



## National Sports Museum

### Collection Policy

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Policy Description	<i>To inform staff and potential donors or lenders to the National Sport Museum of collection acquisition guidelines and policies.</i>
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## > Background

### **Purpose**

To inform staff and potential donors or lenders to the National Sports Museum of collection acquisition guidelines, policies and procedures.

### **Scope**

The National Sports Museum (NSM) is a collaborative national museum that exhibits sporting artefacts which are either owned by the NSM, on loan from individuals or on loan from a number of bodies, including (but not restricted to) the Melbourne Cricket Ground Trust (MCGT) through the Australian Gallery of Sport and Olympic Museum (AGOSOM) collection, the Melbourne Cricket Club Museum (MCCM) collection, the Melbourne Cricket Club Library (MCCL), the Melbourne Cricket Club Archives (MCCA), the Australian Football League (AFL), Cricket Australia (CA) and the Australian Racing Museum (ARM).

Additional stakeholders contributing artefacts or assistance with displays include the Australian Olympic Committee (AOC), Victorian Olympic Council (VOC), the Sport Australia Hall of Fame (SAHoF) and other national sporting bodies.

## > Ownership and Management

The National Sports Museum Limited (NSML) is incorporated as a company limited by guarantee, and the liability of members is limited as provided in the Constitution of the NSML.

The NSM collection is managed by the MCC Membership and Heritage Department Museums team through the NSML Board, and is housed at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) as a centrepiece of the Olympic Stand.

An NSML Advisory Board (established in February 2008) of major NSM stakeholders provides advice to the MCC on content and exhibitions for the NSM.

The Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC), as Ground Manager of the MCG, and the MCG Trust assumes the financial risk in relation to the ongoing operation, and recurrent expenditure, of the NSM.

## > Statement of Purpose

### **Vision**

To be a renowned world-class sporting museum examining Australia's past, revealing the present, envisaging the future.

*A sporting moment happens once. Never to be repeated. A split second in time, captured forever. They live in the minds of the people: who competed, who were there, and who pass their stories from generation to generation. They shape our collective view of ourselves, and our country. They become a blueprint for what we value and an inspiration for all.*

### **Mission**

To explore Australian values through sport by:

- Developing, preserving and exhibiting a significant collection
- Delivering innovative public and education programs and exhibitions
- Providing an engaging and entertaining environment for local, national and international audiences
- Providing exceptional customer service to enhance the visitor experience

## Charter

The NSM has a charter to encourage greater appreciation of sports by all Australians, including the history of sport in Australia and the individuals who have had significant influence in this area, by:

- Operating a sports museum at the Melbourne Cricket Ground
- Coordinating exhibitions and related events
- Providing the community with access to a wide range of unique Australian sporting related artefacts, and associated research material
- Promoting and developing partnerships with national sporting bodies to ensure a strong national sports representation
- Encouraging greater participation in sports

## Objectives

To be the permanent home of:

- The collection of the Australian Gallery of Sport and Olympic Museum
- The Melbourne Cricket Club Museum
- The Australian Cricket Hall of Fame
- The Australian Football Hall of Fame
- The Sport Australia Hall of Fame
- The Australian Racing Museum
- Displays of objects from the collections of other major sports bodies

## > Collection Development

### Background

The NSM was opened to the public in March 2008 and the establishment of a collecting entity occurred in October 2008. The NSM collection is built by the donation of objects. Donation of objects to the NSML for the NSM is tax deductible. The NSM qualifies for the federal government's Cultural Gifts Program and this is communicated to potential donors when appropriate.

Inward loans to the NSM collection may be considered for exhibition purposes. These offers will be assessed in line with exhibition schedules by MCC Membership and Heritage Department Museums staff. See Inward Loans, (p10).

### Consideration Factors

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

- the existence of specialised repositories of sporting material, with whom NSM will work in association to build up collections of relevant objects.
- the material held in associated collections displayed in the NSM (MCCM and AGOSOM).

### Collection Focus Areas

The NSM may collect objects relating to all sports played in Australia or by Australians.

The collection of material relating to certain, high profile, sports (see below) will be proactively encouraged.

Three specific types of material will be acquired for the NSM collection as a priority:

- Objects that relate to contemporary champions, past champions and significant events in Australian sporting history.
- Objects that provide specific and focused examples of 'grass roots' participation in various sports across all eras.
- Objects that demonstrate the underpinning social importance of sport to Australians of all ages across all eras.

### Designated Sporting Disciplines, Events and Individuals

The acquisition of material relating to a specific number of major sports, sporting events and associated individuals will be proactively encouraged:

Australian football	Football (Soccer)
Baseball	Golf
Basketball	Motorsport
Cycling	Netball
Billiards/ Snooker	Rugby League
Boxing	Rugby Union
Commonwealth Games	Sailing
Cricket	Tennis

The following additional information is noted:

- Due to cricket's status of national importance across all of Australia, the NSM will collect across many aspects of the sport but avoid collecting in competition with the MCCM. (See MCCM Collection Policy.)
- Due to the NSM's location within the MCG, the NSM will collect across many aspects of the ground's history, especially the ground's long and close association with Australian football, but will avoid collecting in competition with the MCCM. (See MCCM Collection Policy.)
- Certain sports will not be collected due to agreements with particular sporting bodies or collecting entities.

## Collecting Principles

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 visual recordings will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The following criteria exist for accepting or declining material offered to the NSM. 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, organisation, or event - through use of, and/or participation in.
- Offered with relevant documentation demonstrating provenance and history.

### *Collecting Guidelines*

- Objects that duplicate existing collection holdings may likely be declined.
- Badly damaged objects will usually 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 NSM 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 usually be declined.

In addition, the NSM reserves the right to deaccession objects. See Deaccessioning and Disposal (p8).

## Acquisitions

### *Assessment of Acquisition Offers*

An offer of material is preferred in written form, with accompanying images. Information about the object(s) use, condition, history, provenance and significance is also appreciated in order for an accurate assessment to be made.

All objects offered to the NSM 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 NSM 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 Collection Focus Areas (p5) and the Collecting Principles (p6)
  - 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 the MCC Museums Manager and the MCC General Manager, Membership and Heritage, before a response is formulated.
- The MCC General Manager, Membership and Heritage will, if necessary, request further advice from the MCC CEO or NSML Board.

### *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 National Sports Museum Limited will be documented on an NSM Deed of Gift. Donations of objects will not be formally accepted until the donor has signed an NSM Deed of Gift.

### *Acquisitions procedure*

The acquisition of objects into the NSM collection will be informed by the Collecting Principles (p6). 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 NSML Board. 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 NSM 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 NSML Board.
- A formal statement will be produced, confirming the NSML Board's ratification and confirming the agreed avenue of disposal.

### *Disposal Procedure*

- 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 to 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 NSML Board and the course of action confirmed.
- Staff, volunteers, board 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.

## Inward Loans

Loans may be accepted if the objects are required for short or long term display in the NSM. Where possible, the NSM will rely on objects in its own collection and within the associated AGOSOM and MCCM collections to maintain displays.

## Lending Entities

A number of lending entities support the NSM content:

- Current and former athletes
- Private collectors
- Descendents of athletes
- National sporting bodies

## Loan Agreements

Irrespective of their deductible gift recipient status, all lending entities, both individuals and sporting stakeholders will be invited to enter into a standard loan agreement whereby they agree to loan specifically requested objects for display in the NSM for a renewable fixed term.

The Loan Agreement sets out the parameters of the loan and lists the objects to be loaned in an accompanying schedule. It also stipulates the responsibilities of the object owner and the NSML.

A Loan Agreement must be read, understood, agreed and countersigned prior to the NSM taking receipt of the objects at the Melbourne Cricket Ground

In addition, significant sporting body stakeholders may also be invited to enter into a detailed agreement with the NSML. This high level agreement:

- contains general provisions for obtaining sporting artefacts from the lending entity for display in the NSM, and
- outlines the cooperative and collaborative relationship to provide information, access to their collections or support to the NSM displays, exhibitions and programs.

## > Collection Use

### **Exhibitions**

The NSM will produce and host exhibitions of varying size and duration, using a range of objects and media. The NSM recognises that whilst this Collection Policy is primarily defined in terms of sport material, its exhibitions, displays, and visitor programs may investigate other themes that cross boundaries that overlap with sport.

It is recognised that there will be some sports that will have a greater public interest from time to time and this will be reflected, where possible, in displays.

#### *Permanent Exhibitions*

The NSM is currently comprised of nine permanent galleries, curated under the following themes:

- Australia's Game (Australian Football)
- Backyard to Baggy Green (Cricket)
- Champions (Thoroughbred horse racing)
- Faster, Higher, Stronger (Olympics)
- Game On (Interactive Gallery)
- Multi-Sports (Various sports)
- Spirit of Sport (Sport Australia Hall of Fame)
- The People's Ground (MCG)
- The MCC Museum is physically attached to the NSM, which constitutes an additional NSM gallery for the majority of days throughout the year.

#### *Temporary Exhibitions*

The NSM also features the ISS Exhibitions Gallery, for the display of temporary exhibitions within the museum. These exhibitions are either curated internally by MCC Membership and Heritage Department Museums staff, external institutions or individual curators.

### **Research and Access**

The NSM is an important resource and, where possible, access will be provided to the collection for anyone researching and writing about sport.

The NSM will strive to present socially responsible public programs that promote the NSM collection and encourage individuals to reflect on the relevance of sport in our community.

Access shall be informed by the MCC Museum Collections Access Policy.

### **Outward Loans**

The NSM will cooperate with other organisations in order to foster common objectives and to attempt to avoid competitive collecting. NSM material 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 NSM 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:

- Australian Gallery of Sport and Olympic Museum Collection Policy
- Melbourne Cricket Club Museum Collection Policy
- MCC Museum Collection Access Policy

## > Definitions and Abbreviations

NSM	The National Sports Museum
NSML	National Sports Museum Limited
AGOSOM	The Australian Gallery of Sport and Olympic Museum
MCC	The Melbourne Cricket Club
MCCF	The Melbourne Cricket Club Foundation
MCG	The Melbourne Cricket Ground
MCCM	The Melbourne Cricket Club Museum
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.
Australian Gallery of Sport and Olympic Museum collection	

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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.

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 National Sports Museum Limited.

Inward Loan

The NSM may seek to borrow objects belonging to others for the purposes of display.

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.