



AIATSIS

**Collection Development
Strategy**

2023 - 2027

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Acronyms / Abbreviations

Acronym	Definition
AIATSIS	<i>Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies</i>
AIATSIS Act	<i>Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Act 1989</i>
ATSILIRN	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library Information and Resource Network
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CSG	Collections Services Group
GLAM	Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums
ICIP	Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property
NLA	National Library of Australia
NSLA	National and State Libraries Australasia
ROMTIC	Return of Materials to Indigenous Communities
SEB	Senior Executive Board

1. Context

1.1 AIATSIS

The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) is a Corporate Commonwealth entity established under the *Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Act 1989 (Cth)* (the AIATSIS Act). The AIATSIS Council is the accountable authority.

Amendments to the AIATSIS Act in 2016 recognised the national importance of the AIATSIS collection to Indigenous knowledge and heritage. Additionally, it strengthened the framework that governs our management and engagement with the AIATSIS collection and informs the basis of this Strategy.

1.2 AIATSIS Mission, Vision, and Goals

1.2.1 AIATSIS Mission

- Tell the story of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia.
- Create opportunities for people to encounter, engage with and be transformed by that story.
- Support and facilitate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural resurgence.
- Shape our national narrative.

1.2.2 AIATSIS Vision

A world in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' knowledge and cultures are recognised, respected, celebrated, and valued.

1.2.3 AIATSIS Goals

- 1 Build and preserve a national collection, and make it accessible:
 - Ensure that our collection is representative, relevant, and diverse.
 - Optimising appropriate accessibility.
 - Maximise opportunities provided by digital innovation.
- 2 Promote better understanding of Indigenous peoples' cultures and heritage.
 - Positioning AIATSIS as the national forum for dialogue on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.
 - Delivering transformative experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, and heritage.
 - Delivering high quality exhibitions, products, and publications.

- 3 Lead and influence on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research, ethics, protocols, and collections.
 - Speaking authoritatively through evidence-based research and culturally based representative networks.
 - Articulating national priorities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research.
 - Positioning AIATSIS as the arbiter of standards in relation to research ethics, Indigenous research, and management of Indigenous Collections.
 - Fostering innovation in ethical, impactful research and collection practice.
- 4 Partner and collaborate with our communities, partners, and governments.
 - Actively building diverse and enduring relationships domestically and internationally.
 - Being responsive and professional, with culturally competent work practices.
 - Building an active network of corporate partners.
 - Engaging our network of members, friends, volunteers, visitors, and affiliates.
 - Helping to develop community capability in relevant areas.
- 5 Advise on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage.
 - Positioning AIATSIS as a trusted advisor.
 - Building our policy capacity and capability to deliver world class expertise.

Reporting regularly on the situation and status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage.

1.2 Collecting Environment

“We understand ourselves through places like AIATSIS. Through places like AIATSIS, we can wake up the people with knowledge...” (Wanta Jampijinpa Pawu-Kurlpurlurnu, Steven Jampijinpa Patrick, Senior Warlpiri Elder)

AIATSIS is unique among cultural collecting organisations in that it is the only Commonwealth institution that has a distinct legislative remit to develop, preserve, and make accessible a national collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage. We therefore aim to:

- Create a collection that is discoverable and accessible to people throughout Australia and internationally.
- Maintain and share a collection that will strengthen and promote an understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and heritage by engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ interpretations and perspectives.

- Continue to build a collection that is representative of the diversity and dynamism of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' cultures and communities.

2 Aim of the Strategy

“AIATSIS holds a valued place in the hearts and minds of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples because it is the only national collection and cultural institution that is entirely about our peoples...” (National Congress of Australia’s First Peoples)

This Collection Development Strategy (2023-2027) sets the direction for the next four years of collection development and provides a framework for the growth, discoverability, and accessibility of the AIATSIS collection, in line with our legal obligation under the [AIATSIS Act 1989](#) and the Institute’s mission, vision and goals.

3 Guiding Principles

A guiding principle for AIATSIS in building the collection is *Yindyamarra*, a Wiradjuri concept which means *“to act with honour and respect, wisdom, to go slowly and act responsibly, be gentle and polite and honest with each other.”* (Professor Michael McDaniel, former AIATSIS Council Chair).

By embedding the concept of *Yindyamarra* into the Institute’s collection development activities and this Strategy, it ensures AIATSIS is building a collection that:

1. Adheres to ethical collection development and management strategies.
2. Is appropriately discoverable and accessible.
3. Recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as creators and owners of their own knowledge.
4. Encompasses cultural, heritage and historical materials that are created by, as well as with and about, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
5. Is representative of the geographic and linguistic diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
6. Is focused on the experiences and expressions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples.

This strategy complements the collecting practices of other major cultural institutions that continue to develop their collections of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander materials.

4 Purpose of the Strategy

The purpose of this Strategy is to guide the selection, development, and management of the AIATSIS collection in accordance with our legislative function and strategic mission.

4.1 Acts on our legislative functions:

- To develop, preserve and provide access to a national collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage.
- To use that national collection to strengthen and promote knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage.
- To provide leadership in the fields of;
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research; and,
 - ethics and protocols for activities relating to the collection; and,
 - use (including use for research) of that national collection and other collections containing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage.
- To lead and promote collaborations and partnerships among the academic, research, non-government, business and government sectors and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in support of the other functions of the Institute.
- To provide advice to the Commonwealth on the situation and status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage.

4.2 Supports the strategic mission of AIATSIS

The strategy seeks to achieve this by:

- Increasing the breadth of representation of the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures within the AIATSIS collection.
- Identifying a collection development approach that will support the current and future needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.
- Acquiring materials that can be made discoverable and accessible online.
- Focusing on developing a relevant and diverse collection of significant materials while managing, as appropriate, the growth of the collection.

In implementing this strategy AIATSIS will continue to build pathways that recognise, respect and value all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' cultures and knowledge.

5 Scope, Content and Areas of Focus

For nearly 60 years, AIATSIS has developed and been custodian of a unique collection that has contributed to building an understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' culture and heritage. The collection includes academic research materials and works by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge keepers, artists, film makers, storytellers, and writers. It also includes important work by non-Indigenous people documenting the cultures, lives, and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The AIATSIS collection reflects both the continuity, diversity, and evolution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in Australia.

This strategy will assist AIATSIS to continuously develop and grow the collection, and to align the collection with the needs and expectations of our clients both now and into the future.

5.1 Our clients

Our clients are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, researchers, scholars, publishers, broadcasters, students, the general public both Australian and international, government, the galleries, libraries, archives, and museums (GLAM) sector, and anyone who comes to a national collection seeking information or inspiration.

5.2 The current scope of the collection

The focus of the AIATSIS collection, and this strategy, is to develop a collection that serves our clients and builds on its existing strengths of:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' lives, attitudes, and aspirations
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges
- Languages
- Music, dance, and song
- Native title and family history resources
- Media with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' content
- Post-contact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' history
- Art and cultural objects

These strengths, along with a renewed emphasis on representation through broad geographical coverage, form the basis for developing our national collection of culture and heritage materials across a variety of traditional and new media formats.

The AIATSIS collection will continue to reflect the dynamism and diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia.

AIATSIS collection subject areas reflect this continuing diversity and include:

- History, culture, and cultural expressions through time.
- Social, political, and economic history and contemporary landscape.
- Relevant government policy as it pertains to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures, knowledge, and heritage.
- Genealogical material.
- Material documenting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's agency, knowledges, success, and creative expression in all forms.
- Material by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities, and organisations.

5.3 Developing a significant collection of cultural and heritage materials

AIATSIS recognises that the development of the collection over time will require opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities, and individuals to be actively involved in its development to ensure it is representative, relevant, and diverse.

5.4 What AIATSIS collects

Primarily, we seek to build on existing strengths of the collection while filling any significant gaps, always recognising that priorities will need to be revisited and adjusted over time to respond to requirements of our clients and needs of the Institution as it moves towards Ngurra: The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Precinct.

Collecting material by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander creators (individuals, communities, groups, peoples, and organisations) remains a high priority for AIATSIS; however, material produced or collected by non-Indigenous people will continue to have an important place in the collection. Ethical practices around the recording and documenting of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities are weighted heavily when considering material for the collection.

Collecting priorities (in no particular order) include:

- Materials created by, or in collaboration with, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, groups, communities, or organisations.
- Contemporary expressions of knowledge and culture by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Language materials.
- Documents of the contemporary political and social landscape.

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' law (Lore), ceremony, music, and dance materials that can be used to sustain, preserve, and revitalise the use and understanding of the diverse knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Family histories and genealogies.
- Endangered formats / media containing relevant and significant records, accounts and histories pertaining to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Identified gaps in the collection based on geographical representation.

Other relevant and significant historical material will continue to be collected when these materials illustrate the continuing and evolving cultural practices and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

5.5 Format types collected

AIATSIS collects material in a variety of formats, with a strong preference for acquiring complete and original (first generation) materials rather than copies or edited versions. A list of the types of formats and the method of their acquisition is detailed below.

5.5.1 Art and objects

This collection has a strong contemporary focus; however, older materials are acquired when an item of significance or relevance to the collection and has been determined to have been acquired ethically and legally. Both donation and purchase are important to developing the art and object collection.

When acquiring art works, AIATSIS strongly prefers the acquisition of items from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and/or purchasing directly from artists or their appointed representative/s.

5.5.2 Audio materials

All audio formats are acquired. Both published and unpublished audio material is collected.

Audio material is primarily acquired by donation.

5.5.3 Manuscripts and research data

The manuscript collection includes unpublished reports, theses, personal papers, research data and pamphlets, as well as organisational papers.

The manuscript collection is primarily acquired by accepting donations of suitably significant historical and cultural materials, with an emphasis on ensuring the preservation of records of Indigenous organisations and businesses.

The management and preservation of AIATSIS research program products and data will be a priority.

5.5.4 Moving image materials

All moving image formats are acquired. Both published and unpublished moving image material, including interactive media, is collected.

Moving image materials are typically acquired by donation, though some are purchased. AIATSIS actively purchases published films made by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The moving image collection includes rushes and footage taken as part of production.

5.5.5 Photographic materials

All photographic formats are primarily acquired by donation with a preference for original photographs. Reproductions will be considered if of high significance, sufficient quality and where copies are not held by other collecting institutions.

5.5.6 Published materials

A key strength of the published material is its value in contextualising primary source material held in the collection.

“Published material” includes:

- Material published by individuals or organisations, including family, community and local histories produced for a limited audience.
- “Grey literature”, working papers, conference proceedings, pamphlets, and other non-commercial material.
- Serials, including journals, newspapers, and monographic series.
- Published audiovisual material.

Rare published materials that are highly significant to the collection will continue to be purchased through targeted acquisition.

5.5.7 Born digital, web-based datasets or archives

AIATSIS is increasingly accepting born digital file types of photographic, audio, moving image, manuscripts, publications, and research datasets, as well as web-based datasets or archives pertaining to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, history, heritage. Prior to the material’s initial acceptance into the collection, a significance and risk assessment are conducted by relevant Collection Service Group staff to ensure long-term preservation issues are considered.

Born digital, web-based datasets or archives are typically acquired by donation.

5.5.8 New and emerging formats

New and emerging formats generally refers to media which has been created within the digital environment and intended for online delivery. New and emerging formats are a growing area of the collection and often presents a number of challenges for preservation and accessibility with the rapid pace and evolution of multi-platform content available.

New and emerging format material is primarily acquired by donation.

6 Modes and Strategies for Developing the AIATSIS Collection

6.1 Ethical collecting practices

AIATSIS is at the forefront of the development and promotion of ethical approaches to caring for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collections and research methods.

AIATSIS is a key collaborator in the [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library Information and Resource Network \(ATSILIRN\) Protocols for Libraries, Archives, and Information Services](#), which set out best practice for managing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collections.

The [AIATSIS Code for Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research \(AIATSIS Code\)](#) establishes a process of meaningful engagement and reciprocity and is informed by the recognition of and respect for the rights of Indigenous peoples as articulated in the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#).

Section 9 lists cultural protocols, legislation, and guidelines as they apply to the AIATSIS collection, and the development of the collection as set out in this Strategy. AIATSIS complies with Commonwealth governance, performance, and accountability rules.

AIATSIS will do the following to support ethical collecting:

- Undertake appropriate provenance and due diligence checks when acquiring material by purchase or donation. AIATSIS acts in accordance with the principles outlined in the Commonwealth Government's [Australian Best Practice Guide to Collecting Cultural Material](#), [ICOM Code of Ethics](#) and the [Indigenous Australian Art Charter of Principles for Publicly Funded Collecting Institutions](#).
- All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander material collected will be treated in a way that respects cultural restrictions and protocols on handling and viewing certain material, where this material has been identified. Refer to the AIATSIS Collection Care Strategy for further information on handling protocols and practices.

- AIATSIS will acknowledge its legal and ethical responsibility to Traditional Owners, Custodians, and Knowledge Holders. When major donations are offered, AIATSIS may consult with the relevant communities on decisions around acceptance, access, appropriate handling, and description of the materials.
- AIATSIS reviews new information about an item in the collection and undertakes further investigations, if required.
- Items identified to have been obtained unethically will be returned to the rightful owners.
- When acquiring contemporary research data there is an expectation that research will have been undertaken in accordance with the AIATSIS Code or subject to a formal ethics clearance, and that incorporation into the collection would be in keeping with any agreements made with research subjects.
- AIATSIS will show leadership in collecting ethics and practice, particularly practices that give precedence to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their knowledge and rights.

6.2 Engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, organisations, and communities to build our collection

Engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities, and organisations as owners of culture is at the heart of our strategy to develop the collection.

We will develop our understanding of what Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, organisations and peoples expect AIATSIS to have in the collection through:

- The AIATSIS Council and Senior Executive Board (SEB) who play an important role in providing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective on collection development as well as guidance regarding ongoing community engagement.
- Providing structured ways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients to identify collection development priorities through priority programs, such as Collection Access (see Collection Access and Use Policy), Return of Cultural Heritage (RoCH), and Return of Materials to Indigenous Communities (ROMTIC) programs.
- Collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations in the selection of material.
- Improving and expanding processes for AIATSIS to engage with a community or community organisation when a significant collection relevant to their community is offered to AIATSIS, in order to provide improved input and

advice, especially in the setting of culturally appropriate access and use conditions.

- Recognising and supporting the desire of communities and organisations to maintain control of their own archives and collections. AIATSIS will support these efforts in a variety of ways.

6.3 Developing a discoverable and accessible collection

6.3.1 Accessibility of the collection

AIATSIS is committed to making the collection as accessible as possible to its clients. The use of Deeds of Gift and Copyright currently enable AIATSIS to accept donations that have administrable access and use provisions, supporting our efforts to make collection materials appropriately available to clients.

AIATSIS recognises and accepts the need to maintain culturally appropriate access conditions across certain materials for contractual or legal reasons, and/or in relation to Indigenous Cultural Intellection Property (ICIP).

Collection development processes and practices that support making the AIATSIS collection accessible include:

- An expectation that new material accepted into the collection is normally able to be made available, at a known point in the future if not immediately.
- Deposits of material of equal significance are prioritised differently according to an assessment on when, and if, such materials can be made available.
- Collection development and management processes must normally enable AIATSIS to set dates on which material now in the collection can be made discoverable and appropriately accessible e.g., at the expiry of copyright protection.

Refer to the AIATSIS Collection Access and Use Policy for further information.

6.3.2 Discoverability of the collection

Digitisation, as well as the collation and management of descriptive metadata, are critical to increasing the discoverability and use of the collection.

To optimise discoverability, AIATSIS remains committed to the preparation of finding aids and sharing collections material online via Mura and Collections Online platforms.

See the AIATSIS Collection Metadata Standards Policy and [AIATSIS Digital Strategy 2021-2030](#) for further information.

6.4 Collaborative collection development

AIATSIS is developing a unique collecting identity to meet its legislative remit and to complement other institutions' collecting practices by:

- Focusing on developing a collection of material that has national significance and including material that may be beyond the scope and resources of state collecting institutions.
- Developing a national collection of material relevant to and representative of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and heritage.
- Cooperating with other cultural institutions to:
 - ensure at-risk Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage material is preserved; and,
 - create opportunities to use collection material in exhibitions and displays and to co-curate exhibitions to tell the story of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia and create opportunities for people to encounter, engage and be transformed by that story, and facilitate access to our collection materials.

AIATSIS holds the only national collection that is exclusively tasked to preserve and safely share the culture and heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The AIATSIS collection is also distinct from other collecting institutions in that a key purpose of the collection is to support the AIATSIS function to strengthen and promote knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage.

AIATSIS has established relationships with a wide variety of international, state and territory collecting, cultural and educational institutions as well as other relevant peak bodies and community organisations, including but not limited to:

- The National Library of Australia, recognising its responsibility to acquire published and unpublished material as it relates to issues concerning First Nation Australians and Australia more broadly.
- The National Museum of Australia, recognising its responsibility to bring the world's cultures to Australia and present Australia's history and culture to the world.
- The National Archives of Australia, recognising its responsibility for preserving Commonwealth Government records.
- The National Portrait Gallery, recognising its responsibility for preserving the national collection of portraits.
- The National Gallery of Australia, recognising its responsibility to collect, share, celebrate and preserve art from Australia and the world.
- The National Film and Sound Archive, recognising its responsibility for preserving the national audiovisual collection.

- Indigenous collecting or keeping organisations, community archives and keeping places.

6.5 Indigenous language collection development

AIATSIS recognises that developing and providing access to language resources is an important means of improving outcomes for the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Collecting and building the AIATSIS language collection will include acquiring material and undertaking work to make these resources discoverable and useful. This work includes:

- Working in partnership with language centres, community groups, educational institutions, government agencies, and other peak organisations involved in language maintenance and reclamation programs, to build and promote the collection.
- Engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to ensure there is two-way communication on language material relevant to their community.

Australian Government policy and programs and the work of the organisations and institutions that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages will inform AIATSIS practices in developing and supporting efforts to improve access to language materials.

7 Methods of Acquisition

AIATSIS is not a legal deposit institution. Therefore, it must actively seek material for the collection.

AIATSIS acquires materials by:

- Donation, gift, or bequest
- Contract of deposit
- Purchase
- Contract of commission (including creation of original material)

Under this strategy a more proactive approach to identifying and securing at-risk materials will drive acquisition. The sources may be individuals, organisations, businesses, communities, academics, researchers, filmmakers, photographers, oral historians, linguists, musicians, writers, artists, anthropologists, archaeologists, and others.

Donation has been, and for the foreseeable future will remain, the primary means of building the collection. AIATSIS encourages donations (rather than deposits) of materials as this ensures preservation, management, and access in the longer term.

AIATSIS also develops the collection by purchasing material. Published materials and our art collection, in particular, are developed through purchase. Material being considered for purchase is also assessed for significance and our capacity to care for and preserve the items.

AIATSIS may also acquire material by commissioning work from Indigenous creators.

AIATSIS participates in the Commonwealth Government Cultural Gifts Program, which provides tax incentives to donors.

7.1 Criteria for acceptance and/or acquisition

- The material contributes to a collection that represents the broadest possible range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, knowledge, and experiences.
- The material supports the aim to develop a collection that has both geographic and temporal spread.
- The material will contribute to the knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and heritage.
- The material can be appropriately stored and managed.

7.2 Assessments

Prior to acceptance into the collection all material undergoes a formal assessment process.

Assessment considerations include (listed in no particular order):

- Significance (as per Significance 2.0)
- Relevance to the existing collection
- Uniqueness and rarity
- Conservation and preservation requirements
- Access conditions
- Provenance
- Supporting documentation
- Presence of restricted materials and/or other sensitive information
- Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights (ICIP)
- Monetary value
- Method of acquisition
- Knowledge of authority to allocate reproduction and/or copyright

AIATSIS requests donors, owners and/or agents of materials under assessment to alert staff of potentially sensitive content, including secret/sacred materials, to ensure they are handled and cared for in a culturally appropriate manner.

AIATSIS staff will undertake due diligence to establish and verify, where possible, the provenance of materials presented for donation, deposit, or deed of gift.

7.2.1 Assessment exemptions

Material with limited or poor provenance repatriated through the Return of Cultural Heritage program will be considered for acceptance on a case-by-case basis.

7.3 Decision making framework

The AIATSIS Council sets the strategic direction for building the collection.

A biennial Collection Targeted Acquisition Plan that identifies specific priorities is approved by the AIATSIS CEO in consultation with the Executive Director, Collection Services Group (CSG).

The collection assessment process is led by the Assistant Director, Collection Development. Other specialist staff including collection development, curators, rights, access, conservation, and digitisation may undertake aspects of the assessment prior to making a recommendation to the Director of Collection Development and Management about the acceptance of material.

When the offer presents complex challenges or has a high monetary value, consultation with the Executive Director, CSG and advice from the AIATSIS SEB is sought. Advice from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, organisations or individuals will be sought under certain circumstances.

For acquisitions that are purchased, AIATSIS policies for procurement and financial delegations are followed.

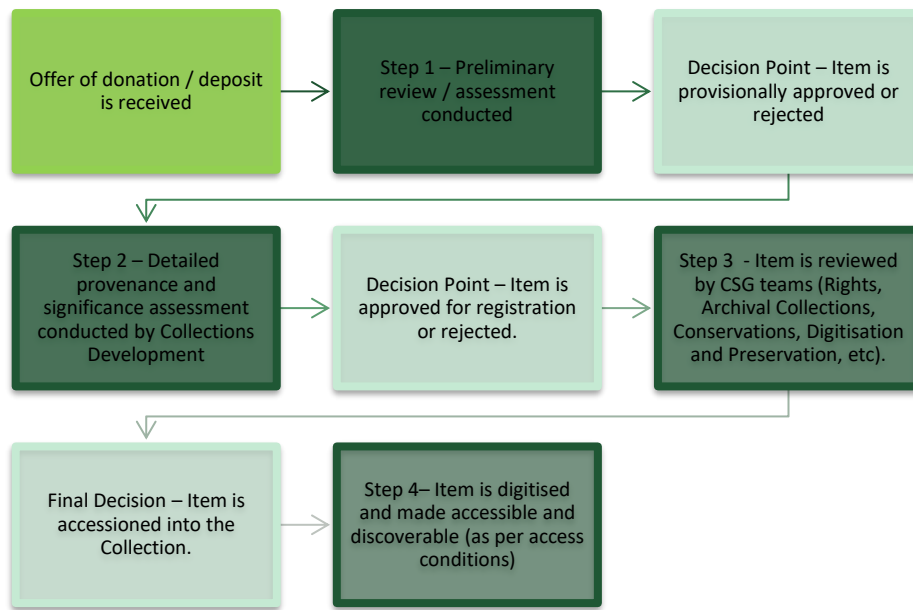


Figure – Decision making framework for donations and deposits to the collection.

7.4 Deselection and disposal

Deselection and/or disposal is the process by which material is permanently removed from the collection.

To ensure that the quality and content of the collection reflects and supports the functions of AIATSIS, materials may be relocated or removed from the collection through deselection or disposal.

For further information on the AIATSIS deselection and disposal process, please refer to the AIATSIS Deselection and Disposal Policy.

7.5 Repatriation

AIATSIS supports the unconditional repatriation of cultural objects and art from the collection to the ownership, stewardship, and possession of Traditional Owners and Custodians.

Requests for repatriation are considered by the AIATSIS SEB and AIATSIS Council.

For further information on the repatriation process and criteria for assessment, please refer to the AIATSIS Repatriation Policy.

8 Guiding Documents and Supporting Policies

AIATSIS and Cultural Sector Protocols

[Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library Information and Resource Network \(ATSILIRN\) Protocols for Libraries, Archives, and Information Services](#)

[AIATSIS Code for Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research \(AIATSIS Code\)](#)

[Museums Australia, Continuous Cultures, Ongoing Responsibilities.](#)

[Australia Council for the Arts, Protocols for Working with Indigenous Artists](#)

[Australian Government's Best Practice Guide to Collecting Cultural Material](#)

Legislation

[AIATSIS Act 1989](#)

[AIATSIS Act 2016 \(Cth\)](#)

[Australian Public Service Act 1999 \(Cth\)](#)

[Copyright Act 1968 \(Cth\)](#)

[Freedom of Information Act 1982 \(Cth\)](#)

[Privacy Act 1988 \(Cth\)](#)

[Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Act 1986 \(Cth\)](#)

[Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984 \(Cth\)](#)

[Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 \(Cth\)](#)

Policy

[United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People](#)

AIATSIS Collection Access and Use Policy

AIATSIS Repatriation Policy

AIATSIS Deselection and Disposal Policy

AIATSIS Collection Metadata Standards Policy

AIATSIS Collection Care Strategy

[Australian Government National Cultural Policy, Revive: a place for every story, a story for every place](#)

Guidelines and Plans

[Association of Moving Image Archivists Code of Ethics](#)

[Australian Library and Information Association Statement on Professional Conduct](#)

[Australian Society of Archivists Code of Ethics](#)

[Collections Council of Australia, Significance 2.0](#)

[Indigenous Australian Art Charter of Principles for Publicly Funded Collecting Institutions](#)

[International Council of Archives, Code of Ethics](#)

[International Council of Museums, Code of Ethics for Museums](#)

AIATSIS Strategic Plan

AIATSIS Digital Strategy 2021 - 2030

AIATSIS Takedown Position Statement and Guideline

AIATSIS Repatriation of Cultural Objects Policy Implementation Plan

AIATSIS Collection Interpretation Plan

AIATSIS Targeted Acquisition Plan

9 Strategy Review

This strategy will be reviewed in 2026.

10 Reporting Requirements

10.1 Performance measures

Collection development performance measures are determined each year by the AIATSIS SEB in consultation with AIATSIS CSG staff.

Performance measures provide a critical tool for how AIATSIS seeks to achieve its vision and mission identified in the AIATSIS Corporate Plan, and the AIATSIS CSG annual Business Plan.

Performance and achievements are reported in the AIATSIS Annual Report. Key performance indicators are also reported in the Portfolio Budget Statement.

10.2 Reporting

A CSG Quarterly Report is presented at AIATSIS Council meetings. Contained within the report is an update on the rate of collection growth along with a report on key acquisitions and, if required, repatriation or de-selection / disposal requests for approval.

Appendix A

Glossary of terms

Acquisition: acceptance of materials into the collection.

Born digital: texts or recordings produced in digital form, rather than having been converted from print or analogue equivalents.

Contract of commission: whereby materials are created under a contract of commission and/or deed of grant so ownership of the material is transferred to AIATSIS.

Contract of deposit: whereby materials are cared for as part of the collection, but the depositor maintains ownership of the physical property.

Copyright: the exclusive right, granted by law for a certain term of years, to make and dispose of copies of, and otherwise to control, a literary, musical, dramatic, or artistic work.

Creation of original materials: whereby materials, including writings and recordings, are created by AIATSIS staff in the course of their work.

Cultural significance: the meaning and values of an item or collection, or what makes it important. Significance is the historical, aesthetic, scientific and social value that an item or collection has for past, present, and future generations.

Deaccession: the process of amending catalogue records to document and indicate that a previously registered item or material has been removed from the collection.

Deposit: the physical transfer of materials to AIATSIS for preservation and use but legal ownership of the items is retained by the depositor.

Deselection: the formal process of research and assessment culminating in a decision to remove an item or material from the collection.

Donation, gift, or bequest: whereby ownership of materials is transferred to AIATSIS via direct donation, donation through the Cultural Gifts Program, or bequest.

Grey literature: is material which is either unpublished or has been informally published. It can appear in many forms, including government reports, statistics, patents, conference papers and even non-written resources such as posters and infographics.

Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property: refers to Indigenous peoples' rights to their cultural heritage based on the fundamental right to self-determination.

New Media: Interactive digital, computerized or communication technologies.

Preservation: The protection of materials through activities that minimise deterioration and damage.

Provenance: the history of an item's ownership and geographical origin.

Published Works: Material intended for release to the general public.

Unpublished Works: Material created for private use and not intended for public release