologies which were initially predicted to be long lived industry standards.

Currently, the overwhelming majority of the NFSA's audiovisual collection is preserved in its native analogue format, be it film, videotape or audio formats of various sorts. For the NFSA to continue to fulfil its charter of ensuring that all Australians (including the generations of the future) have access to the nation's audiovisual heritage as well as its current culture, it must preserve that material in a format that is guaranteed to last as long as possible. At present we are not satisfied that current digital formats offer that long-term guarantee. At the same time, we are aware that older formats, such as photochemical film, while having an excellent prospect for long-term preservation, has a limited future for making preservation copies as film stock and processing will likely be available for only a few more years.

### Research drives innovation and extracts the value of our diverse collection

As noted earlier, the breadth of archival collections nurture and enable connections and new discoveries across a broad range of subject areas and disciplines. NFSA staff research into the historical, conceptual, technical, scientific and social aspects of collection materials is essential to the development, understanding and meaningful communication and exhibition of our collection.

The NFSA is currently a partner in two Australian Research Council Linkage projects, which aims to employ new technology in the service of innovative cultural projects. One will enable the development and connection of online records and research on Australian women in leadership and, the other create Indigenous tourism resources.

Another of the many ways the NFSA supports research for innovative outcomes is through our Fellowship program, the Scholars and Artists in Residence (SAR) program which supports individuals conducting high level research into the NFSA collections for their own purposes. Residing and working in the NFSA Residence at our Canberra headquarters, we provide Fellows with research assistance and facilitated access to the collection to develop their projects. An Indigenous Fellowship (which attracts an additional stipend) supports Indigenous artists and scholars.

The NFSA attracts eminent Fellows from Australia and abroad, supporting cross-disciplinary research over the full ambit of NFSA activities, including archival research, scientific and technical developments and creative/performance activities.

Artist and digital entrepreneur Sarah Barns 2007 SAR Fellowship explored how archival recordings featuring historic locations in Sydney could be made available to mobile users. Sarah has partnered with NFSA again this year, she wrote:

*The Unguarded Moments* project featuring as part of *Art & About Sydney 2011* has explored the use of film and sound collection materials within outdoor film installations based around Millers Point, Sydney. It has built on previous projects such as *Jaywalking Sydney* supported by the NFSA's Centre for Scholarly and Archival Research in 2007, and *Sydney Sidetracks* supported by the ABC with assistance from the NFSA.

Where previous works investigated how digital media platforms could be used to interact with archival recordings specific to a given location, *Unguarded Moments* has used the surfaces of buildings as the interface for archival film projections, drawing extensively on both public and private collections specific to the area of Millers Point<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> Email from Sarah Barns

## Old magic inspires new - The Corrick Collection and Legs on the Wall

The work that the NFSA has done to restore and promote the films of the Corrick collection is a good illustration of the NFSA's excellent curation of its own collection – bringing the forgotten jewels of Australia's cultural past back to light. It also demonstrates our work as an enabler of innovative creative industries.

Over 100 years before the modern 'mashup', the Australian-based Corrick Family Entertainers were showing repackaged and complete versions of the latest special effects, comedy and actuality (non-fiction) films in black-and-white and dazzling colour, touring Australasia, South-East Asia and Europe from 1897 to 1914.

A painstaking five-year project to restore the troupe's surviving 130 films has uncovered films once considered lost and shed light on the way Australians experienced moviegoing in the early 20th century. Each print has been carefully restored and copied using techniques developed at the NFSA and at Haghefilm Conservation, in Amsterdam. Since 2007, the restored films have been progressively relaunched at Le Giornate del Cinema Muto, the pre-eminent festival of silent film, in Pordenone, Italy.

These exquisite films inspired a further successful partnership – with the Sydney Festival and the physical theatre troupe, Legs on the Wall. The resulting show *My Bicycle Loves You* was funded and accepted into both the Sydney Festival (January 2011) and the Perth Festival (February 2011) where it played to sell-out audiences.

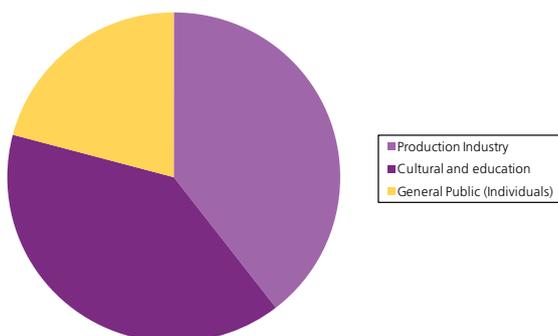
This project fulfils our role of reaching out to audiences across Australia to increase the appreciation and enjoyment of the wealth and diversity of the national audiovisual collection, and to acknowledge the expertise required to manage, maintain and share it.

## Servicing cultural and creative industries

Creative industries, along with innovative education providers, other cultural institutions and the general public constantly make use of the NFSA collection. Artists, producers, actors, directors, broadcasters, musicians, curators and programmers find inspiration, education on style and technique, works to curate or exhibit in their programs, and source material for the creation of new works in the NFSA collections. Our expert staff provide research, advice and technical services to assist these, our clients. We also maintain offices in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne as well as relationships with the Australian Centre of the Moving Image and the State Libraries – to extend the reach of our collection and expertise into the capitals of every state and territory.

In the last six months alone NFSA has provided collection research and archival materials to support a range of broadcast documentaries, including ABC *Message Stick* feature about Wilma Reading and *The Tall Man* (Tony Krawitz, Blackfella Films), a feature length documentary based on Chloe Hooper's book about Cameron Doomadgee, *Wide Open Road* (Paul Clarke, Bombora Films) — a 3 part documentary series discussing the Australian love affair with the car currently screening on ABC 1 and major exhibitions at national and state cultural institutions including the National Museum of Australia (*The Irish in Australia*), the Australian National Maritime Museum (*Britain's Child Migrants*), the National Gallery of Australia (*Ballet Russes: the Art of Costume*) and NSW Historic Houses Trust (*Surf City*).

Client access to NFSA collections by sector 2010-11



Screen and sound industry creatives also access the NFSA collection for a variety of other purposes. For example, actor Miranda Otto and director Shirley Barrett viewed a variety of footage to prepare for their roles in the 2010 feature *South Solitary* set in 1920s Tasmania. American film director Quentin Tarantino approached NFSA to loan the 1973 film *Charley One-Eye* to screen at his New Beverley Cinema in Los Angeles in March 2011, as NFSA holds one of the only known 35mm prints of the film in the world. He subsequently borrowed the film a few months later as part of pre-production for his current feature film *Django Unchained*, for a private screening to the lead actors and heads of department, with the intention of observing *Charley One-Eye* to inform the style of his new film.

Keeping Australian productions alive for audiences is also a role of the NFSA. The NFSA's preservation and restoration work feeds the Australian distribution industry through providing quality film components for the cinema exhibition and re-release of classic Australian titles. The NFSA loans high quality restored film components to distributors such as Madman and Umbrella for DVD, Blu-ray and potential online distribution. These include many iconic works such as Fred Schepisi's *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith* and *The Devil's Playground* – which were re-released to the international market through the Australian distributors' partnership with a US organisation.

Classic Australian television is also still available to audiences because of the work of the NFSA. For example, working with Umbrella, the NFSA has assisted with four DVD sets of the landmark series *Number 96*, which marks its 40th anniversary next year.

With the addition of the Film Australia Collection, further expert services are provided to industry and key Australian documentaries are distributed to a variety of markets and platforms, ensuring these works continue to educate and entertain and return dividends to investors.

The NFSA's support to industry rests on the continuing interest of Australian audiences and participants in our own audiovisual culture. The NFSA intends to make a submission to the convergence review in support of ensuring that Australian content is as plentiful and of as high a quality in the converged media space as it is in current print, cinema and broadcast media. As articulated in the discussion papers and associated reports<sup>17</sup> new models of encouraging and financing new Australian made content and intellectual property will need to be found.

### Managing and preserving digital collections

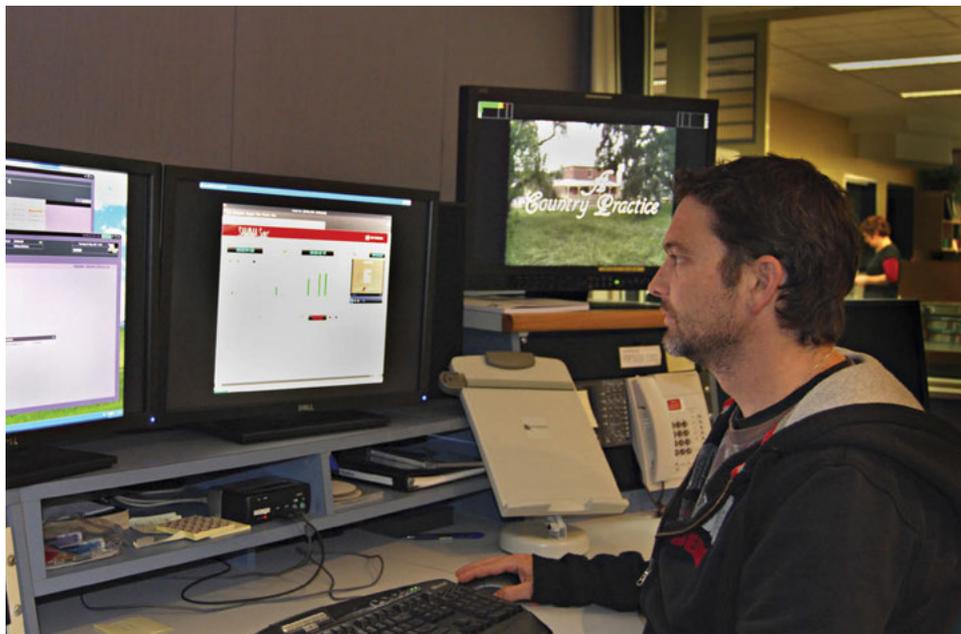
The NFSA has already invested a substantial amount of its limited funds and people resources to developing, implementing and migrating our collection information to a new collection management system capable of managing digital as well as analogue media. This has taken over 5 years and the benefits are now being seen in higher quality and more efficient collection management and improved public access information. Soon our updated online collection search tool will be demonstrating the more powerful digital access this will provide.

NFSA has used digital technology to preserve and store its stills, documents and recorded sound items for more than a decade. Earlier this year, the NFSA moved from preserving videotape on to videotape to file based digital preservation. It launched its digital video preservation service with the encoding of an episode from the much loved Australian series – *A Country Practice*. Although this has been a great start, there is a considerable job ahead of us. The NFSA holds more than 68,000 video tapes that await preservation in climate controlled vaults. Even with the efficiencies that digital technology offers, and in the absence of significant new funding, we anticipate that it could take more than 30 years to digitise the entire video collection and considerable time to secure the future of even a limited selection of significant Australian television history.

Further work on standards and major capital investment are still required to address digital film preservation – a pressing need given that a recent internal report estimates that within 3 – 5 years it will be extremely hard to find a cinema, outside of NFSA's Arc cinema, within Australia capable of projecting 35mm film. Within 5 – 10 years it will be extremely difficult to buy film stock or have it processed.

<sup>17</sup> Especially in Convergence 2011: Australian Content State of Play, Screen Australia 2011

Significant challenges impact upon the NFSA's capacity to meet the Government's goal, including digitisation of the analogue collection, effectively dealing with increasing volumes of digital born new media, improving and increasing collection storage facilities to cater for predicted increases in the collection and legal deposit of audiovisual and associated documents and artefacts. The NFSA looks to collaborations across the GLAM sector and government support to meet these challenges.



NFSA staff member digitising an episode of *A Country Practice*

### Legal framework to support access

As both a copyright owner and copyright user, the NFSA desires a rebalancing of rights to satisfy the respective economic and cultural interests of rights holders, national cultural institutions, and the public. There needs to be consistency between a national cultural policy and all areas of content regulation to achieve a workable balance.

Where the NFSA owns copyright (in a small minority of works in the national collection), income derived from the commercialisation of this copyright is currently directed towards funding the day-to-day operations of the organisation, including access activities. Some of the issues facing the NFSA under the public pressure of providing free access to material in which it owns copyright were acknowledged in the *Report on review and development of principles on open public sector information* by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner.<sup>18</sup> The NFSA will grow increasingly reliant on its commercialisation initiatives if funding is not available to meet demand for its core business, especially to meet the public demand for digital content.

Copyright in majority of works held in the NFSA is held by third parties. The NFSA has developed a strong rights management framework in an effort to fully exploit our rights to digitise collection items for access purposes within the limits of the *Copyright Act 1968* (Cth). In collaboration with members of the Copyright in Cultural Institutions (CICI) group, we published the user guide, *Flexible dealing and cultural institutions – statement of principles regarding the use of section 200AB of the Copyright Act 1968*. We daily educate our clients, and we provide training to our staff and research fellows to enable them to understand and work with the complexity of rights in audiovisual materials. We also update and provide copyright contact information and guides for our creative and education clients to assist them to obtain copies of material they require.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> [http://www.oaic.gov.au/publications/reports/Principles\\_open\\_public\\_sector\\_info\\_report\\_may2011.html](http://www.oaic.gov.au/publications/reports/Principles_open_public_sector_info_report_may2011.html)

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.nfsa.gov.au/collection/collection-enquiries/copyright/>

The NFSA is predominantly a user of copyright of third parties and these parties may be different to the donor or depositor of collection items with whom the NFSA has a relationship. However, we do not always have the capacity to do the painstaking work of researching the rights to verify if materials are in the public domain or obtaining the permissions required to make large amounts of our collection available online. We are forced to risk-manage the limitations of rights legislation. Section 200AB does not fully address the issues of cultural organisations wishing to enable industry and community use of the orphaned and abandoned works that make up large proportions of their valuable collections. Likewise the provisions in the Copyright Act as they relate to the ability of libraries and archives to copy material for preservation do not reflect the practices of effective digital preservation or the potential provision of access to digitised material. The Act's other exemptions, including for use for criticism and review are more restrictive than those of other nations, such as the United States.

In some cases the NFSA has to rely on licences administered by collecting societies, but, like other cultural institutions, we do not believe that the Government is able to fund us to pay annual and ever increasing costs to pursue our access mandate this way. While the NFSA sometimes pays rights owners or distributors to licence works for special programs — such as screenings, exhibitions and events — ASO has only been able to expand the array of Australian works on its site through a 'no fee' policy. Instead, rights owners are approached for free permissions and most appreciate that the promotional opportunity of excerpts of their work being digitised and showcased on this authoritative site is a fair exchange.

The NFSA intends to make submissions to the Convergence Review, the Classification Review and to the recently announced Australian Law Reform Commission's review of copyright exceptions in the digital environment<sup>20</sup>. We trust that OFTA will support a rights regime that balances the rights of owners with the ability for cultural institutions to provide non-commercial access to heritage materials. We also will continue working with agencies across government on proposals to extend legal deposit to audiovisual and digital material.

### In conclusion – Goal 2

The overall intent of Goal 2 closely aligned with priorities of the NFSA. With the benefit of NFSA's long experience of adapting to change in audiovisual practice and technology, supporting creative innovation and creative industries we suggest that Goal 2 be modified: (changes in bold):

*To encourage the use of the **best technologies** and new ideas to support the development of new artworks and the creative **and cultural** industries, and that enable more people to access and participate in **cultural activities and arts***

Further, expectations of our innovative fellows and creative clients are, if anything, ahead of the general population. Working at the cutting edge of conceptual research or media production they expect the NFSA to match their language, pace, flexibility and the seamless business transactions available in the increasingly digital worlds in which they work. For the NFSA to provide the expertise and services they need, and to enhance industry productivity, the NFSA needs Government to consider additional strategies to meet this Goal:

Proposed strategies:

- *Support the collaboration and sharing of expertise in digital preservation including through the development of standards and strategies for digitisation of analogue and born digital works and ways to enable discoverability and long term storage*
- *Balance legislation governing copyright, legal deposit and archiving audiovisual archives to protect creators but also enable use, including as envisaged by the mandate of GLAM sector organisations.*
- *Support solutions for increasing non-commercial use of materials access materials that do not place large burdens of additional annual expenditure on cultural institutions.*

<sup>20</sup> Announced by the Attorney General The Hon Sire Richard McClelland in his address to the 13<sup>th</sup> Biennial Copyright Symposium: [http://www.classification.gov.au/www/ministers/mccllelland.nsf/Page/Speeches\\_2011\\_FourthQuarter\\_14October2011-KeynoteAddresssto15thBiennialCopyrightSymposium](http://www.classification.gov.au/www/ministers/mccllelland.nsf/Page/Speeches_2011_FourthQuarter_14October2011-KeynoteAddresssto15thBiennialCopyrightSymposium)

*Goal 3: To support excellence and world-class endeavour, and strengthen the role that the arts play in telling Australian stories both here and overseas*

### **NFSA's alignment with Goal 3**

The NFSA recognised both nationally and internationally for its leadership; innovation; programs; expertise; and support plus training national and international activities, including:

- our world-class collection, appropriately stored and well utilised
- international leadership in audio-visual collection management, preservation and technical services – NFSA developed its previous audiovisual collection management system MAVIS which was developed in partnership with an Australian software company and adopted by archives worldwide. While we have now moved on to a digital-ready system the data structures and cataloguing principles developed inform our world class cataloguing today.
- multi-award winning ASO website – receiving national and international recognition for its effectiveness in the diverse categories of education resource, film culture website, online cultural institution presence and archival finding aid.
- our innovative and effective public programs

Further detailed examples of our world-class endeavours follow.

### **National leadership and contribution to the international audiovisual archives community**

The NFSA provides national leadership within the broader collections sector through senior representation on key national and international bodies, including the Executive Council of the International Federation of Film Archives, the International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives (IASAA), the Australasian Sound Recordings Association and the Association of Moving Image Archivists. Work has included development of new international standards for the production and preservation of digital audio objects (second edition) with IASA and through the International Organisation for Standardization (ISO) to published ISO standards for care of magnetic media and optical discs.

The NFSA is the leader in Australia in audiovisual preservation and has placed a high priority on technical preservation training. The requirement for training in specific knowledge and skills continues as new technology is constantly being introduced and audiovisual archivists require training in not only the new technology but also how this interfaces with the collection. To meet the need NFSA has continued to develop both internal and external training projects and strategies to fill the gap. The outcomes of this training development has been fed into the international area through formal bodies developing recommended practices as well as via individual training projects in response to requests from organisations responsible for audiovisual collections.

There has been a strong focus on supporting the development of archives and collection preservation in the Southeast Asia and Pacific region. Training is most commonly conducted on location to ensure that local conditions are factored in, however on some occasions staff from overseas archives have visited the NFSA and studied specific issues of audiovisual archiving. Archivists from Singapore, Mexico and India to name but a few have spent time at NFSA learning the techniques and workflows NFSA have developed.

### **Promoting excellence – shining a light on Indigenous filmmakers**

The NCP discussion paper notes that 'a new generation of Indigenous filmmakers is emerging to convey compelling stories from their lives and communities, through films that have resonated with Australian and overseas audiences.' NFSA's online presence makes a significant contribution to promoting Australian culture overseas and drawing international attention to the nation's significant audiovisual culture, history and expertise. ASO plays a key role in promoting the unique and valuable culture of Australia's Indigenous people - with the Indigenous material on the site the most visited. With an understanding of Indigenous cultural intellectual property and well developed protocols, many important works have been sensitively curated, and appropriately interpreted, for online audiences. In 2010–11 alone the NFSA published a significant body of Indigenous material on ASO. Both Indigenous staff and external Indigenous contributors curated titles for the website.

Importantly ASO has provided a platform to promote the work of emerging Indigenous filmmaking, highlighting films that were not, or in limited, distribution. Some of these works that have now been discovered internationally by virtue of them being hosted on the site and a number of films have been sought by international film festivals as a direct result of the festival directors being able to view clips on ASO.



Simon Weaving, Kim Ledger (father of Heath Ledger), the Hon Simon Crean MP, Karen Fitz-Gibbon, Eamon Farren and Samara Weaving at the launch of the Heath Ledger Young Artists Oral History Project in Arc cinema, NFSA, Canberra, December 2010

### Australia's got talent – the Heath Ledger Young Artists Oral History Project

The NFSA's collection contains in-depth documentation of the careers of our world class talent – including in our oral history collection which captures the personal stories and reflections of great Australian directors, broadcasters, producers and performers. Often these audio or video interviews provide a retrospective view of an entire career.

In December 2010, the NFSA launched a new program that recognises and encourages young artists and will establish a resource to seed and inform the aspirations of our future performers. The Heath Ledger Young Artists Oral History Project, will see interviews with young and emerging artists undertaken at regular intervals to build a record of their subsequent careers and to capture the changing nature of their understanding of their professions.

Our intention is to capture the widest possible spectrum of artists who will work in the film, television, sound or audiovisual industries, or will cross into these areas for part of their careers. This includes not only filmmakers and recording artists but also actors, musicians, dancers, designers, visual artists and craftspeople, writers and others.

### Beyond Australian stories - cultural diplomacy

The NFSA is a leading member of a number of international film and archival bodies, and we especially value our role in helping our regional neighbours through the South East Asia and Pacific Audio Visual Archives Association (SEAPAVAA). In the last few years the NFSA has worked closely with the National Archives of Singapore and the Malaysian Archives in providing copies of local content so the residents of both countries can enjoy watching local footage. We have been particularly active in engaging with our immediate neighbours in Timor-Leste and Papua New Guinea. We hold extensive collections of material from these two nations and are keen to provide them with support and technical assistance. They are struggling to come to grips with exceptional challenges in preserving and archiving their historical materials in hostile climates and with woefully inadequate resources and technical capacity. There are a number of initiatives already underway at the NFSA to take an active role in the preservation of these endangered collections.

The NFSA would welcome the opportunity to further research and share our holdings of benefit to our near neighbours, activity that strongly supports Australian cultural diplomacy. Next year, 2012 is the 10th anniversary of the establishment of Timor Leste. The overall state of Timor-Leste's cultural heritage has been heavily impacted by the dramatic political and military upheavals dating from World War II to recent years. The events of late 1975 in particular resulted in the mass exodus of many of the better off Timorese and expatriate population to Australia and other countries such as the USA and centres with colonial connections such as Portugal and Macau, and the loss of cultural heritage from Timor-Leste. Various public records are also believed to have been removed to Djakarta as part of the occupation. In the period leading up to independence the political leadership of Timor-Leste spoke publicly in support of the importance of establishing and maintaining a record of the country's national history and memory.

The NFSA would like to support the Australian Government's Timor-Leste Strategy (2009 - 2014) noting that the Timor Leste Government's Strategic Development Plan – 2011-2030 includes the a commitment to have The National Library and Archives of Timor-Leste operational in the period to 2015. The NFSA would be interested in further cooperation with Government agencies responsible for international aid and diplomacy in the interests of promoting cultural exchange and exercising regional influence through 'soft power'.

Imagine what a special birthday gift a package of audiovisual history and memories would be to this nation which is struggling to emerge from its conflicted past.

### Conclusion - Goal 3

The NFSA contributes strongly to the strategies and outcomes of this goal.

We believe that Government could better harness the efforts of cultural organisations by greater collaboration of Departments responsible for international aid and diplomacy with Australian cultural institutions.

The NFSA believes it has a special role to play, if assisted by broader Government, to assist with nation building and bolstering the cultural heritage of countries within our own region.

The NFSA proposes an amended goal and additional strategies that will enhance and accelerate progress to this goal:

*To support excellence and world-class endeavour, and strengthen the role that **our unique Australian cultures play** in telling stories both here and overseas.*

### Additional strategy

*Harness the value of Australian collecting institutions by supporting direct funding of Australian cultural institutions through projects with Government agencies responsible for international aid and diplomacy.*

**Goal 4:** *To increase and strengthen the capacity of the arts to contribute to our society and economy*

### Online education resources

The NFSA is the primary and premium source of online access to audiovisual collections in Australia and a significant presence globally. AustralianScreenOnline (ASO)<sup>21</sup> provides a model that makes high quality education outcomes a by-product of online publication, and has achieved this with a number of significant collection partners. ASO had its genesis as a tool funded through Screen Australia to showcase the Australian screen industry to the world. Partnerships, including with Le@rning Federation enabled the development of teachers' notes that identify and describe the educational values of many of the film clips. The development and continuing enhancement of ASO is directed towards maintaining a promotional and educational resource providing worldwide online access to information about the Australian film and television industry. The dual nature of the site means it has great utility in engaging a broad range of people both in Australia and overseas as well as being a quality learning resource for teachers and students.

The expert curators commissioned by ASO include film and television directors, critics, historians and scriptwriters, archivists, broadcasters, composers, Indigenous filmmakers and scholars, artists, musicians, festival directors and performers. These prominent and passionate individuals contextualise as a cultural destination.

More recently, the NFSA has acquired 21 Screen Australia Digital Learning websites as part of the Film Australia Collection. These content rich education websites feature thousands of video and audio clips available for streaming and downloading.

In the coming months the redeveloped NFSA corporate website<sup>22</sup> will also be deployed, creating new opportunities to discover works through an improved collection search, to connect to all NFSA collection databases as well as existing ASO resources, to publish the results of research undertaken by NFSA staff and scholars and artists who work with it, and to deliver increased online support for NFSA's Learning and Cultural Programs Strategy.

The NFSA has significant collections, including the Film Australia Collection, established partnerships with other Australian film and television producers and collections, as well as the online platforms and skilled personnel already delivering audiovisual resources to education. The NFSA's content aligns with the new national curriculum in the areas of History, English, the Arts and Geography. It is even stronger in the most recent edition of the Arts curriculum.

There is increasing demand for and expectations of NFSA online education resources to meet the needs of the Australian Government's Digital Education Revolution and National Curriculum initiatives. There is a compelling opportunity (if not obligation) for the NFSA to place learning and education at the centre of future online content development.

However, we are concerned that funding for online education resources might be too narrowly funnelled so that the broader potential for online publication of audiovisual materials might not be able to be realised. That is, schools education specific criteria might prevent the development of online resources that also serve as research and access supports to creative industries, tools for the national and international promotion of Australian screen and sound culture or resources for cultural tourism.

Educators, artists and creative industries alike would benefit from projects that enable the NFSA to realise online platforms that reach more broadly to the Australian and international community.

### Building skills and capacities for engagement

NFSA Connects is already at the future of education delivering student centred participatory learning that will be able to reach out to more young Australians as the NBN and technology resources are rolled out to more schools.

*"Let me say that this was the most wonderful opportunity, my kids were absolutely thrilled – what a way to create an authentic, rich and luminous resource for our context studies, especially a text that it is not necessarily easy to collect first class resources for...Absolutely unforgettable!"*

Tim Cottrell, Keilor Downs College, Keilor Down, VIC

<sup>21</sup> <http://aso.gov.au/>

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.nfsa.gov.au/>



## ●●● education

Developed by [Education Services Australia](#) through [The Learning Federation](#), the education collection is designed to help teachers and students make the most of the wide range of moving image resources on the site. The clips in this collection are accompanied by teachers' notes created by specialist curriculum writers. Expert curators' notes also provide useful background material.

Clips in this collection have been selected for their educational value and any clips that are considered potentially disturbing carry clear [classification warnings](#).

There are currently 1065 clips with teachers' notes. These clips are identified by the  symbol.



[Environment](#)  
164 clips



[Film and media](#)  
507 clips



[History](#)  
241 clips



[Identity and culture](#)  
364 clips



[Indigenous Australia](#)  
240 clips



[Science and technology](#)  
118 clips



[Society](#)  
352 clips



[Sport and health](#)  
202 clips

Australian Screen Online website

Through the NFSA Connects program, high school students from around Australia have the opportunity to interact with leading Australian creative artists such as Rachel Perkins, Aden Young, Paul Kelly and Darlene Johnson. They can ask them questions and hear, first-hand, their experiences of working in the audiovisual cultural industry.

The NFSA Connects program builds on the growing importance of screen culture in today's teaching. It facilitates these events in collaboration with the various state education departments and uses schools' video and web-conferencing equipment to allow students, especially from remote and regional Australia, to participate in the Q&A sessions. The program is deliberately designed to develop online learning models that will harness the capability of the National Broadband Network. NFSA Connects is a world leading program that will kindle the flame of school children who aspire to the creative excellence of Australians like Cate Blanchett.

NFSA Connects complements our School Screen program through which we continue to showcase Australian films and stories to regional school students and teachers nationally with free screenings of feature films, shorts and documentaries in local cinemas.

NFSA also recognises the importance of offering training, education and innovative learning opportunities via the NBN to the broader Australian community outside of the school system. The NFSA and the CSIRO's Australian Centre for Broadband Innovation (ACBI) have been meeting to discuss developing a short term research and development project on the NBN. Using NFSA Connects as the model, we propose to work with the community to organise workshops, information sessions or film screenings to the community. NFSA digitised and copyright cleared content will be paired with CSIRO's existing collaboration technology. The first step will be to set up a meeting with the community in Kiama, NSW. Participants will include NFSA Online and National Programs and ACBI staff with representatives from the local Kiama library, council, community and school education, University, Historical Society and other interested parties.

### Support from the private sector for NFSA's film restoration programs

The NFSA is challenged with the ongoing storage and preservation of a massive collection of 200,000 Australian films. In 2000 the NFSA partnered with Atlab Pty Ltd and Kodak (Australasia) Pty Ltd to embark on an exciting collaboration to ensure that 50 of Australia's more recent 'classic' colour feature films were not only fully preserved but also available in pristine new film print form. This inaugural Kodak Atlab Project proved so successful that a second phase (now called the Deluxe/Kodak Project, due to Atlab's change of corporate identity) emerged for 2006–2011 to address 25 additional key feature-length film titles.

Working in close collaboration with the Deluxe laboratory team, and with Kodak as a film stock supplier, we also seek advice and support from the original filmmakers whenever possible, to ensure the best possible results. This year Peter Weir's classic *Gallipoli* has been restored to its full glory.

The existing colour film prints of many recent classic Australian features are in a very degraded state, scratched, faded or cut about from damage. This has happened to most of my early films. The actions of the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia, Kodak and Atlab in making prints of 50 colour films over the next five years will ensure that recent Australian films can be appreciated by the world's filmgoers in the decades to come.

– Dr George Miller

Deluxe/Kodak titles have screened nationally and internationally at archival retrospectives and film festivals at such far-flung places as the Danish Film Institute (Copenhagen), the Museum of Modern Art (New York), the Mar del Plata Film Festival (Buenos Aires), the Halls Gap Film Festival (in regional Victoria), and all of the major Australian Film Festivals. They have also featured in our Arc cinema and Big Screen programs and have always been presented within the context of the highest quality of work being generated through the Deluxe/Kodak collaboration.

Alongside this colour film project, the NFSA's own motion picture labs continue to preserve black and white film heritage. The curatorial task is to prioritise works for comprehensive preservation (and often restoration) treatment. Curators focus on films which are unique (not held elsewhere), which are in physical danger of disintegration and which illustrate important elements of the history of cinema in Australia.

We recently restored four films made by Italian/Australian filmmaker Giorgio Mangiamiele — *Il Contratto* (1953), *The Spag* (1962), *Ninety Nine Per Cent* (1963) and *Clay* (1965). In collaboration with industry partner Ronin Films they have been released as a DVD box set, and three screened to great interest at the 2011 Melbourne International Film Festival. There is potential for further digital distribution.

NFSA's film preservation partnerships have dramatically extended its budget funding through involving private sector partners in projects that ensure that children and young Australians will have the opportunity to experience the cinema arts. In these strategic collaborations we not only respond to responding to community and audience demand but also apply our curatorial expertise to lead, guide and educate Australian and international communities in screen culture and history.

### Conclusion - Goal 4

The NFSA contributes strongly to the strategies and outcomes of this goal. The NFSA aspires to make audiovisual archive resources available to the education sector as flexibly and sustainably as possible using existing NFSA website infrastructure and to deliver a significant, integrated and engaging online space for learners.

Our innovative and effective work has been possible through developing strong partnerships. In order to deliver to the schools education sector, the NFSA has actively pursued funding from the department responsible for education and has negotiated funding through Education Services Australia (and its predecessors). This enabled us to provide tremendous resources for this one sector. However, as Government recognises, the power of digital resources and the opportunities for building digital literacy is something that must be provided to many Australians at all points in their lives and careers.

Educators, artists and creative industries and rural communities alike would benefit from projects that would enable the NFSA to realise online platforms, publish resources and data and empower industries and professions not yet dreamt of. Life-long learning will more broadly support diverse Australian communities. While the NFSA aspires to realise these benefits to Australian society and our economy realising them is not possible within our limited resources. Like many other cultural institutions the NFSA is seeking funding through a range of initiatives at all levels of Government. Australian cultural development is a very notable omission in NBN objectives.

There is also great inefficiency in the diverse cultural institutions piecemeal chasing funds for small pilots and projects rather than a specific NBN initiative that draws on the sector's vast cultural resources to develop innovative online resources. In doing so, Government would also be addressing the issues of the Convergence Review in ensuring that a depth of Australian cultural content is available online. We are aware that the Feral Arts Association proposed that Government provide just 1% of NBN funding for initiative to support participation in culture and the arts and invite the Minister to imagine how effective this would be. A working model of the effectiveness of an approach like this is available in the New Zealand Governments'

Digital New Zealand initiative<sup>23</sup>.

<sup>23</sup> <http://digitalnz.org>

The NFSA proposes a rewording of Goal 4:

**Goal 4:** *To increase and strengthen the capacity of the arts and cultural activities to contribute to our society and economy*

Additional strategies that will enhance and accelerate progress to this goal:

- *Establish an NBN initiative that harnesses the resources of the Government's cultural institutions by funding a range of innovative online community and education projects*  
Eg: Seniors are well represented as volunteers in community heritage organisations, projects improve seniors' engagement and online skills through working to identify, contribute and interpret cultural material of local significance through linking national and local collecting institutions.
- *Support partnerships at all levels of government with cultural institutions to identify, interpret and harness the pool of research and Australian cultural material in creative enterprises*
- *Explore regulatory options that encourage production of digital content and intellectual property, maintain and attract cultural workers, and promote production based on existing Australian cultural collections*

## CONCLUSION

The NFSA is proud to provide the Minister with the evidence of how NFSA already make a substantial contribution to the proposed Goals of the National Cultural Policy. We also encourage Government to consider the impact of goals and funding for initiatives that support leveraging greater value from the investment in already makes in its cultural institutions. Hence, in this response, NFSA has suggested amended wording and additional strategies for the four goals posited in the discussion paper and a fifth Goal with attendant strategies.

Given the unique and important role the NFSA has in supporting cultural and artistic expression, community and industry through the 21st century's favoured modes of audiovisual and digital engagement, the NFSA also urges the Minister to consider rebalancing its funding arrangements and providing greater resourcing to the NFSA so Government can best achieve its objectives.

The NFSA looks forward to the outcome of the review and is interested in opportunities to comment our proposed strategies. The NFSA appreciates your consideration of the issues and recommendations outlined in this submission.

