



# Australian Gallery of Sport and Olympic Museum

## Collection Policy

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## > Background

### Purpose

To inform staff and potential donors or lenders to the Australian Gallery of Sport and Olympic Museum (AGOSOM) of collection acquisition guidelines, policies and procedures.

### Scope

The concept of the Australian Gallery of Sport was first conceived in 1984 and the museum was opened to the general public in 1986. From the beginning the theme of the Olympic Games was central to the museum's collecting and exhibitions and in 1989 permission was granted by the International Olympic Committee to add "and Olympic Museum" to the title. The current home of the AGOSOM collection is the National Sports Museum (NSM), located within the Olympic Stand at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG). The NSM was opened to the public in March 2008 and sits alongside, and is attached to, the Melbourne Cricket Club Museum (MCCM).

## > Ownership and Management

The AGOSOM collection is a public collection owned by the Trustees of the Melbourne Cricket Ground (who are appointed by the Victorian Government). Should the AGOSOM cease to exist, all of the collection will become the property of the State of Victoria.

The AGOSOM collection is managed by the Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC) Membership and Heritage Department Museums team alongside two other museum collections: those of the NSM and the MCCM.

## > Statement of Purpose

### Vision

To honour Australia's sporting culture and achievement in an innovative manner and in a facility accessible to all people.

### Objective

To maintain collections that reflect Australia's rich sporting heritage and to ensure their efficient and effective management for current and future generations

## > Collection Development

### Background

The AGOSOM collection has been collecting objects since its foundation in 1984. Until 2008 the collection was built around objects relating to a defined, but quite broad, suite of major sports. In 2008, following the foundation of the NSM as a collecting entity, the collecting focus of AGOSOM collection was altered to include only objects that relate to Australian involvement in the Olympic movement. This change was undertaken so that the two museums would not collect in direct competition, whilst maintaining the AGOSOM's long-standing association with the Olympic Games movement – as demonstrated in its title.

The AGOSOM collection is built and maintained by the donation of objects. Donation of objects to the MCG Trust for the AGOSOM is tax deductible. The AGOSOM also qualifies for the federal government's Cultural Gifts Program and this is communicated to potential donors when appropriate.

### Consideration Factors

The development of the AGOSOM collection will be informed by a number of factors, to prevent the duplication of effort or collections:

- the existence of other specialised repositories of Olympic/ Paralympic material, in association with whom AGOSOM will work to build up collections of relevant objects.
- the collection policy of the MCCM which highlights the desire to collect objects relating to the Melbourne Cricket Ground – the central venue for the 1956 Melbourne Olympics. AGOSOM will refer to the MCC Museum's collection policy and the MCCM existing holdings at all times and will avoid collecting in direct competition with the MCCM. (See MCCM Collection Policy.)
- the material held in the other collection managed by the MCC Membership and Heritage Department Museums team - the NSM collection. (See NSM Collection Policy.)

### Designated Collection Areas

The AGOSOM collection may collect objects relating to Australian participation at (or involvement in) the various incarnations of the Olympic movement.

Three specific types of Olympic/ Paralympic material will be acquired for the AGOSOM Collection as a priority:

- Objects that relate to the 1956 Summer Olympic Games, for which Melbourne was the host city.
- Objects that relate to the 2000 Summer Olympic Games, for which Sydney was the host city.
- Objects that relate to Australian athletes who have achieved success or fame at any incarnations of the Olympic movement.

## Collecting Principles

The AGOSOM collection will be generally built and maintained by donation of objects

Objects suitable for collection may include, but are not restricted to, sports equipment, uniforms, medals, trophies, documents, letters, diaries, artworks, commemorative items and ephemera. Audiovisual material such as film, photographs and audio or video recordings will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The following criteria and guidelines exist for accepting or declining material offered to the AGOSOM. All offers are assessed by the relevant MCC Membership and Heritage Department Museums staff.

## *Collecting Criteria*

Preference will be given to objects that are:

- Directly related to a significant Australian sporting individual, team or organisation – through use of, and/or involvement with.
- Offered with relevant documentation demonstrating provenance and history.

## *Collecting Guidelines*

- Objects that duplicate existing holdings may likely be declined.
- Badly damaged objects will normally be declined unless the damage is less important than the item's representational value.
- Objects which cannot be properly displayed, stored or conserved, or at a cost that cannot be met by the AGOSOM within its budgets, will not be collected.
- If a collection is offered but it contains material that is not required (surplus, damaged or duplicate objects) the preference will always be to take only the most relevant elements.
- Conditional offers (for example, that objects be perpetually displayed) will normally be declined.

In addition, the AGOSOM reserves the right to deaccession objects. See Deaccessioning and Disposal (p7).

## Acquisitions

### *Assessment of Acquisition Offers*

All objects offered to the AGOSOM will be reviewed by appropriately trained and experienced MCC Membership and Heritage Department Museums staff in accordance with the following, responsive, procedure:

- All objects offered will be assessed in the first instance by the MCC Assistant Curator (Collections). The MCC Assistant Curator (Collections) will, in a timely manner in order to provide a swift response, undertake appropriate levels of research on all objects being offered.
- The MCC Assistant Curator (Collections) will, specifically:
  - research the existing AGOSOM collection holdings, to assess similar material or relevant gaps in the collection.
  - seek the advice of appropriate individuals such as the MCC Librarian and other experts.
  - refer to this Collections Policy and, in particular, the Consideration Factors (p4) and the Collecting Principles (p5)
  - provide a written assessment (Acquisition Proposal Assessment form) to the MCC Curator recommending whether the offer should be accepted or declined.
- The MCC Curator will table all recommendations to MCC Museums Manager and the MCC General Manager, Membership and Heritage before a response is formulated.
- If necessary, MCC General Manager, Membership and Heritage request further advice from the MCC CEO or MCG Trust.

### *Declining Acquisition Offers*

A MCC Membership and Heritage Department staff member will communicate the declining of the offer either verbally or in writing.

### *Acceptance of Acquisition Offers*

The MCC Assistant Curator (Collections) will communicate the acceptance of the offer in writing. The transaction of ownership from the donor to the MCG Trust will be documented on an AGOSOM Deed of Gift. Donations of objects will not be formally accepted until the donor has signed an AGOSOM Deed of Gift.

### *Acquisitions procedure*

The acquisition of objects into the AGOSOM collection will be informed by the Collecting Principles (p5). Processing of acquisitions will conform to established collection management procedures and will be recorded to agreed standards in the Collection Management System, Vernon.

## Deaccessioning and Disposal

The MCC Membership and Heritage Department Museums staff will be responsible for identifying items suitable for deaccessioning. In all instances this will involve ratification from the MCC General Manager, Membership and Heritage and the MCG Trust. Every step of the process will be recorded in detail and all documentation will be retained.

### *Deaccession Criteria*

Objects will only be considered for deaccessioning from the AGOSOM collection if at least one of the following applies:

- The object no longer complies with the museum's collection policy.
- The object is damaged beyond repair.
- Conservation and storage costs are beyond the means of the museum.
- The object is a lesser quality duplicate of an object already owned by the museum and does not have provenance to provide it with value beyond its own inherent physical interest.
- The object lacks any supporting information to enable precise identification or to establish its relevance to the collection.

In addition, there must be no ongoing dispute over legal ownership involving one or more external parties.

### *Deaccession Procedure*

Objects will, in the first instance, be considered by the MCC Curator and the MCC Museums Manager to fit the above criteria. The following procedures will be followed:

- Written recommendations by the MCC Curator and the MCC Museums Manager will be required and will include details of source and provenance of object, reasons for seeking deaccession and suggested avenue of disposal.
- All potential deaccessioning will be considered sensitive and the advice of the MCC General Manager, Membership and Heritage will be sought on all occasions.
- The MCC General Manager, Membership and Heritage will request ratification from the MCG Trust.
- A formal statement will be produced, confirming the MCG Trust's ratification and confirming the agreed avenue of disposal.
- In the first instance the object will be offered to the original donor if that organisation/ individual or their family can be determined.

If, after thorough investigation, the donor or family of donor is untraceable, or if they indicate they have no further interest in the object(s), the object(s) will then be:

- Offered to, or swapped with, an appropriate public collection and appropriate paperwork completed transferring legal ownership.
- Used as an interpretative tool (for example, in visitor programs).

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- Sold by public auction if appropriate with paperwork be completed transferring legal ownership. All funds obtained from the sale of a deaccessioned item will be used ONLY for acquiring items for the collection and/or conservation of the existing collection.
- If the above avenues of disposal are unavailable the object(s) can be destroyed or recycled (if appropriate).
- The object will be held for a “cooling off” period of 12 months, after which time the decision to deaccession will be reviewed by MCG Trust and the course of action confirmed.
- Staff, volunteers, committee members and their respective families are all prohibited from obtaining deaccessioned objects.

The disposal process will be undertaken in a transparent and open manner (including an announcement on the NSM website).

### *Record Keeping*

Records detailing the disposal of an object will be kept in perpetuity and be made available in response to any reasonable inquiry.



## > Collection Use

### Exhibitions

The AGOSOM recognises that whilst this Collection Policy is primarily defined in terms of sports material, its objects may be utilised in displays that investigate other themes that cross boundaries and overlap with sport.

#### *Permanent Exhibitions*

The AGOSOM collection is mostly displayed in the various galleries of the NSM, with additional objects also on display in - and a significant element of - the Melbourne Cricket Club Museum.

#### *Temporary Exhibitions*

AGOSOM objects may be included within temporary exhibitions within the NSM and within the MCCM single 'focus' case available for the display of small temporary exhibitions. These exhibitions will be curated internally by MCC Membership and Heritage Department Museums staff.

### Research and Access

AGOSOM is an important resource and, where possible, access will be provided to the collection for anyone researching and writing about the sport in Australia, the history of Melbourne or the development of sport in general.

Access shall be informed by the MCC Collections Access Policy.

### Outward Loans

AGOSOM objects may be loaned to reputable organisations where satisfactory standards of museum practice, such as Museums Australia (Victoria)'s Museum Accreditation Program (MAP), are assured.

## > Ethics

### *Laws and conventions*

Activities undertaken by AGOSOM will be governed by the laws of the state of Victoria and the Commonwealth of Australia. Specific museum related activities shall also be informed by the following:

- International Council of Museums Code of Ethics
- Museums Australia Code of Ethics

## > Related Documents

Related documents include:

- National Sports Museum Collection Policy
- Melbourne Cricket Club Museum Collection Policy
- MCC Museum Collection Access Policy

## > Definitions and Abbreviations

AGOSOM	The Australian Gallery of Sport and Olympic Museum
NSM	The National Sports Museum
NSML	National Sports Museum Limited
MCC	The Melbourne Cricket Club
MCCF	The Melbourne Cricket Club Foundation
MCG	The Melbourne Cricket Ground
MCCM	The Melbourne Cricket Club Museum
Australian Gallery of Sport and Olympic Museum collection	The collection of heritage objects owned by the Melbourne Cricket Ground Trust and managed by the Melbourne Cricket Club Membership and Heritage Department Museums team.
National Sports Museum	The display space located inside Gate 3, on Level 1 and B1 of the Melbourne Cricket Ground.
National Sports Museum collection	The collection of heritage objects owned by National Sports Museum Limited and managed by the Melbourne Cricket Club Membership and Heritage Department Museums team.
Melbourne Cricket Club Museum	The display space located inside the Members Reserve, on Level B1 of the Melbourne Cricket Ground.
Melbourne Cricket Club Museum collection	The collection of heritage objects owned by the Melbourne Cricket Club Foundation Limited and managed by the Melbourne Cricket Club Membership and Heritage Department Museums team
Melbourne Cricket Club Library collection	The collection of reference and resource material owned by the Melbourne Cricket Club Foundation Limited and managed by the Melbourne Cricket Club Membership and Heritage Department Heritage team.
Melbourne Cricket Club Archives	The collection of business records owned by the Melbourne Cricket Club and managed by the Melbourne Cricket Club Membership and Heritage Department Heritage team.
Donation	

The act of acquiring objects to build the permanent collection and transferring ownership to the MCG Trust.

Deaccession

The administrative act whereby an object is removed from the permanent collection.

### > Review

This document will be reviewed annually with major reviews completed prior to the Museums Australia (Victoria) Museum Accreditation Program reaccreditation cycle.