



# **EXHIBITIONS Policy**

## SUMMARY

Exhibitions Policy	
Summary description of Policy	This policy sets out the principles by which the Gallery develops and presents an exhibition program for local, national, and international audiences.
Policy Status	<input type="checkbox"/> New Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revision of existing policy
Approval Authority	Council
Policy Steward	Head, Exhibitions and Displays
Contract area	Collections and Exhibitions

## APPROVALS

Position	Name	Endorsed/Approved	Date
Assistant Director, Collections and Exhibitions	Natasha Bullock	Yes, endorsed	12 December 2022
Director	Nick Mitzevich	Yes, endorsed	20 January 2023
Council	Ryan Stokes	Yes, approved	3 February 2023

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	Purpose.....	4
1.1.	Scope.....	4
2.	Policy Statement.....	5
2.1.	Principles.....	5
2.2.	Exhibition Models.....	6
2.3	Exhibition Proposals and Approval Process.....	7
2.4	Exhibition Management.....	8
2.5	Gallery Spaces.....	8
2.6	Funding and Revenue Considerations.....	8
2.7	Exhibition Budgets and Reporting.....	8
2.8	Conflicts of Interest.....	9
2.9	Record Keeping.....	9
3	Roles, Responsibilities and Authorities.....	10
4	Revision History.....	12
5	Definitions.....	13
6	Guidelines and Legislation.....	15
6.1	National and international guidelines, procedures and associated documents.....	15
6.2	Legislation.....	15

# **1. PURPOSE**

This policy provides the rationale for the development of the National Gallery of Australia (National Gallery) exhibition program. It also provides guidance on the National Gallery's different exhibition models and considerations, overviews the decision-making process for the approval of the exhibition program, and outlines key governance controls.

## **1.1. SCOPE**

This policy applies to all National Gallery employees (ongoing, non-ongoing, casual or otherwise) who are responsible for the National Gallery exhibition program.

This policy applies to all exhibitions presented at the National Gallery and on tour in Australia and internationally.

## 2. POLICY STATEMENT

The exhibition program at the National Gallery is central to the National Gallery's purpose and vision as described in the *National Gallery Act 1975* (the Act) to 'exhibit, or to make available for exhibition by others, works of art from the national collection or works of art that are otherwise in the possession of the Gallery' and is informed by the National Gallery's strategic goals as outlined in its annual Corporate Plan.

### 2.1. PRINCIPLES

The following principles guide the National Gallery's approach to developing its exhibition program:

- a) **National Gallery vision:**  
The exhibition program is informed by the National Gallery's vision to be the reference point for visual arts in Australia and to contribute powerfully to culture in Australia and beyond.
- b) **Scope:**  
The exhibition program is accessible to a diverse range of exhibitions that includes Australian and international contemporary and historical content. It aligns with the National Gallery's vision, as outlined in the Corporate Plan, and is consistent with the *Vision for the national collection*. The exhibition program will have a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art, the whole of Australian art, modern and contemporary art worldwide, and art from across Asia and the Pacific.
- c) **Research, scholarship, and interpretation:**  
The exhibition program aims to meet the highest standards of curatorial scholarship, introduce new research and present innovative and engaging approaches to interpretation and display.
- d) **Collection amplification:**  
The exhibition program aims to highlight, contextualise, interrogate or enable greater access to works from the National Gallery's collection. They can also provide an opportunity for collection development, in accordance with the National Gallery's Acquisitions Policy.
- e) **Financial Management:**  
The financial feasibility of the exhibition program must be researched prior to commencement. This includes consideration of:
  - projected financial outcomes
  - balancing the need for ticket revenue with audience engagement and artist exposure ensuring adequate funding and resources are provided
  - rigorous assessment of potential audience
- f) **Gender Equity:**  
The integration of gender equity commitments as outlined in the National Gallery's Gender Equity Action Plan.
- g) **Inclusion:**  
The National Gallery's exhibition program strives to be diverse and accessible to a wide range of specialist and general audiences. It is a balanced program of both ticketed and non-ticketed exhibitions, including a variety of ticketing options to provide access to a broad audience. Access to existing and new and diverse audiences is enhanced through innovative display methodologies, artist-led and audience-focussed curating, relevant public programs, publications that extend the life and impact of the exhibition, new research, and creative partnerships, nationally relevant school curriculum connections, online platforms including social media, and marketing campaigns.

h) **Resources:**

The exhibition program is planned and implemented with regard for: the responsible use of human, material and environmental resource management and sustainability; the National Gallery's existing and future priorities and commitments; the strategic management of risks; and sound financial management practices during exhibition development, planning and delivery.

i) **Artist Expression:**

The National Gallery respects the right of artists to creatively communicate diverse views about the past, present and future. In presenting a complex diversity of visions, belief systems and personal world views, the National Gallery has in place systems to support the management of sensitive content. Please refer to the Child Safe Framework for further information.

j) **First Nations engagement and consultation:**

As stated in the Reconciliation Action Plan, the National Gallery recognises the importance of art and specifically exhibitions in fostering the cultural understanding and respect that are vital to reconciliation across the broader community. The National Gallery is committed to ethical and culturally sensitive research and presentation throughout the exhibition-making process.

k) **Partnerships:**

The exhibition program supports the development, expansion and strengthening of important partnerships and alliances with key national and international galleries, museums, festivals, and touring organisations. The exhibition program is aligned with the National Gallery's strategic goals and priorities.

l) **Access:**

The integration of best practices for access, as outlined in the National Gallery's Disability and Inclusion Action Plan.

## 2.2. EXHIBITION MODELS

The National Gallery offers a balanced program of ticketed and non-ticketed exhibitions. Ticket prices are benchmarked against state galleries, national cultural institutions, and formative market research.

The National Gallery employs several exhibition models in its exhibition programming. These include, but are not limited to:

- a) Ticketed exhibitions with broad appeal that develop the National Gallery's profile as a major cultural destination.
- b) Reoccurring exhibitions dedicated to contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art, including the National Indigenous Art Triennial.
- c) Monographic, survey or thematic exhibitions that recognise the contribution of individual artists, collectives, or groups of artists. These may be ticketed or non-ticketed offerings.
- d) Exhibitions that provide a platform for new work, mobilise responses to the collection and/or encourage conversations with festivals, major events, partners, and other art forms.
- e) Exhibitions developed by the National Gallery or other galleries, museums or organisations that feature works borrowed from other galleries, museums, or private collections to advance new ideas and build new audiences.
- f) Touring exhibitions from international organisations.

- g) Collection-based exhibitions with potential to tour interstate or internationally.

Exhibitions are categorised by project Tiers ranging from Tier 1 through to Tier 4.

- a) Tier 1 exhibitions are of greatest risk and or complexity. It includes major exhibitions that are ticketed, have major donors or grants, and/or very complex logistics, reputational issues or stakeholder management.
- b) Tier 2 exhibitions have a degree of risk or complexity. It includes non-ticketed exhibitions with a budget over \$250,000. Tier 2 exhibitions may also require donors or grants to support the exhibition and have complex elements in logistics, reputational issues or stakeholder management.
- c) Tier 3 exhibitions have a moderate risk and limited complexity in logistics, reputational issues or stakeholder management. It includes non-ticketed exhibition of greater than \$100,000 with limited donors and/or grants.
- d) Tier 4 exhibitions are of minor risk or simple complexity. They include non-ticketed exhibitions of less than \$100,000 without external funding, routine logistics and minimal reputational risks or simple stakeholder management.

### **2.3 EXHIBITION PROPOSALS AND APPROVAL PROCESS**

Exhibition proposals may be accepted from internal and external sources; however, the National Gallery does not support unsolicited proposals. Most exhibitions presented are developed by National Gallery curators or in collaboration with partner institutions.

Preliminary exhibition proposals are submitted to the Director and Head Curators and then scheduled for presentation and review by the Content Committee. The presentation includes indicative information about its scope, timing and scale, and any works of art containing sensitive content. The exhibition is approved by the Director and then included in the exhibition schedule.

Once the preliminary exhibition proposal is approved, an Exhibition Project Manager is allocated, to work with the curators on developing a more extensive exhibition scoping document in accordance with internal procedures. This scoping document, which includes budget impacts, is presented for further consideration and in-principle approval by the Director.

Where a Tier 1 major exhibition is included in the exhibition program, attendance is a key consideration for programming the exhibition. External stakeholders are consulted, as needed, at an early stage of the review process.

#### **a) Approving exhibitions that include loans**

If an exhibition is to include works on loan, the National Gallery must conduct due diligence and investigate the works' provenance before approval for inclusion of the loans can be granted. For further guidance, refer to the Due Diligence and Provenance Policy, Inward Loans Policy and related procedures.

#### **b) Approving exhibitions of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander material**

If a proposed exhibition involves art, culture, knowledge or perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, the National Gallery must consult with the First Nations Portfolio and relevant communities.

For significant projects involving First Nations art and culture the exhibition will additionally be presented to the First Nations Advisory Group for endorsement.

#### **c) Approving touring exhibitions**

Content for touring exhibitions must be drawn either from the National Gallery's temporary exhibition program or curated specifically for tour. The touring program covers both metropolitan and regional venues in all states and territories, and internationally, when relevant. It includes a broad range of exhibitions taking venue sizes

and facility requirements into consideration with the aim of reaching audiences across regional and remote Australia.

## 2.4 EXHIBITION MANAGEMENT

Once an exhibition has been approved and scheduled, the onsite planning and presentation is managed by the Exhibitions and Displays department, and the offsite exhibitions are planned by the Touring department. Planning is facilitated through the methodology detailed in the Exhibition Project Planning guidelines.

## 2.5 GALLERY SPACES

The National Gallery has twenty-six gallery spaces and one theatre that are committed to collections displays, exhibitions and programs. The National Gallery's permanent collection spaces include:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art collection galleries (galleries 1 - 6).
- Australian collection galleries (galleries 19-25).
- Worldwide collection galleries (galleries 7 – 14 and galleries 16-18).

The National Gallery's temporary collection exhibition spaces usually includes Galleries 15 and 26.

The National Gallery's temporary exhibition space usually includes Gallery 12.

As a general principle, temporary exhibitions will not be presented within the permanent collection galleries. This allows the Exhibitions Management team to stabilise the workflow of the temporary exhibition projects and the continued scheduling of changing permanent Collection displays.

## 2.6 FUNDING AND REVENUE CONSIDERATIONS

As inclusion and access are key principles of the National Gallery's Strategic Plan, the National Gallery offers a balanced program of ticketed and non-ticketed exhibitions and programs. Core funding from the Commonwealth Government supports free public access to the National Gallery and to the national collection.

Ticketed admission supports the presentation of Tier 1 major exhibitions that engage diverse audiences. Ticket prices are benchmarked against other State galleries, National cultural institutions, and formative market research. Concessions are available, including for children, youth, students, seniors, pensioners and members. In addition to paid entry, the high costs of ticketed exhibitions and programs are offset through grants and sponsorship (cash and in-kind) from both government and non-government sponsors, private patrons, and the opportunity for risk sharing high-risk projects with other venues or presenting organisations. Ticket prices are recommended by the Assistant Director Engagement and Development and Chief Finance Officer for approval with the Director.

## 2.7 EXHIBITION BUDGETS AND REPORTING

All exhibition proposals will be carefully evaluated for financial feasibility prior to commencement. This includes consideration of:

- projected financial outcomes
- balancing the need for ticketed revenue with non-ticketed exhibitions is essential to providing wider access for Australian audiences
- ensuring adequate funding is available.

The Head of Exhibitions and the Chief Finance Officer must prepare a budget and risk assessment for projects with a projected expenditure of over \$1,000,000 and submit it to Council or relevant Committee. Council approval must be sought before committing third parties.

Following an assessment of potential audiences, three budget scenarios are presented:

- **Scenario 1:** 100% of target for audience attendance
- **Scenario 2:** 75% of target for audience attendance



- **Scenario 3:** 50% of target for audience attendance.

Evaluation of expenditure and income is monitored throughout the exhibition program cycle, often spanning multiple financial years, including the performance of individual projects, in accordance with established reporting procedures.

Projects are monitored by regular Project Status Reports for Tier 1 and 2 projects, and via the Artistic projects Dashboard for Tier 3 and Tier 4 projects. Oversight of artistic projects is to be governed by the Content Committee, and Tier 1 projects report regularly to the Senior Management Group.

At the completion of a Tier 1 major exhibition an exhibition report is compiled to reconcile the performance of the exhibition against targets. This report is shared with the Senior Management Group and the Council where the financial delegation requires their oversight.

## **2.8 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

As the visual arts and culture sector, both nationally and internationally, is highly dependent on networks and relationships, is it important that any conflicts of interest in the development of exhibitions, including selection of artists, works of art, touring venues, contractors, or suppliers is declared. If a conflict of interest exists, the individual concerned should exclude themselves from any discussion or decision in relation to matters in which they have declared an interest and take any other action in accordance with the Conflict-of-Interest Policy.

## **2.9 RECORD KEEPING**

The Director must ensure that a list of all onsite and touring exhibitions is published in the National Gallery's annual report.

In accordance with established procedures, staff must maintain records (paper-based and/or electronic) for each exhibition, including exhibitions that are not approved. The records must document relevant information and decision-making.

### 3 ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITIES

Roles	Responsibilities and authorities
Content Committee	<p>Makes recommendations to the Director on the exhibitions program.</p> <p>Regularly reviews the forward program to ensure alignment with the National Gallery’s Vision.</p> <p>Reviews exhibition proposals for further development before approval by the Director and inclusion in the exhibition program.</p>
Assistant Director, Collections and Exhibitions	<p>In consultation with the Director, oversees the planning and presentation of the overall artistic program and associated budgets.</p>
Council	<p>Approve individual exhibition budgets when the budget exceeds the Director’s delegation.</p>
Curators	<p>Develop internally curated exhibitions and oversee content for externally created exhibitions.</p> <p>Review and assess potential material for title, significance, and condition.</p>
Director	<p>Overall responsibility for the strategic direction of the National Gallery’s exhibitions program.</p> <p>Reviews and approves proposed exhibitions within delegation.</p>
Enterprise Project Management Office	<p>Facilitate, support, provide advice and coordinate, as required.</p> <p>Provide awareness &amp; visibility, as appropriate, of whole-of-gallery non-exhibition projects that may impact on the artistic program.</p>
Governance and Reporting Manager	<p>Ensures the Council process is documented.</p>
Head of Exhibitions and Displays	<p>Develops schedules and budgets</p> <p>Assigns a project manager who coordinates a cross-functional project team</p> <p>Ensures the appropriate implementation of the Exhibition Project Planning Guidelines and risk assessments.</p>
Manager, Touring Exhibitions	<p>Develops schedules and budgets</p> <p>Assigns a project manager who coordinates a cross-functional project team</p> <p>Secures tour funding</p> <p>Ensures the appropriate implementation of the Exhibition Project Planning Guidelines.</p>
Project Manager	<p>Coordinate the timelines, supporting activities and deliverables relating to exhibitions</p>

**Roles****Responsibilities and authorities**

Develop and monitor project timelines; complete the RACI (Responsible Accountable Consulted Informed) Chart for the project and ensure the project is delivered on time and on budget.

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## 4 REVISION HISTORY

Version	Date	Policy Steward	Comments
V.1	November 2020	Head of Exhibitions	The policy has been updated to reflect new Gallery policies
V. 2	December 2022	Head of Exhibitions and Displays	The policy has been updated to align with the new policy template. It has been substantially rewritten for greater strategic alignment with the Gallery's mission, aims and objectives.

## 5 DEFINITIONS

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Act</b>	<i>National Gallery Act 1975.</i>
<b>Content Committee</b>	The Content Committee established to review and discuss the exhibition program.
<b>Collection display</b>	A display of works drawn from the Gallery's own collection, that does not have defined opening and closing dates.
<b>Collection Exhibition</b>	A display of works drawn from the Gallery's own collection with a stated opening and closing date and dedicated budget.
<b>Council</b>	The Gallery's governing body appointed in accordance with the <i>National Gallery Act 1975</i> .
<b>Curator</b>	The person responsible for the conceptual framework and selection of works of art for an exhibition. The curator is also responsible for the interpretation of the exhibition through original research and scholarship.
<b>Director</b>	The Director of the Gallery appointed under the Act and includes a person appointed by the Minister as acting Director.
<b>Enterprise Project Management Office</b>	The Enterprise Project Management Office (EPMO) provides support and assistance to ensure a consistent approach to project initiation, reporting, and oversight across the different types of projects delivered across the National Gallery.
<b>Exhibition Program</b>	The forward program and schedule of temporary, national collection and touring exhibitions.
<b>National Gallery</b>	The National Gallery of Australia, a statutory authority established in accordance with the Act.

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**Major exhibition** Tier 1 high-profile exhibitions where the target audience is in the range of 200,000+ and the dedicated budget expenditure is over \$AUD1,000,000. Other aims and characteristics of major exhibitions include: potential to increase National Gallery’s profile as a major cultural event destination; attract significant interstate and international visitation; impact on the national cultural agenda; and defray investment in the exhibition through ticket sales and flow-on revenue generated in the Gallery’s food and beverage and retail outlets. Major exhibitions usually occupy Gallery 12 (Temporary Exhibition Galleries).

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**National collection** Works of art in various media that are National Gallery property and have been formally accessioned. In this policy, the terms work of art, work and related terms are used interchangeably to describe all art or other material accessioned into the national collection. In this policy, the national collection does not include the Study Collection.

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**Temporary exhibition** A titled display of works of art for a defined period with a stated curatorial rationale. This includes exhibitions with inward loans and/or commissions and/or the inclusion of works drawn from the collection.

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**Touring exhibition** An exhibition of work(s) of art that may include works drawn from the collection, inward loans and/or commissions that the National Gallery tours to other venues.

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## 6 GUIDELINES AND LEGISLATION

### 6.1 NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL GUIDELINES, PROCEDURES AND ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

This policy should be read in conjunction with, but not limited, to the following:

- Australian Government, Attorney General's Department, Ministry for the Arts, *Australian Best Practice Guide to Collecting Cultural Material* 2014
- The Association of Art Museum Directors' *Report of the AAMD Task Force on the Acquisition of Archaeological Material and Ancient Art* 2004
- *Combating Illicit Trade: Due diligence guidelines for museums, libraries and archives on collecting and borrowing cultural material*, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, London, 2005.
- International Council of Museums (ICOM), *Code of Ethics for Museums* 2013
- 1970 *UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import and Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property*
- United Nations – *United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* 2007

National Gallery policies:

- Inward loans policy
- Outward loans policy
- Due Diligence and Provenance policy

National Gallery action plans and frameworks:

- Disability and Inclusion Action Plan
- Gender Equity Action Plan
- Reconciliation Action Plan
- Environmental Sustainability Action Plan
- Ethics Decision Making Framework
- Provenance Framework

### 6.2 LEGISLATION

- *National Gallery Act 1975*
- *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*
- *Freedom of Information Act 2016*
- *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012*
- *Privacy Act 1988*
- *Financial Management Act 1996*
- *Financial Management Regulation 2005*
- *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984*
- *Protection of Cultural Objects on Loan Act 2013*
- *Protection of Cultural Objects on Loan Regulation 2014*
- *Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Act 1986*
- *Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Regulations 2018*