

## Darebin City Council Art Collection Policy 2023-2026

<p><b>1. Purpose</b></p>	<p>This Policy provides a framework for the acquisition and management of artworks and heritage items that comprise the Darebin art Collection (herein known as “the collection”). Darebin Council acknowledges the valuable social and cultural heritage of the collection.</p> <p>The collection inspires, informs, engages, and connects our community in an appreciation of contemporary visual arts and heritage. The collection forms a visual record of the issues and ideas that are important to the community at a particular time.</p>
<p><b>2. Scope</b></p>	<p>Darebin City Council owns and manages the collection and acts as a custodian on behalf of the Darebin community.</p> <p>The policy scope applies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further developing the collection aligned with acquisition criteria.</li> <li>• Increasing access and engagement with, and knowledge of the collection through exhibitions and public programs.</li> <li>• Maintaining, preserving and conserving the collection.</li> <li>• Documenting the collection.</li> <li>• Positioning Darebin City Council as a leader in supporting contemporary visual arts through the delivery of its acquisitive art award, the Darebin Art Prize.</li> <li>• Increasing funding and donations to grow the collection.</li> <li>• Delivering public gallery professional standards in collection management.</li> </ul> <p>Internally facing, the policy outlines the purpose and management of the collection using best practice principles and processes. The policy provides guidance on the collection acquisition, conservation, access, display, borrowing and loaning and de-accessioning.</p>
<p><b>3. Policy context</b></p>	<p>Darebin Council Plan 2021-2025 Darebin 2041 Community Vision</p> <p><b>Darebin’s Statement of commitment to Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people</b></p> <p>Darebin City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the traditional owners and custodians of the land and waters we now call Darebin and affirms that Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people have lived on this land for millennia, practising their customs and ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal. Council acknowledges that Elders, past, present and emerging are central to the cohesion, intergenerational wellbeing and ongoing self-determination of Aboriginal communities. They have played and continue to play a pivotal role in maintaining and transmitting culture, history and language. Council respects and recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities’ values, living culture and</p>

	<p>practices, including their continuing spiritual connection to the land and waters and their right to self-determination. Council also recognises the diversity within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities have had and continue to play a unique role in the life of the Darebin municipality. Council recognises and values this ongoing contribution and its significant value for our city and Australian society more broadly.</p> <p><i>Extract from Darebin City Council's Statement of commitment to Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 2019.</i></p> <p><b>Darebin's Diversity Statement</b></p> <p>Situated on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people, the City of Darebin is now home to a diverse community of people with different socio-economic status, gender, age, ability, race, culture, ethnicity, language, sexuality, sex characteristics, gender identity, beliefs, occupations, income, education, carer status and household type. The Darebin community cherishes this diversity and values it as an important civic asset. Darebin City Council acknowledges the history and contributions of the various communities, migrants and refugees who have made the municipality their home. Their endeavors have enriched the economic, social, cultural, artistic, community and civic character of the city and created a cosmopolitan locality where variety and difference are welcomed and encouraged. Council also acknowledges that who we are today as a municipality rests on the history of loss and dispossession inflicted upon Aboriginal people, past and present, despite their strengths, resilience and continued contributions to our city.</p>
<p><b>4. Industry standards and guidelines</b></p>	<p>The policy adheres to the following documents in guiding best practice in the collection sector:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Council of Museums (ICOM) Code of Ethics for Museums 2017</li> <li>• AMAGA First Peoples: a Roadmap for Enhancing Indigenous Engagement in Museums and Galleries 2018</li> <li>• National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries 2023</li> </ul> <p>The policy adheres to legislative requirements related to Aboriginal culture, content and artefacts as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australia Council for the Arts, <i>Protocols for Producing Indigenous Australian Visual Arts</i>, 2007</li> <li>• <i>Indigenous Cultural Protocols and the Arts</i> 2015 by Terri Janke</li> </ul> <p>Darebin City Council acknowledges that it has a mandatory obligation under the <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006</i> to register Victorian Aboriginal cultural artefacts in its possession with Aboriginal Affairs Victoria and that human remains and secret and sacred material legally belonging to the traditional owners should be repatriated.</p>

<p><b>5. Darebin Art Collection</b></p>	<p><b>About the Collection</b></p> <p>The Darebin Art Collection comprises more than 400 artworks and historical objects.</p> <p>The major collection is of Contemporary Art including paintings, photographs, works on paper, ceramics, glass, textiles, sculpture, video art and mixed media.</p> <p>Additionally, the collection comprises three specialised Historical Collections that relate to Darebin local history; the Smith Family Collection, Hospital Heritage Collection and Heritage Pottery Collection.</p> <p>The Smith Family and Hospital Heritage Collections hold cultural heritage material relevant to Bundoora Homestead. They include images (often reproductions), objects, family heirlooms, personal effects, letters, equipment and oral histories.</p> <p>The Heritage Pottery collection includes Remued ceramics, a line of pottery made locally dating from the late 1920s to the mid-1950s. The Darebin area was home to multiple early potteries including Premier Pottery Preston and Northcote Pottery.</p> <p><b>5.1 Collection purpose</b></p> <p>The purpose of the collection is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Record and represent contemporary art in Darebin.</li> <li>• Provide a record of the cultural identity of Darebin.</li> <li>• Commit to providing support to Aboriginal and other First Nations artists and communities through the acquisition, preservation and display of their art for current and future generations</li> <li>• Collect and preserve artworks that demonstrate innovation and artistic excellence by significant Australian contemporary artists.</li> <li>• Provide employment opportunities for Darebin artists through the commissioning and/or acquisition of their work</li> <li>• Enrich the lives of the community and enhance awareness, understanding and appreciation of art.</li> <li>• Maintain the Smith Family specialised collection.</li> <li>• Maintain the Hospital Heritage specialised collection.</li> <li>• Maintain the Heritage Pottery specialised collection.</li> <li>• Provide an educative function that allows residents, educators, researchers, artists and curators to access high-quality visual art, historical items and background information.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Acquisition</b></p>	<p>Acquisitions to the collection are made by Council purchasing or commissioning artworks. They may also be acquired through bequests or donations. In addition, artwork may be acquired through the biennial Darebin Art Prize.</p> <p>Council procurement procedures must be followed as per the current Procurement Policy. All acquisitions must meet the Art and Collection Policy</p>

collection purpose and acquisition criteria and adhere to the stated processes and procedures.

All works that are approved for acquisition must be subject to the guiding principles as outlined in the Acquisition Checklist (Appendix I). All works that are approved for acquisition through donation must be subject to the guiding principles outlined in the Donations Checklist (Appendix J).

### **6.1 Acquisition Panel**

Decisions of artworks to be acquired into the Darebin Art Collection are made by the Acquisitions panel. A temporary, expert Acquisition Panel (herein referred to as 'The Panel') is appointed to provide strategic advice and recommendations to Council about the development of the collection. The Panel is made up of two members of the Art and Heritage Advisory Committee who have significant visual arts expertise, the Art and Collections Unit Coordinator and Curator, with the option of an additional co-opted member who is an independent leading visual arts or heritage specialist. The Panel considers proposed acquisitions provided by the Curator and makes recommendations about which works to acquire.

Consistent with the City of Darebin's Conflict of Interest Policy, no artworks by, or objects from, members of The Panel or their immediate families can be considered for purchase while they are members of The Panel.

The Curator is authorised to pursue acquisitions and place reserves on works and prepare a written Acquisition Proposal for review by The Panel. This proposal must:

- Outline the rationale for acceptance of the work to the collection.
- Demonstrate compliance with this policy.

This policy recognises that action is sometimes required at short notice to capitalise on acquisition opportunities where:

- Artworks are available for purchase in a competitive environment (e.g. exhibitions and auctions).
- Timing deadlines require immediate action to secure funding, donations or gifts.

### **6.2 Acquisition criteria**

#### **Standard requirements**

For the collection to be available for future generations and for the collection to develop, the following standards apply to acquiring works. They must:

- Be in good condition.
- Be a durable artwork.
- Be an unconditional donation or purchase that has valid and clearly verifiable legal title and provenance.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have the capacity to be placed on display and stored appropriately.</li> <li>• Works that are contemporary and represent excellence, innovation, high aesthetic quality, relevance and authenticity.</li> <li>• Works that engage with current artistic, cultural and social developments and trends that reflect Darebin’s distinct identity.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key collecting areas</b></p> <p>In developing the collection, priority will be given to works:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By culturally and linguistically diverse artists.</li> <li>• By Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and other First Nation artists.</li> <li>• By artists living in Darebin.</li> </ul> <p><b>Copyright, moral rights and cultural rights</b></p> <p>For the collection to meet its moral and legal obligations under national standards relating to copyright, moral rights and cultural rights, the following standards apply to acquiring works. They must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strongly align to the City of Darebin’s values, Community Vision 2041 and Council Plan 2021-2025.</li> <li>• not impinge on the intellectual, moral or cultural rights of another person or community</li> <li>• not contravene the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic).</li> </ul>
<p><b>7. Access to the Collection</b></p>	<p>It is intended that the Darebin Art Collection be accessible to the community through exhibition and display to promote an understanding, appreciation and engagement of works in the collection and art and culture more broadly.</p> <p>The Curator will ensure works from the collection are on display at all times, however it should be noted that some works may not be appropriate for public display due to preservation concerns, for instance lack of climate control.</p> <p>Public display of items from the collection is also guided by requirements that works be safely displayed in secure locations and not be at risk of theft and damage. Considering the constraints, the collection will be regularly displayed in the following Council buildings and spaces accessible to the Darebin community and the display rotated annually: including Preston Town Hall foyer area, Council Chambers, Conference room, Executive meeting room, Office of the Mayor, Councillors and CEO.</p> <p>Additionally, the Bundoora Homestead Arts Centre will regularly display the collection in hallways, café and atrium area and through curated gallery exhibitions in a dedicated permanent gallery space. The permanent space will provide greater opportunity for public access to the collection exhibiting different items every three months aligned with the annual exhibition schedule.</p>

	<p>The Art and Collections Unit will support scholarly investigation and research to document, publish and advance understanding of the collection and contribute to broader academic and public discourse.</p> <p><b>7.2 The Collection online</b></p> <p>The Darebin Art Collection database manages and promotes the collection. Its public interface, Victoria Collections, provides the public with access to images and details of works in the collection.</p> <p><a href="http://victoriancollections.net.au">Darebin Art Collection (victoriancollections.net.au)</a></p>
<p><b>8. Management of the Collection</b></p>	<p>The collection comprises of more than 400 works and the Darebin City Council owns and manages the collection and acts as a custodian on behalf of the Darebin community.</p> <p><b>8.1 Conservation</b></p> <p><b>a. Preservation</b></p> <p>The Art and Collections Unit will endeavour to conserve the collection in accordance with best practice. The Bundoora Homestead Art Centre will provide a safe and appropriate environment for the collection, with effective security and environmental control, for the benefit of present and future generations.</p> <p>The following are essential to object preservation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate installation materials are accessible for use.</li> <li>• All necessary equipment required for the safe handling of artworks is accessible and in good condition.</li> <li>• Works of art must only be handled by an appropriate number of prepared and trained staff.</li> <li>• Exhibition schedules must allow sufficient installation and de-installation time.</li> <li>• Adequate funding is allocated for safe handling and presentation of objects.</li> </ul> <p>The safety of people and art objects must always take priority over aesthetic considerations. This applies to all artworks, including artworks on loan.</p> <p><b>b. Handling artworks</b></p> <p>Proper procedures for handling artworks must be respected and enforced without exception. Training and supervision by knowledgeable staff is imperative. Those authorised to handle art objects are the Art and Collections Coordinator, Curator, Collections Officer and contracted art technicians. However, in emergencies when objects are in danger of loss, damage, or destruction, it is acceptable for any Darebin staff and even members of the public (under staff supervision) to help save the Collection from harm.</p> <p>Only couriers with professional training in art handling and experience with transport procedures will be appointed.</p> <p><b>c. Treatment</b></p>

The Curator will recommend works for conservation on an as-needed or annual basis. Funding may be secured from the Acquisition budget, Maintenance and Renewal budget or additional requests for funds will be submitted through Council's annual budgeting process. Untrained personnel should never attempt to clean, treat or restore works from the Collection. Where appropriate, an artist may be appointed to treat their own artwork but in most cases a suitably qualified conservation agency will be engaged.

**d. Object condition reports**

Art and Collections Unit staff are responsible for approving an object for installation or loan. An object's conservation history and vulnerabilities are considered when making loan, handling, packing, transport, and installation decisions.

**e. Disaster preparedness**

The Gallery will have a Disaster Preparedness Plan that anticipates needs that may arise from damage to the collection. The emergencies to be addressed in the Plan are floods and leaks, fire, electrical interruptions, biological infestations, structural or mechanical failures and vandalism. The Plan will cover the Bundoora Homestead Arts Centre and galleries, offsite storage locations and any associated sites.

**8.2 Documentation and record keeping**

All records created or received are the property of the City of Darebin and must not be dispersed or destroyed except in accordance with the City of Darebin's Record Retention Policy.

The creation and maintenance of up to date, accurate records on the history, identification, location and condition of collection objects is imperative. Collection documentation is the Art and Collections Unit responsibility and it is essential that software and staff training be provided for documentation maintenance, efficient retrieval and keeping up with the growth of the collection.

At a minimum, each object record should provide the following information:

- A unique object number automatically assigned by the database. The user must define how many objects are in that series and how many parts belong to each object.
- An identifying description of the object.
- Details of the maker, title, date, medium, dimensions, whether it is accessioned or non-accessioned, temporary loan, etc.
- How its title was acquired, e.g. by gift, bequest, purchase, transfer or exchange, and from whom.
- Credit line and copyright details.
- The purchase price or insurance value (if possible).
- Photograph(s) of the object.

- The location of the object, e.g. loans, exhibits, conservation, movement inside or outside The Bundoora Homestead Art Centre and other Council owned buildings.

The following information is privileged and will not be divulged to third parties unless under legal obligation:

- Names of lenders, donors and prior holders who have requested anonymity.
- Contact details of donors, lenders or prior holders.
- Location of objects.
- Valuation of objects.

### **8.3 Collection database**

The Darebin Art Collection database backup including all images of works in the Collection is managed through contract with AMAGA through Creative Victoria. A backup of the Database must be stored on Council's digital archive and updated annually.

### **8.4 Loans and borrowing**

The Art and Collections Unit lends and borrows material through outward and inward loan processes. The terms and conditions of outward and inward loans are detailed in (Appendices B and C).

The Art and Collections Unit will lend objects to other museums and galleries. Public-facing privately-owned galleries will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Art and Collections Unit staff are responsible for approving an object for loan. An object's conservation history and vulnerabilities are considered when making loans and include handling, packing, transport, and installation decisions. Condition reports are written prior to an object being packed, upon unpacking at each borrowing institution, upon packing at each borrowing institution, and as soon as possible after return. This is ideally within 48 hours of delivery to its storage location and immediately upon being unpacked.

### **8.5 Storage**

The care and storage of the collection is of utmost importance, and the following guidelines are strictly followed:

- Storage areas must be clean and secure.
- Temperature and relative humidity should be kept as stable as possible.
- Access to storage areas is limited to key personnel.
- Ultra-violet light should be excluded from storage areas. Lights must be off when storage areas are not in use.
- Archival quality storage materials should be used for all significant material.
- Storage areas must be regularly checked for pests and other problems.
- Objects are not to be stored on the floor.
- Archival boxes should be fitted out specifically for works of significant value.

<p><b>9. De-accessioning</b></p>	<p>To de-accession an artwork or object from the collection is to officially remove it from the registered holdings of the collection for sale or disposal.</p> <p><b>a. Process of de-accessioning</b></p> <p>The Curator may nominate a registered item for de-accession and disposal. The nomination will consist of a written report that evaluates the object against the accession and de-accession criteria and recommends a disposal method. An external industry expert may also be appointed to identify works for potential de-accessioning.</p> <p>All items nominated for de-accessioning will be brought to the Acquisitions Panel. The Acquisitions Panel is responsible for endorsing the disposal of artworks. Works identified for disposal will be valued by a recognised valuer.</p> <p>The item nominated for de-accessioning will be held for a twelve-month cooling-off period from the date of the report being accepted before disposal occurs. Any funds acquired from the sale of the de-accessioned item will be set aside for future acquisitions via the acquisitions budget.</p> <p><b>b. Criteria for de-accessioning</b></p> <p>The collection will be subject to periodic review to assess its relevance to the Art Collection Policy. Works will be considered on a case-by-case basis for de-accessioning based on the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The item does not meet the current acquisition criteria.</li> <li>• Low artistic merit.</li> <li>• Irrelevance to the current Art Collection Policy.</li> <li>• The opportunity to upgrade by exchange.</li> <li>• Absence of clear legal title.</li> <li>• Theft or loss, damage or serious deterioration in condition.</li> <li>• The conservation and storage costs for it are beyond the means of Darebin City Council.</li> <li>• It is a lesser quality duplicate of an object the Gallery already owns.</li> <li>• It lacks supporting information to enable proper identification or to establish its relevance to The Collection.</li> <li>• A substantiated request for the return of the object to its original owner/donor is received. This could be the return of sacred material to Indigenous peoples.</li> <li>• It falls under the jurisdiction of an act that determines alternative placement, such as the <i>Public Records Act 1973</i> and the <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006</i> (Vic)</li> </ul> <p>De-accession of artworks from the collection that engage with Aboriginal content made by a non-Aboriginal artist must be considered by the Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee in the process of de-accession.</p>

	<p>A record of all items de-accessioned and their method of disposal must be kept. A donor or living artist should be notified in writing by the Art and Collections Unit, whenever possible, if an object is to be de-accessioned.</p> <p>Councillors, Council staff, volunteers, committee members and their families are prohibited from purchasing, or otherwise obtaining, an object de-accessioned from the collection.</p> <p>When a work is subject to de-accessioning, the process is guided by the De-accession Checklist (Appendix K).</p> <p><b>c. De-accessioning work from the Bundoora Homestead gift fund.</b></p> <p>A de-accessioned item that came to the collection through the Bundoora Homestead Gift Fund as a donation or as a Cultural Gift must be disposed of by the following methods, listed in priority order:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transferred to an appropriate cultural institution with Deductible Gift Recipient status.</li> <li>• Sold by public auction with monies deposited back to the Bundoora Homestead Gift Fund.</li> <li>• Destroyed or recycled.</li> </ul> <p><b>d. De-accessioning a work not from the gift fund</b></p> <p>A de-accessioned item must be disposed of by the following methods, listed in priority order:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transferred to an appropriate public gallery or collection by gift.</li> <li>• Returned to the original donor.</li> <li>• Returned to the maker or their family.</li> <li>• Sold by public auction with monies set aside for future acquisitions through the acquisitions budget.</li> <li>• Used as an educative/interpretive tool.</li> <li>• Destroyed or recycled.</li> </ul> <p>If the work was acquired within the past 25 years the Art and Collections Unit will use reasonable efforts (e.g. records, phone directory, basic internet research) to identify any heirs of a donor. If the heirs are located, the Art and Collections Unit should provide adequate written notice and all contact efforts should be recorded.</p>
<p><b>Definitions and Abbreviations</b></p>	<p><b>Traditional Owners:</b> Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people represented through the Wurundjeri Woi wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee.</p>

<b>Implementation</b>	<p>The general day to day exhibitions, care, management and monitoring of the collection are the responsibility of the Art and Collections Unit staff, led by the Coordinator and Curator. Darebin City Council is responsible for providing adequate storage and display facilities. The collection remains the property of Darebin City Council.</p> <p>The policy is guided by appendices, operational manuals and other documents relevant to the Art and Collections unit.</p> <p>The policy will be reviewed in three years in 2026.</p>		
<b>Organisational Values</b>	<p>Council's organisational values enable and support the effective design and application of this policy by guiding staff in the course of their work.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="389 987 1482 1727"> <tr> <td data-bbox="389 987 892 1727"> <p><b>We Make a Difference:</b> We are driven by our desire to make a difference for the people we serve. Our work is purposeful and creates a positive impact for the community. We are proud to work here. Our work matters.</p> <p><b>We are Accountable:</b> We are empowered to own and take responsibility for our actions. We follow through on our commitments and deliver on our promises. We make it happen.</p> <p><b>We are Collaborative:</b> We are united by a common purpose to serve the community. We work together, connecting within our teams and across the organisation. We are inclusive and collaborative. We are one.</p> </td> <td data-bbox="892 987 1482 1727"> <p><b>We have Integrity:</b> We act with integrity and transparency in conversations and decision-making. Through open and clear communication, we build trust. We're honest. We walk the talk.</p> <p><b>We show Respect:</b> We are diverse, inclusive, respectful and caring. We encourage everyone to have a voice and we listen to each other. We recognise one another's contributions and treat people fairly. We look after each other.</p> <p><b>We are Creative:</b> We are bold, courageous and innovative. We try new things, experiment and continuously improve. We are open-minded, creative and forward-thinking. We are leaders.</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><b>We Make a Difference:</b> We are driven by our desire to make a difference for the people we serve. Our work is purposeful and creates a positive impact for the community. We are proud to work here. Our work matters.</p> <p><b>We are Accountable:</b> We are empowered to own and take responsibility for our actions. We follow through on our commitments and deliver on our promises. We make it happen.</p> <p><b>We are Collaborative:</b> We are united by a common purpose to serve the community. We work together, connecting within our teams and across the organisation. We are inclusive and collaborative. We are one.</p>	<p><b>We have Integrity:</b> We act with integrity and transparency in conversations and decision-making. Through open and clear communication, we build trust. We're honest. We walk the talk.</p> <p><b>We show Respect:</b> We are diverse, inclusive, respectful and caring. We encourage everyone to have a voice and we listen to each other. We recognise one another's contributions and treat people fairly. We look after each other.</p> <p><b>We are Creative:</b> We are bold, courageous and innovative. We try new things, experiment and continuously improve. We are open-minded, creative and forward-thinking. We are leaders.</p>
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## GOVERNANCE

<b>Parent Strategy/ Plan</b>	Darebin Council Plan 2021-2025
<b>Related Documents</b>	<p>This policy should be read in conjunction with Council's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Art Framework 2018</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creative and Cultural Infrastructure Framework 2018</li> <li>• Memorials Policy 2022</li> <li>• Art and Heritage Advisory Panel Terms of Reference 2022</li> <li>• Towards Equality: Darebin Equity Inclusion and Human Rights Framework 2019- 2029</li> </ul>

! All Darebin policies and procedures must be developed through the lens of key Darebin strategies, plans and related considerations. See the **Darebin Policy Review Lens** to inform and guide policy development and review.

Appendices:

- Appendix A – Technicians procedures
- Appendix B – Outward loan template
- Appendix C - Inward loan template
- Appendix D – Copyright licence template
- Appendix E – Digital media copyright template
- Appendix F – New commission agreement
- Appendix G – Acquisition checklist
- Appendix H – Acquisition process template
- Appendix I – Specialist collection information
- Appendix J – Deed of gift
- Appendix K – De-accessioning checklist