



# COLLECTION POLICY 2022

NATIONAL FILM AND SOUND ARCHIVE OF AUSTRALIA

Amended in June 2024



## NFSA Collection Policy – Overview

The NFSA is Australia's only national archive for audiovisual culture. We collect, preserve and share the national story through audiovisual material, which is the cultural engagement medium of our time. Our priority is to build a collection of historical, social and cultural significance that represents Australia's audiovisual output and experience, in all of its complexity and diversity.

We acquire Australian and limited international audiovisual works, associated documentation and objects. Our collecting decisions are guided by three overarching pillars:

- > Identity (cultural expression)
- > Form (technical output) and
- > Curiosity (education, entertainment and innovation).

We recognise the inherent historical and ongoing biases in decision-making about what we collect, preserve and share. This is reflected in gaps in collection content and understanding – particularly in relation to First Nations, cultural and linguistic diversity (CALD) and gender diversity. Our priority is to address these gaps through proactive and targeted collecting activity and research. In particular, we will focus on building First Nations representation in the national audiovisual collection, on increasing understanding of this material, and facilitating repatriation of First Nations content where appropriate, in partnership with First Nations people, communities and organisations.

We preserve and digitise the collection, maintaining and conserving work in its original format where possible, digitising to preserve content and to provide long-term access, and maintaining safe and secure storage for physical and digital collection material.

The NFSA provides direct and mediated access to the collection, through research and education, audition and production, entertainment, commissions, cultural expression, loans, collaborations, outreach and experience-based activities. We work within the cultural and Intellectual Property (IP) rights frameworks, respecting third party rights in collection materials.

Over last decade, there has been an explosion in new forms of creation, and we must continue to adapt to remain relevant and to ensure our collection appropriately reflects audiovisual creation. We are evolving to collect games and interactive media – and embracing the technical and philosophical challenges these present.

We operate as part of an international network of audiovisual archives, and we work to the highest international archival standards in our collection, preservation and sharing activity – for analogue and digital material.

# 1. PURPOSE

## 1.1 About the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia (NFSA)

The NFSA is Australia's only national audiovisual archive. We are established by the *National Film and Sound Archive of Australia Act 2008* (the Act), which requires us to collect and preserve a collection of Australian related film, recorded sound, broadcast, video games and extended reality and their associated documents and artefacts, and to share it with audiences worldwide.

The NFSA began as the National Historical Film and Speaking Record Library in 1935 as part of the Commonwealth National Library. The NFSA was established as a semi- autonomous body in 1984 with full responsibility for the national audiovisual collection. From 2003 to 2008 it was part of the Australian Film Commission, and was finally established as an independent statutory authority in 2008. In 2011 the assets of Film Australia Limited were transferred to the NFSA, including copyright in a significant body of work produced and commissioned by Film Australia and its predecessors for the Commonwealth of Australia.

## 1.2 The collection

The national audiovisual collection includes over 3.6 million items representing moving image and sound production from its earliest days to the present and into the future. Drama, actuality and documentary, creative arts, social and scientific history, comedy, experimental and unique amateur audiovisual records are all represented. Formats span the analogue era, from nitrate film and wax cylinders through to format iterations of the twentieth century (acetate and vinyl discs, audiotape, CDs, polyester film, broadcast video tape and various home movie formats). The collection includes the latest digital files produced by today's media creators and professionals, and ongoing creative advances in multimedia and multiplatform creative expression. Documentation and artefacts also form a large part of the collection, including stills, scripts, posters, manuscripts, multimedia design concepts and walkthroughs, media industry oral history interviews, costumes and vintage equipment.

## 2. PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

This Collection Policy sets out the guiding principles for the development, preservation and sharing of the national audiovisual collection. It is supported by the Collection Development Strategy, which outlines our approach to implementing the Collection Policy, and the Collection Development Plan, which describes specific areas of focus.

# 3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our collecting activity is based on the following principles:

## 3.1 Collect – Preserve – Share

The NFSA exists to perform three vital functions:

- > **Collect** audiovisual works and associated documentation that reflect all aspects of Australian experience and our diverse communities
- > **Preserve** the Collection in accordance with best international standards and working within our resources, to ensure permanent access
- > **Share** the Collection so its stories form an ongoing part of the evolution of our culture.

## 3.2 Reflecting diversity and complexity

The NFSA develops the national audiovisual collection on behalf of all Australians. The collection must reflect Australia's diversity and complexity across our history – including millennia of First Nations custodianship, European colonial and post-colonial culture, and the multicultural vibrancy of 21st century Australia. We acknowledge the diversity and multicultural nature of the Australian community as it relates to ethnicity, gender, age, class, sexual orientation, religion and ability. We acknowledge and seek to redress historical biases in interpreting what is important and what stories to collect and tell. We will prioritise activities to redress

these biases, to ensure that our collection reflects multiple viewpoints.

We respect and adhere to the inherent rights of First Nations peoples to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions as expressed in Article 31 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.<sup>1</sup> We commit to implementing the themes and commitments of the 2019 Tandanya Declaration.<sup>2</sup>

## 3.3 Curatorially driven

Collection management at the NFSA is based upon a curatorial approach in which collection development, collection preservation and collection sharing are interlinked activities. It builds upon the concepts of collecting, managing and experiencing the artefact and the content in context and with integrity. Curators, reference teams, expert advisers, collection managers and technicians, engagement and access services staff all contribute to this process.

Our collection must be accessible and shared where appropriate, to remain relevant and meaningful. The NFSA does not simply store materials that are 'frozen in time'. The goal of our curators is to ensure that cultural materials are understood and interpreted to high professional standards, as significant and valuable manifestations of history and as cultural concepts.

This duty of care informs collection development strategies, preservation priorities and activities to engage the public with the NFSA collection. Our curatorial approach values professionalism, accountability, impartiality, collegiality and the ethical, effective and efficient use of resources.

## 3.4 Relevant and evolving

Audiovisual media is constantly evolving. Our collection reflects formats as they have changed over more than a century, along with the changing nature of audiovisual content. It is critical that we continue to shift our approach, referencing new modes of production, consumption, interpretation and use. Born digital media, and in particular games and interactive media, present challenges for museums and archives the world over. Institutions like the NFSA must develop new infrastructure and approaches to collecting and preserving, to conquer the particular technical, legal and philosophical questions these new formats pose. The NFSA will continue to evolve our collecting practice to adapt to games, interactive media (IM) and other formats as they emerge, in order to remain relevant and to ensure that our collection presents a full picture of Australia's audiovisual story.

<sup>1</sup> [www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS\\_en.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> International Council on Archives Expert Matters Indigenous Group, Tandanya – Adelaide Declaration, 2019.

### **3.5 Committed to archival standards and best practice**

As part of an international community of cultural collecting institutions, including galleries, libraries, archives and museums, we actively align our activities with recognised best practice. The professional standards practised by the NFSA reflect the conventions, codes and protocols applied by national and international cultural organisation peak bodies. We also actively contribute to the formulation of standards: we debate their principles, participate in and monitor their development and adopt them into our own practices, as appropriate.

### **3.6 Connected and collaborative**

Collaboration and partnerships as part of a network of community, industry and public organisations are essential in today's cultural and collecting environment.

We work closely with our fellow Australian Government National Collecting Institutions and with other Australian cultural collecting institutions. The NFSA supports collaboration across all tiers of government, and plays an active role in policy development and public debate through our work with peak bodies in the collections sector.

The NFSA is an active member of the international community of film, sound, broadcast and multimedia archives and museums. We contribute directly to the world body of audiovisual archiving expertise, adhering to and promoting the practices and ethics of the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF), the International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives (IASA), the International Federation of Television Archives, the Australian Museums and Galleries Association (AMaGA) and the Australian Society of Archivists. We subscribe to the protocols, declarations and recommendations of UNESCO and its Coordinating Council of Audiovisual Archival Associations.

The NFSA engages in exchange, training and mentoring and practical and philosophical debate in our field both nationally and internationally. We take a leadership role in directing and coordinating initiatives in the audiovisual field in Australia, and advising on audiovisual practices in Australia and the region.

# 4. COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

## 4.1 Key collecting areas and priorities

Under the NFSA Act, we have a unique mandate to build a collection of audiovisual works and associated documentation, to preserve these works and to make them accessible. We develop and maintain a collection of historical, social and cultural significance.

We cannot collect everything, and our collection is necessarily representative of Australia's audiovisual output and experience. Our curators make judicious and informed decisions about what to bring into the collection, based on expert knowledge and research, and in line with the Collection Development Strategy and Collection Development Plan.

Our collecting takes place against three guiding pillars:

- > Identity – content that represents Australian culture, histories, viewpoints and perspectives in the audiovisual context,
- > Form – content reflecting Australian creative and technical achievement in the audiovisual context, and
- > Curiosity – content that focuses on the growth of knowledge, education and entertainment in the audiovisual context.

Our focus is on Australian audiovisual material. We selectively collect international material to provide context to historical Australian audiovisual production, with a focus on international material that:

- > has cultural influence and impact in Australia, and that would otherwise not be accessible to Australians
- > reflects culture and creativity in the Pacific region
- > is the only known extant copy of an international work, or which is not adequately preserved or otherwise at risk of loss.

It is critical that the collection reflects the diversity and complexity of Australian stories and viewpoints. Over the life of this Collection Policy, our focus will be on building diversity within the collection, particularly in relation to Australian First Nations.

## 4.2 Acquisition methods

Our collecting activity is both proactive and reactive. We actively target acquisitions, and we respond to unsolicited collection offers. Decisions about what to acquire for the NFSA collection are made by curators in line with this Collection Policy, and within the decision-making framework set out in the NFSA Collection Development Strategy and Collection Development Plan.

We acquire collection material through a range of methods including:

- > **Donation** – ownership of the physical items transfers to the NFSA. Copyright may also be conveyed partially or in full as part of this transaction but usually rests with the original copyright holder.
- > **Deposit** – physical items are lodged with the NFSA but physical ownership remains with the depositor and the original items may be withdrawn by the depositor at any time.
- > **Bequest** – ownership of physical items is transferred to the NFSA by will. Copyright may also be conveyed by will. The NFSA welcomes such contributions on the basis of agreed selection and relevance.
- > **Purchase** – our collections budget is used to purchase items; in some cases, this can include the purchase of any copyright in that item. Purchase is the final option but only when finances allow and when identified works are deemed sufficiently relevant to the collection.
- > **Legal Deposit** – a copy of material is required to be provided to the NFSA under an Act of Parliament.
- > **Deliverables** – a copy of material is required to be provided to the NFSA under a contractual arrangement (such as with the Australian Government and/or state and territory screen funding bodies).

Formats acquired include all analogue and digital varieties which are used to produce relevant audiovisual works in their original form. As current digital formats continue to evolve, the NFSA updates its processes to accommodate format development and migration. Online and digital-born works, including selections from sites such as YouTube and Facebook, are included within the established context for audiovisual production. As the audiovisual production world expands and converges, video games, virtual reality and ongoing developments of artificial intelligence and their influence on creative industries and cultural expression, are also part of the national collection.

When items physically delivered to the NFSA for consideration are deemed not relevant for the collection because of their content, inferior condition or duplication of existing holdings, they are defined as 'non-selected' and disposed of according to the procedures outlined below.

### 4.3 Collection collaborations

As the only national audiovisual collecting institution in Australia, the NFSA takes a leadership role in driving and coordinating advocacy initiatives in the audiovisual archiving field.

The NFSA operates in collaboration with other key national, state and regional collecting bodies and with key industry bodies to increase our impact and to achieve the most efficient and cost-effective outcomes, including avoiding duplication of efforts and sharing resources where appropriate. These collaborations include the contractual arrangements with Australian screen funding bodies, and specifically relate to formal or informal collection development focuses shared with and relating to specific institutions such as the Australian War Memorial (war-related audiovisual works), the National Archives of Australia

(government records), the National Library of Australia (folklore, oral history and music recordings) and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (Indigenous cultural materials and related research and production).

### 4.4 Data management

The NFSA undertakes to capture and record information relating to all material in our care to facilitate its discoverability and to increase the potential for research and creative appropriation. This is accomplished through metadata harvesting and creating an acquisition record in the NFSA collection management system that identifies the provenance, content significance and format of the work in accordance with the relevant procedures.

Acquisitions are carefully prioritised for accessioning. The catalogue record created upon accessioning is the formal documentation of a work in the collection; it contains a detailed intellectual and technical description of material so that it can be readily identified, located and retrieved on request.

Accessioning is completed in accordance with the NFSA Data Entry Guidelines and Accessioning Policy, to ensure consistency in our practice of data management. The NFSA is committed to quality information and governance of our collection records is undertaken in accordance with the NFSA Data Quality Framework.

### 4.5 Deselection

Curators and NFSA management carefully consider and document deselection decisions. Deselection means the permanent removal of an item from the NFSA collection on the basis that it:

- > is in a state of advanced deterioration or irreversible repair to the point where the content cannot be recovered or the item accorded the necessary conservation treatment

- > is of poor quality, either intrinsically or relative to other items
- > requires return to its owner and/or repatriation
- > duplicates other items in the collection in excess of the collection's requirement for additional copies
- > is made redundant by subsequent new format copies or new acquisition components
- > no longer falls within the scope of the NFSA's collecting remit due to its content or format.

In the event or immediate aftermath of a disaster, we may have to deselect collection material that is so severely damaged it cannot be recovered successfully.

### 4.6 Disposal

Curators and collection managers coordinate the disposal of deselected material according to one of the following methods, listed in order of preference:

- > returning the item to the donor, if the material was donated and the donor can be located
- > trading with another public or not-for-profit collecting institution or reputable individual collector
- > donating the item to another public or not-for-profit collecting institution
- > selling at a private or public auction
- > selling to a private buyer
- > destroying the material.

Physical disposal proceeds only after notifying donors, if they can be located. Proceeds from the disposal of deselected material go towards the acquisition of new works or preservation of existing collection materials.

### 4.7 Cultural gifts

Gifts made under the Cultural Gifts Program will not be returned to the donor as the donor has already received the benefit of a tax deduction for the gift.



# 5. PRESERVATION AND DIGITISATION PRINCIPLES

## 5.1 Key principles

In order to ensure access to the collection, for both the present and the future, preservation and digitisation aim to:

- > maintain the integrity of the original work
- > conserve, stabilise and/or duplicate its content
- > ensure that digitised material is readily available for use
- > maintain safe and secure storage conditions.

## 5.2 Standards and guidelines

In undertaking preservation and digitisation activities, the NFSA refers to relevant standards and guidelines set by international peak bodies and standards organisations. These include, but are not limited to:

### Film and still photography

- > ISO 18911:2010 *Imaging materials – Processed safety photographic films – Storage practices*
- > ISO 18902:2013 *Imaging materials – Processed imaging materials – Albums, framing and storage materials*
- > ISO 10356:1996 *Cinematography – Storage and handling of nitrate-base motion-picture films.*
- > ISO 18916:2007 *Imaging materials – Processed imaging materials – Photographic activity test for enclosure materials*

### Magnetic media

- > ISO 1858:1977 *Information processing – General purpose hubs and reels, with 76 mm (3 in) centrehole, for magnetic tape used in interchange instrumentation applications*

- > ISO 18933:2012 *Imaging materials – Magnetic tape – Care and handling practices for extended usage*
- > ISO 18923:2000 *Imaging materials – Polyester-base magnetic tape – Storage practices.*

### Non-ISO Standards

- > DIN SPEC 15587 – Standard for the Digitisation of Cinematographic Film
- > IASA-TC 03 (2017) *Safeguarding the Audio Heritage: Ethics, Principles and Preservation Strategy*
- > IASA-TC 04 (2009) *Guidelines on the Production and Preservation of Digital Audio Objects*
- > IASA-TC 05 (2014) *Handling and Storage of Audio and Video Carriers*
- > IASA-TC 06 (2018) *Guidelines for the Preservation of Video Recordings*

### Related documents

- > ANSI IT9.13-1996 *Imaging Materials – Glossary of Terms Pertaining to Stability*
- > ANSI IT9.1-1989 *Imaging Media (film) – Silver Gelatin Type – Specifications for Stability*
- > NEH Report *Environment and Enclosures in Film Preservation* #PS 20802-94
- > NEH Report *The Preservation of Magnetic Tape Collections: A Perspective* #PA 50123-03
- > Image Permanence Institute: *New Tools for Preservation*
- > Image Permanence Institute: *Time Weighted Preservation Index (TWPI).*

## 5.3 Protecting the original work

Protecting the artistic and physical integrity of the original work is a primary responsibility. Whenever possible and reasonable, its preservation and reproduction in original format is the priority as this preserves material characteristics of the carrier medium, and allows for an understanding of its historical reproduction and reception context.

However, the move from analogue duplication to digital reproduction means that in many instances this approach is no longer sustainable on a large scale due to technical obsolescence. While the NFSA undertakes selective analogue preservation of audiovisual objects based on their value as creative and historical artefacts, digital extraction of a carrier's content has become the norm for the majority of formats. If preservation in the original format is not sustainable, the NFSA commits to 'lossless digitisation' according to international best practice wherever possible, recognising the challenge of digitising redundant analogue items before they become inaccessible. Balancing the priorities of digitisation to full preservation archival standards, and the imperative to deliver accessible digital files for research and subsequent use in a timely fashion, remains a major prioritising responsibility.

## Active preservation and digitisation

Active preservation maintains the content of audiovisual works either by duplication to a new carrier in the original format, or by signal extraction of its content and embedded metadata into a lossless digital format through the digitisation process. Active preservation aims to produce new copies that are authentic, complete, of equivalent quality to the original item and reflect as much as possible the original author's intention at the time of its production.

Curators and access staff research and establish priorities for active preservation in consultation with preservation experts. In prioritising collection material for active preservation and digitisation, the NFSA focusses on a combination of physically at-risk, culturally significant and 'in demand' material.

Where possible, we will digitise original material that has not yet been preserved in analogue format to the highest preservation standards, based on an 'end-to-end' workflow which delivers lossless preservation outcomes, distribution files and simpler audition files through the one process. When digitising formats such as broadcast television, we will digitise to accepted industry output standards. Similarly, when original analogue formats have been preserved in analogue form, we may take the same approach on the premise that the preserved analogue material remains a stable future master reference.

## Passive preservation

Passive preservation aims to maximise the longevity of physical original materials through non-invasive conservation treatments (for example, cleaning), appropriate packaging and storage, and controlled environmental conditions. It also encompasses the adequate storage, back-up and

migration of digital collection materials, as well as proper handling and usage procedures for all relevant assets.

## 5.4 Formats and media (analogue and digital)

The NFSA deals with all formats of audiovisual production from the earliest iterations of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the constantly evolving digital forms of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In addition, we manage major holdings of documents and artefacts in traditional and digital formats.

The evolution of technology in audiovisual production and distribution has resulted in the technological obsolescence of much analogue and photochemical media. The NFSA maintains the expertise and facilities necessary for working with obsolete media and the associated exhibition experience, while also actively pursuing the digitisation of collection material to ensure the ongoing preservation and accessibility of the NFSA collection.

The *NFSA Technical Specifications for Digital Preservation* details our digital file formats for preservation, distribution and access purposes and their respective technical metadata. This is a 'living' document that we regularly review and update to reflect best archival practice for the long-term preservation of our digital collection and the access needs of our users.

There is now consensus among audiovisual archives internationally that we will cease being able to support large-scale digitisation of magnetic media in the very near future. Magnetic tape that is not digitised by 2025 will in most cases be lost forever.

Our *Deadline 2025: Collections at Risk* (2015) called for the development of a collaborative National Framework for Digitisation of Audiovisual Collections. With additional funding support from the Australian Government, the NFSA is now well on track to address the challenge of digitising our most at risk magnetic media.

## 5.5 Storage of physical materials

We regularly assess storage requirements for the NFSA collection.

International best practice informs our approach to environmental conditions in our storage facilities. They are designed, managed and monitored to ensure the longest possible life expectancy of the various materials in our collection.

In undertaking preservation activities, we are guided by standards and international guidelines published by recognised authorities in the engineering and archival fields to assist in the design, construction and maintenance of collection storage vaults. We undertake regular monitoring and annual testing of facilities to ensure consistent performance.

International best practice also informs the environmental conditions appropriate for the materials held in each of our vaults.

We have implemented appropriate security policies and practical security systems, including fire detection, in all collection storage areas, and undertake a regular formal review of alarm notification procedures.

## 5.6 Storage of file-based (digital) materials

The management of our digital audiovisual collection is aligned with the Open Archival Information System (OAIS) model. This model identifies mandatory responsibilities for file acquisition, authentication, long-term storage and discoverability. Key management issues include:

- > avoidance of proprietary codecs and wrappers for audiovisual objects wherever possible
- > quarantine and authentication of incoming (third party) files
- > verification of data (checksums) at any step of the path
- > periodic checking of data (checksum)
- > migration of cloud-based services and resources
- > long-term data storage on the latest generation tape format<sup>3</sup>
- > retention of three tape copies in three physical locations
- > geographical isolation of the third copy from the other two copies
- > periodic migration of the tape library<sup>4</sup>
- > migration of at-risk digital formats as a priority.

## 5.7 Research and innovation

The NFSA encourages continued research and discovery to improve preservation and conservation performance. In collaboration with the broader audiovisual archive community, audiovisual industries and the tertiary sector, we are guided by advances in environmental controls, storage, digital workflows and technical leverage and technology standards.

<sup>3</sup> The NFSA preservation data tape is currently LTO6. The next migration is scheduled to be LTO8 in 2022-23.

<sup>4</sup> Periodic migration allows the data to be verified completely and for growth without updating the hardware.

# 6. SHARING THE NATIONAL AUDIOVISUAL COLLECTION

## 6.1 Key principles

At the heart of the NFSA's purpose is the need to foster engagement with the national audiovisual collection. We do this through direct and mediated access – research and education, audition and production, entertainment, commissions, cultural expression, loans, collaborations, outreach and experience-based activities. We endeavour to ensure that the collection is discoverable and accessible, in a way that meets user expectations.

We work within the cultural and intellectual property rights frameworks and we respect third party rights in collection materials. We respect ICIP and work with First Nations owners and creators of collection material to ensure that access and engagement is culturally appropriate. Third-party ownership of much of the intellectual property in the NFSA collection means that permissions are often required prior to any external use or copying of collection material. Where audiovisual material is available commercially the NFSA refers enquiries to the relevant parties.

The NFSA works in collaboration with the international network of audiovisual archives to deliver consistent, equitable access which supports the core archival principles of responsible preservation whilst facilitating use of the broadest range of collection materials.

Wherever possible, the NFSA provides access to the collection and related information, in accordance with NFSA business operations. We balance this commitment with the actual costs of providing services and the need for cost recovery from clients and users.

Our sharing activities are based on curatorial values and a strong connection to the national audiovisual collection. We make the collection relevant through context, interpretation, expertise and by connecting it to topical issues. We aim to maximise the collection's potential to have a positive impact on society and to contribute to the process of Reconciliation with peoples, social justice, accessibility, equity, inclusion and diversity.

Finally, we seek to understand, quantify and qualify the aspirations and needs of our existing and potential users, and to prioritise sharing activities accordingly.

## 6.2 Collection access services

The NFSA provides access to collection materials for third party use, including film and documentary makers, cultural collecting institutions, researchers, educators, artists and other industry practitioners, making the collection available to a broad audience.

Loan conditions for collection material reflect attribution, branding and cost requirements familiar to audiovisual archives worldwide and are closely aligned with relevant sections in the FIAF Statutes and Rules<sup>5</sup>. They are noted in the formal loan agreement for each approved loan.

## 6.3 Engagement

The NFSA endeavours to provide access to collection material in digital format, where possible. We support access to and engagement with the collection online where appropriate, across all spaces and surfaces where audiences and users engage with audiovisual culture. This includes search access to collection data, blogs, curated collections, oral histories and other online content.

The NFSA actively facilitates, promotes and mediates public engagement with the collection by:

- > Highlighting its relevance in contemporary society through context, interpretation, storytelling, experience design, community engagement and dialogue.
- > Creating and maintaining safe spaces for discussion about Australia's history, culture and identity, acknowledging bias as well as historical and colonial legacies.
- > Educating Australians about our audiovisual heritage and culture to enable them to critically engage with media in all aspects of life.

<sup>5</sup> [www.fiafnet.org/pages/E-Resources/FIAF-Statutes-and-Rules.html](http://www.fiafnet.org/pages/E-Resources/FIAF-Statutes-and-Rules.html). The relevant sections are Chapter IX - Relations Between Affiliates in the 2016 edition.

- > Encouraging diverse perspectives on a broad range of elements of the Collection from experts, creators and audiences.

The NFSA also commissions new work and new interpretations of existing work, to promote unique perspectives of collection material.

## 6.4 Education

The NFSA delivers education programs linked to the Australian curriculum, designed to increase understanding of the national audiovisual collection.

As the trusted custodian for Australia's audiovisual heritage, the NFSA has a unique role in relation to media literacy, delivering educational programs to increase awareness of, and skills in, media literacy for all Australians.

## 6.5 Professional Development

The NFSA encourages our staff to research, interpret and share the national collection through professional activities including conference papers, blogs, articles and other professional development activities.

## 6.6 Collaborations

Collaboration with reputable partners in Australia and internationally is a key strategy for the NFSA to share as much of the collection as possible, to the widest audience. We welcome and seek out partnerships with cultural institutions and exhibitors.

# 7. FIRST NATIONS COLLECTION MATERIAL

The NFSA's collection must include at its heart the unique stories and perspectives of Australia's First Nations as an integral part of the epic story of 21<sup>st</sup> century Australia.<sup>6</sup> The national audiovisual collection as it stands today reflects the biases of our past, which have shaped the social context in which audiovisual content is created, impacted decisions about what we collect and filtered how we interpret and share it. It is vital that we challenge the assumptions on which our collection has been built, that we identify the impact they have had on the collection and our understanding of it.

The NFSA recognises the 2019 Tandanya Declaration<sup>7</sup>, which makes a call to action for archives to embrace First Nations methods of creating, sharing and preserving knowledge, and to work respectfully with First Nations people. We will strive to implement the principles embodied in the Declaration through all of our activities. Importantly, consultation and partnerships with First Nations individuals, communities and organisations will be central to any activity undertaken in relation to First Nations collection material.

Today, the NFSA is custodian of over 30,000 audiovisual works on the stories of Australia's First Nations. There is much more we can do to better understand and ensure the safe and appropriate use of this material, and to expand First Nations representation and perspectives in the collection overall.

Over the life of this Collection Policy we will prioritise this work through a range of activities:

- > Targeting First Nations content in our acquisitions for the national audiovisual collection
- > Identifying and clarifying the nature and provenance of existing First Nations collection material
- > Working with First Nations individuals, communities and organisations to re-establish permissions for existing collection material
- > Improving catalogue information including identification of cultural protocols and access controls for First Nations collection material
- > Working with owners of collection material to repatriate content to First Nations individuals, communities and organisations, and
- > Ensuring that First Nations collection material is accessed, preserved and stored in a culturally appropriate manner.

In undertaking these activities, the NFSA commits to working in partnership with First Nations communities, cultural knowledge holders, and creators to develop the collection and respectfully manage these cultural materials. We will continue to rely on the advice and guidance of First Nations individuals, communities and organisations through a range of ongoing and targeted relationships.

The NFSA has established an Indigenous Connections Committee, comprising First Nations subject matter experts as well as members of the NFSA Board, to specifically address and support the NFSA's First Nations initiatives including the development, preservation and sharing of the national audiovisual collection.

While the NFSA will prioritise the repatriation of content in our collection to Australian First Nations people, we also recognise that the NFSA is part of an international network of cultural collecting institutions that, collectively, have a role in facilitating the repatriation of content for all First Nations peoples. Where possible, we will work with other institutions to assist with repatriation for Australian First Nations individuals and communities of collection material held internationally, and where appropriate we will assist to repatriate collection material held in Australian institutions to First Nations peoples from other countries. In Australia, the focus of our repatriation activity is to share knowledge and content, however at times the repatriation of physical collection items may also be undertaken.

Finally, we observe Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property (ICIP) protocols, which are embedded in our collection-related policies and workflows.

<sup>6</sup> With reference to Noel Pearson, "Declaration of Australia: three epic strands in a grand narrative", September 16, 2017.

<sup>7</sup> International Council on Archives Expert Matters Indigenous Group, Tandanya – Adelaide Declaration, 2019.

# 8. GAMES AND INTERACTIVE MEDIA

In recent years increasingly complex digital formats have presented challenges for many audiovisual collecting institutions, including the NFSA. Museums and archives the world over have been grappling with the difficulties that games and interactive media (IM)<sup>8</sup> present in the collecting environment – rapidly changing technology, a complex legal framework with multiple layers of ownership, shifting creation methods and an evolving value proposition. We have already adapted many of our systems to collect digital material that mirrors more traditional audiovisual formats (such as film and television). Digital games and IM demand a deeper and more rigorous update to our collecting approach and systems, due to their particularly complex nature and use framework.

As Australia's national audiovisual archive, games and IM are a core part of the NFSA's collecting remit. During the pandemic of 2020-21, digital games were second only to streaming services as a form of entertainment in Australian homes, ahead of free to air television and radio.<sup>9</sup> In addition, participation in gaming has the broadest demographic spread of any audiovisual format in Australia.<sup>10</sup> It is critical that we continue to evolve our practices to collect and preserve this significant and pervasive part of our national audiovisual culture.

In 2019 the NFSA undertook a pilot program to identify the challenges and opportunities in our approach to collecting video games. At that point, we identified that one of the greatest difficulties is not the act of

collecting the items themselves, but the requirement to ensure long-term viability and the ability to recreate, or to 'emulate' the gaming experience. That pilot highlighted gaps in our digital infrastructure, enabling us to target areas for investment to ensure that we can properly manage games and IM as part of our collection.

During 2022, changes in the Australian funding landscape have created new opportunities for games and IM creators which also present an opportunity for the NFSA to build our collection. The Australian Government's Digital Games Tax Offset will commence on 1 July 2022 and will include a requirement for all supported games to offer a copy to the NFSA. Screen Australia has also announced new funding for games development during 2022, and will require funding recipients to provide a copy of their finished products to the NFSA.

The NFSA is now positioned to move from a project-based approach to collecting games, to incorporating games and IM as part of our business-as-usual collection development activity. In doing this, our primary role as an archive is to collect the original content and files for games and IM as well as associated material, and to ensure their long-term preservation. There are specialist emulators currently in Australia and internationally that provide access to the gaming experience. We will actively develop our networks with other organisations that seek to maintain playback platforms for these items.

Collecting games and IM does present ongoing challenges to our existing approach that the NFSA will work to address over the life of this policy. In addition to gaps in our digital infrastructure, which we will work to procure and build, we will be developing our approach to the complex network of rights and ownership of games and IM.

There are more existential issues that we will also need to consider in the long-term. Social media platforms are built around IM content, however the platforms themselves are difficult to collect and preserve due to their proprietary nature and the heavy reliance on unique algorithms. We will endeavour to use technological solutions to record the user experience wherever possible. We will continue to work with other cultural collecting institutions to test different approaches to collecting, and we will endeavour to partner with industry and with creators.

Finally, we will consider our collecting philosophy over time, as the nature of games, IM and born digital content evolves. Digital means of production have led to a tsunami of digital content. We must make increasingly difficult decisions about what we choose to bring into the national audiovisual collection. The NFSA will continue to evolve our approach, as we reflect on our experiences in relation to games, IM and born digital content, and as we consider their influence on narrative and aesthetic forms, social connections and the distribution of information.

<sup>8</sup> 'Interactive media' includes screen-based experiences in which the user has an element of control or input.

<sup>9</sup> Interactive Games & Entertainment Association (IGEA), "Connected by Games: Digital Australia 2022", 2021 – [DA22-Report-FINAL-19-10-21.pdf \(igea.net\)](#).

<sup>10</sup> As above.



# 9. RELATED POLICIES, GUIDELINES AND REFERENCES

Policies and guidelines relating to the principles established in this policy include those listed below as updated:

## [www.nfsa.gov.au](http://www.nfsa.gov.au)

- > NFSA National Audiovisual Collection Accessioning Policy
- > NFSA Collection Development Strategy
- > NFSA Corporate Plan
- > NFSA Deadline 2025: Collections at Risk
- > NFSA Digitisation Strategy
- > NFSA Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights Guidelines
- > NFSA Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property Protocol
- > NFSA Indigenous Strategy 2020–2023
- > NFSA Reconciliation Action Plan
- > NFSA Strategic Vision

## **NFSA internal documents**

- > NFSA Collection Deselection Procedure
- > NFSA Data Entry Guidelines
- > NFSA Data Integrity Framework
- > NFSA Data Quality Standards
- > NFSA Digital Preservation Policy
- > NFSA Disposal of Non-selected Material Procedure
- > NFSA Mediaflex Procedures for Creating Acquisitions
- > NFSA Risk Management Framework
- > NFSA Technical Specifications for Digital Preservation
- > NFSA Collection Digitisation Plan 2020–2025

## [www.fiafnet.org](http://www.fiafnet.org)

- > FIAF (International Federation of Film Archives) Statutes and Rules 2016
- > FIAF Code of Ethics 2008
- > FIAF Moving Image Cataloguing Manual 2016
- > FIAF Resources of the Technical Commission (TC) including The Digital Statement Part 1–V and Digital Preservation Principles.

## [www.iasa-web.org](http://www.iasa-web.org)

- > Ethical Principles for Sound and Audiovisual Archives (2010)
- > IASA Cataloguing Rules 1999

## **Other**

- > Fédération Internationale des Archives de Télévision / The International Federation of Television Archives (FIAT/IFTA)
- > ICOM (International Council of Museums) Code of Ethics for Museums 2013 [www.icom.org](http://www.icom.org)
- > ICCROM (International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property) Standards in Preventive Conservation 2002 [www.iccrom.org](http://www.iccrom.org)
- > United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) 2007 [www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS\\_en.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf)
- > International Council on Archives Expert Matters Indigenous Group Tandanya – Adelaide Declaration (the Tandanya Declaration)

- > PSPF (Protective Security Policy Framework) [www.protectivesecurity.gov.au](http://www.protectivesecurity.gov.au)
- > Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers (SMPTE)
- > European Broadcasting Union (EBU)
- > International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
- > Audio Engineering Society (AES)
- > Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG)
- > Moving Picture Expert Group (MPEG)
- > Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF)
- > Digital Cinema Initiatives (DCI)
- > InterSociety Digital Cinema Forum (ISDCF)
- > Digital Preservation Coalition (DPC)



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SOUND ARCHIVE OF AUSTRALIA**

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