



muswellbrook shire council

Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre Management Policy

MSC051E

Authorisation Details

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Community Strategic Plan Goal	4. A culturally rich and diverse Community with strong identities, history and sense of belonging		
Community Strategic Plan Strategy	4.3 Host and support a diverse range of cultural activities and events which create a sense of identity and belonging, engage the local community and attract visitors		
Delivery Program	4.3.2 Deliver an arts program		

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1 Policy Objective

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for the delivery of Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre's functions. Policy objectives include:

- Ensuring organisational excellence in gallery management in accordance with national standards for Australian Museums and Galleries; and
- Delivery of best practice in collection management, exhibitions, and public programming.

2 Risks being addressed

This policy mitigates the potential risk of improper acquisition and deaccessioning of artworks, inadequate care and preservation of artworks, and poor exhibition and program planning.

3 Scope

This policy applies to the functions underpinning gallery service delivery: collection management, exhibitions, and public programming.

4 Policy Statement

The mission of Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre is to cultivate social engagement in arts and culture through the delivery of relevant and enriching contemporary visual arts programming. This policy guides the design and delivery of gallery services in support of this mission.

4.1 Collections

Objectives

The objectives of collection management for the Arts Centre are to:

- Develop a collection of works of art with an emphasis on the collecting focuses.
- Appropriately care for and conserve a regionally significant visual arts asset.
- Showcase a collection of works of art in meaningful ways that engage and connect with diverse audiences.

Principles

Muswellbrook Shire Council commits itself to the following principles:

- Accountability and transparency - The policy provides a framework for the transparent and relevant acquisition and deaccessioning of works of art to and from the collections.
- Providing museological standards of management, care, and conservation to ensure preservation of the collection of works of art.

4.1.1 Acquisitions

i) Collecting focus

The Arts Centre aims to collect Post War Australian works of art of all regions with an emphasis on:

- Paintings.
- Works on Paper.
- Ceramics.
- Photography.
- Works of art by artists associated with the Upper Hunter Region.

ii) **Criteria for acquisition**

The Arts Centre will only acquire a work of art for the collection if the work of art is:

- Relevant to, and informs, the collection including one of the collecting focuses.
- Unencumbered to allow an unconditional right to retain custody and control in perpetuity.
- Unencumbered to allow the legal and equitable title to transfer to Muswellbrook Shire Council.
- Able to be cared for and stored appropriately by the Arts Centre.
- Of gallery / museum quality and in a good state of preservation.
- Not a duplicate of a work of art already in the collection.
- Being acquired primarily for public display.

iii) **Authorisation for acquisition**

Pursuant to the Instrument of Sub-Delegation to the Arts Centre Director, the Director has the authority to:

- Authorise the acquisition of works of art, subject to the available budget.
- Accept gifts under the Tax Incentives for the Arts Scheme (Cultural Gifts Program).

4.1.2 Deaccessioning

i) **Criteria for deaccessioning**

The Arts Centre may only deaccession works of art if it is established that the work of art:

- Is inconsistent with this policy or was erroneously included in the collection.
- Has no clear legal and equitable title.
- Has been lost or stolen.
- Has its authenticity proven to be in question.
- Is damaged or suffered serious deterioration in condition.
- Is an obvious duplication or repetition of the work of art already in the collection.

ii) **Engaging with artists and donors**

Subject to the criteria for deaccessioning, the Arts Centre will not deaccession:

- A work of art by a living artist without first making a reasonable attempt to engage with the artist.
- A work of art donated or bequeathed to the Arts Centre without first making a reasonable attempt to engage with any relevant donor.

Exclusions include works of art that:

- Have been donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, where a work of art will not be returned to the donor, as the donor has already received the benefit of a tax deduction for the donation.

iii) **Recommendation and approval for deaccessioning**

Pursuant to the Instrument of Sub-Delegation to the Arts Centre Director, the Director has the authority to:

- Determine works of art to be considered for deaccessioning from the collection with a full report on the reason for disposal submitted to Council.

iv) **Methods of disposal**

Following deaccession, a work of art may be disposed of by various means, including sale, gift, and destruction. If works of art are approved for disposal through private sale or public auction, the proposed use of funds must be documented prior to sale.

4.1.3 Loans

i) **Authorisation for loans**

Pursuant to the Instrument of Sub-Delegation to the Arts Centre Director, the Director has the authority to:

- Approve the loan of work from the collection of works of art, where the loan is subject to the terms and conditions of Council's outgoing loan agreement.
- Authorise the loan of work from the Max Watters Collection in accordance with the Deed of Trust.

4.2 Exhibitions

Objectives

The objectives of exhibitions for the Arts Centre are to:

- Create awareness and appreciation of, and facilitate meaningful connections with, art.
- Develop, program, and manage high-quality, diverse, and accessible exhibitions.

Principles

Muswellbrook Shire Council commits itself to the following principles:

- Accountability and transparency - The policy provides a framework for the transparent programming of exhibitions.
- Exhibition management practices that ensure sound planning, financial, and risk management principles.
- Delivering exhibitions that meet museological standards and ethics in relation to content, interpretation, display, and access.

4.2.1 Exhibition Programming

i) **Criteria for exhibitions**

The Arts Centre will program exhibitions in accordance with the following criteria:

- Quality – presents considered, conceptually sound ideas; represents innovative approaches, as well as excellence in contemporary art.
- Value – engages and challenges audiences; contributes to Council's strategies and goals.
- Reach – facilitates meaningful connections with the arts; delivers outcomes relevant to the needs of audiences.
- Viability – achievable outcomes; sound planning, including appropriate timeline and effective use of resources; Public liability insurance up to \$20 million where required to activate on-site.

Exclusions include exhibition proposals that:

- Present a conflict of interest, including proposals from employees of Muswellbrook Shire Council. In the case of extenuating circumstances, such inclusion is determined by the Arts Centre Director with the Manager Community Services.

4.3 Programs

Objectives

The objectives of programs for the Arts Centre are to:

- Encourage arts practice and creative engagement between artist, community, and place.
- Deliver high-quality, diverse, and accessible programs.

Principles

Muswellbrook Shire Council commits itself to the following principles:

- Accountability and transparency - The policy provides a framework for the transparent scheduling of programs.
- Programming practices that ensure sound planning, financial, and risk management principles.
- Delivering programs that contribute to the long-term cultural development of the community.
- Providing opportunities for the creative and professional development of artists.
- Delivering programs that facilitate equity of access.

5 Delegations

Pursuant to section 378 of the LG Act, the General Manager of the Muswellbrook Shire Council sub-delegates specific authorities and responsibilities to the Arts Centre Director in relation to acquisition, deaccessioning, and loans of artworks.

Roles	Responsibilities
Arts Centre Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorise the acquisition of works of art, subject to the available budget. • Accept gifts under the Tax Incentives for the Arts Scheme (Cultural Gifts Program). • Determine works of art to be considered for deaccessioning from the collection with a full report on the reason for disposal submitted to Council. • Approve the loan of work from the collection of works of art, where the loan is subject to the terms and conditions of Council's outgoing loan agreement. • Authorise the loan of work from the Max Watters Collection in accordance with the Deed of Trust.

6 Dispute resolution

The General Manager is the interpreter of this policy.

7 Related Documents

7.1 Legislation and Guidelines

[National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries](#)

7.2 Policies and Procedures

Not applicable.

7.3 Other Supporting Documents

Not applicable.

8 Version History

This section identifies authors who reviewed the Policy and the date that it became effective.

Version No.	Date changed	Modified by	Amendments/Previous adoption details
1	13/07/2023	Arts Centre Director	Public exhibition of draft policy 27/07/2023-24/08/2023. Adopted by Council 26 September 2023, minute number 122.