

Cultural Collection Policy 2008

**Botanic Gardens of Adelaide
and State Herbarium**



Introduction

The Botanic Gardens of Adelaide and State Herbarium is the corporate identity which includes Adelaide Botanic Garden, Mount Lofty Botanic Garden, Wittunga Botanic Garden and the State Herbarium of South Australia. The Board of the Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium operates pursuant to Section 6 of the *Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium Act 1978* and is subject to the general direction and control of the Minister for Environment and Conservation.

The mission statement of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide and State Herbarium is: *To manage the natural and cultural resources of the Botanic Gardens & State Herbarium to advance plant (knowledge), conservation and sustainable horticultural practices, and to enrich society.*

The Cultural, Living and State Herbarium Collections of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide and State Herbarium support the mission statement for the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide and State Herbarium and are used for the purposes outlined in the mission statement.

The Cultural, Living and State Herbarium Collection policies are part of the strategy to conserve and enhance the Botanic Gardens' pre-eminent role as a cultural and scientific landscape and to make the Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium exemplary institutions. In particular, the policies provide a framework for maintaining, building and displaying collections and enhancing the richness and uniqueness of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide and State Herbarium.

The Cultural Collection Policy addresses the following issues:

- Function of the Collection's Policy
- Authority and Delegation of Responsibility
- Code of Ethics
- Collection Categories
- Scope of Collection
- Access to and use of Collection
 - *Photography*
- Acquisitions/Accessioning
 - *Commissions*
 - *Loans*
 - *De-accessioning*
- Collection Records
 - *Inventories*
 - *Collection Lists*
- Collection Management/Conservation
 - *Sustainability*
- Collection Insurance

This policy is due for review annually. However, comments on it may be addressed to the Executive Director or Board at any time.

Botanic Gardens of Adelaide and State Herbarium Cultural Collection Policy

The Board of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide and State Herbarium is the custodian of a unique Cultural Collection. This collection serves far more than just the purpose of beautification – it connects people to the history and core business of the Board/Botanic Gardens and in doing so increases the richness of the visitor's experience. It contributes to the heritage and style of the Botanic Gardens and promotes the Botanic Gardens as a place of cultural life and creativity.

The Cultural Collection forms an important part of interpretation in the Botanic Gardens by capturing interest and provoking curiosity in the bigger picture. It encourages the use and enjoyment of the Botanic Gardens by promoting its educational, historical, cultural, scientific and recreational values. The blend of art, science and culture makes a visit to the Botanic Gardens enjoyable, intellectually stimulating and memorable.

Function of the Cultural Collection Policy

The Cultural Collection supports the mission statement for the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide and State Herbarium and is used for the purposes outlined in the statement.

This policy has the ability to generate tangible and intangible benefits to the Botanic Gardens by:

- Providing a sustainable framework for the care and conservation of the Botanic Gardens' unique collection of cultural heritage
- Providing guidance for assessing future donations, bequests, commissions and exhibitions
- Enabling the Botanic Gardens to achieve collections maintenance and development and facilitate visitor and community access and delight in line with the Botanic Gardens' current Strategic Plan
- Ensuring that artworks added to the Botanic Gardens are consistent with the aesthetic and cultural significance of the Gardens
- Fostering an appreciation of the beauty and diversity of plants as depicted in works of art
- Nurturing the role of the Botanic Gardens as a place of leisure and of learning about the interconnectivity of plants, people and culture
- Encouraging thoughtful, creative and joyful responses to the Botanic Gardens and environmental concerns.
- Ensuring that the Botanic Gardens' collection of artworks and cultural objects constitutes a valuable and significant cultural heritage which can be adequately managed, maintained and conserved
- Developing an exhibition program that brings together the artistic fabric of the Botanic Gardens in ways that contribute to the understanding of the Botanic Gardens' unique environment and history
- Keeping up with contemporary art and museum practices

- Contributing to the North Terrace Cultural Boulevard and to cultural tourism for the State.

Authority and Delegation of Responsibility

The Executive Director of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide has decision-making authority and responsibility for acquisitions, de-accessions, collections care and use of the Cultural Collection. This authority can be delegated by the Executive Director to the Head of Botanic Gardens, Cultural Collections Manager and other appropriate staff.

Major acquisitions (more than \$AUD 50,000) are to be approved by the Executive Director in consultation with the Board. Where it is deemed advisable, an independent appraisal should be obtained for such objects. The Executive Director and the Head of Botanic Gardens are to approve acquisitions up to \$AUD 50,000.

Code of Ethics

The staff responsible for the management of the Cultural Collection conduct themselves in accordance with the South Australian Government's *Public Sector Management Act, 1995*. In addition, the *Code of Ethics for the Botanic Gardens & State Herbarium 2007* provides a framework for the decision-making, conduct and ethical responsibilities of an organisation that holds its collections in public trust for the benefit of society and science. This Code applies to members of the Board, staff and volunteers of the organisation.

Collection Categories

For the purpose of this policy, the Cultural Collection is comprised of:

- Artworks on paper
- Paintings
- The economic botany collection
- Statuary and sculpture
- Archives
- Photographs
- Library including rare book collection
- Objets d'art including memorials, artefacts, medals.

Scope of Collection

Objects in Cultural Collection have been chosen to:

- Be relevant to the Botanic Gardens in terms of subject matter (botany, horticulture, conservation, education) and appropriateness (special historical significance linked to the Botanic Gardens' cultural heritage, location, history and reputation)
- Play a part in the Botanic Gardens' interpretation master plan.
- Fit well with the overall design and concept of the Botanic Gardens and the existing culture (for new artworks, public art and commissions)
- Have provenance that reinforces its historical or other relevance to the Botanic Gardens
- Align with the Botanic Gardens' activities, mission and planning

- Reinforce the Botanic Gardens' cultural role and enhance the image of the Botanic Gardens as a place of cultural importance
- Build a broader understanding of the visual culture of the Botanic Gardens
- Contribute to the Botanic Gardens' ability to attract visitors for enjoyment, discovery and learning
- Be suitable for enhancing public spaces
- Provide opportunities to collaborate with the cultural programs of other cultural institutions
- Be of demonstrable excellence (taking into consideration the reputation and standing of the artist)
- Be perceived an important work, nationally or internationally
- Be complementary in style to other artworks in the Botanic Gardens (public art)
- Enhance or enrich the Botanic Gardens and/or the collection
- Contribute to recreational enjoyment and celebration of the Botanic Gardens
- Attract positive publicity for the Botanic Gardens
- Engage local communities, visitors, tourists and students
- Provide opportunities for image building or merchandising
- Be in good to excellent condition (and durable enough for public display)
- Contribute to creating the Botanic Gardens as a place where people of every background can be touched by the art
- Be in harmony with the Botanic Gardens' physical features, maintenance or other activities in the Botanic Gardens
- Require only reasonable ongoing maintenance or storage costs
- Be reliable in terms of public liability (public art)
- Have regard for living collections or infrastructure (public art)
- Not alienate any part of the Botanic Gardens for significant periods
- Not divert funds and resources from the Botanic Gardens' core business
- Reinforce the Botanic Gardens' mission statement
- Bolster the Botanic Gardens' reputation for excellence in all its activities
- Be unique in subject matter or by artists not already represented in the Collection

Access to and Use of Collection

The Botanic Gardens of Adelaide have a key role in making their Cultural Collection accessible to the public, including tourists, students and researchers. The Botanic Gardens will mount exhibitions and display its own or other collections to encourage the use and enjoyment of its spaces in a manner that promotes and enriches the cultural, historical and educational values of Botanic Gardens.

The primary exhibition space will be the Museum of Economic Botany, but other spaces such as the Lothian Hall or the Goodman Building will also be utilised. The grounds of the Botanic Gardens will be the showcase for existing statuary and sculptures as well as new public art and temporary outdoor exhibitions. Alternative short-term exhibition space is at the discretion of the Executive Director or Board.

A public program may be developed around permanent displays, temporary exhibitions and public art located in the grounds of the Botanic Gardens proper.

Public programs will raise awareness of the Botanic Gardens as the custodian of a unique collection of cultural heritage items, as well as encouraging an appreciation of art in science and culture as it pertains to plants.

Guidelines for access to the different collections in the Cultural Collection will be prepared.

Photography

Users of the Cultural Collection are permitted to make images of individual collections or parts of those collections. If used in publications, the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide must be clearly acknowledged as the source of the collection. The use of photographs that are the property of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide will be covered by the Australian *Copyright Act 1968*.

Acquisitions/Accessioning

The Botanic Gardens will continue to acquire artworks that attract new audiences and reinforce the Botanic Gardens' importance in the cultural life of the South Australian community. In considering proposals for acquisitions, regard will be paid to the long-term positive contribution such an object would make to the physical, artistic, historical, scientific or educational quality of the Botanic Gardens.

Works of art will be acquired only if legal title is obtainable, clear of restrictions or qualifications. The owner or depositor will be required to transfer ownership and to acknowledge conditions on which the objects are deposited.

The Botanic Gardens will maintain records of all acquisitions, and will notify donors, when possible, of any necessary reparation, change of location or proposed de-accession.

The Executive Director or Board may vary the location of any object in the Garden at any time, at their discretion, without the need for prior consultation or agreement with the original donor. Where relocation is necessary, attempts will be made to conform to the donors' original preference.

Commissions

A key aim is the integration of new art within the Botanic Gardens through an insistence on relevance and meaningful connections between the work and the Botanic Gardens (site and location). Commissioned works should also meet the criteria outlined above.

Strategic partnerships with Government and the private sector may be formed to fund commissioned pieces.

Loans

The loan of objects from the Botanic Gardens' Cultural Collection is at the discretion and on the conditions determined by the Executive Director or the

Board. Loans will be made only to cultural institutions that can adequately exhibit objects under appropriate conditions. The highest priorities are the preservation and security of the Collection.

De-accessioning

Although de-accessioning will only be considered in exceptional circumstances, it must be recognised that not all objects are permanent. After adequate consideration and review, the Board and the Executive Director, may decide to de-accession objects which are determined not to contribute positively to the Botanic Gardens or to a particular collection.

The Botanic Gardens has the sole right to determine the date of de-accession, and the method of disposal including the use of any resulting funds. Items in the Collection may be disposed of by sale, gift, exchange for another work or by destruction.

Collection Records

The documentation of the Cultural Collection is the responsibility of the Collections Manager.

A database and documentation guidelines for the Cultural Collection will be prepared.

Inventories

Specimens will be inventoried on an ongoing basis whenever they loaned or used.

Collection Lists

A list of the collections will be prepared.

Collection Management/Conservation

The “collection” refers to existing artworks and other items of cultural significance, as described above, belonging to the Board and will include all additional artworks and objects that are purchased, commissioned, donated or otherwise acquired by the Botanic Gardens.

The Collection is recognised by the Botanic Gardens as being of great value and cultural significance requiring museological standards of management, care and conservation so that this unique cultural heritage is preserved for future generations.

The following collection management strategies will be implemented:

- The Botanic Gardens will exercise a high standard of curatorial care and management of its assets
- The Botanic Gardens will aim, where possible, to function in accordance with professional standards and codes of conduct
- Each item in the Collection is to be properly documented, catalogued and researched to enable identification, informed management decisions and the provision of information to the community

- The Botanic Gardens will ensure that valuation of the Collection takes place in accordance with State Government guidelines
- Detailed policy and procedure documents will be developed for:
 - *Collection Management*
 - *Acquisitions, including gifts and bequests*
 - *Exhibitions and Displays.*

While all reasonable measures will be taken to care for objects, the Botanic Gardens cannot guarantee full protection from public interference with any object that is placed in a publicly accessible location.

As a part of the conservation and maintenance of the Cultural Collection, the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide require an Integrated Pest Management program to assure protection of the Collection from harmful pests. This includes the use a variety of methods to safeguard the Collection including good housekeeping so as to reduce or eliminate environments suitable for pests.

Maintaining good environmental controls on collection storage spaces will produce suitable storage conditions for all material in the Collection. The balance between conditions providing the best atmosphere for the Collection and usable working conditions for the staff is carefully monitored to reduce the possibility of harmful conditions for the Collection or staff.

Sustainability

The Botanic Gardens of Adelaide and State Herbarium, as a part of the South Australian Government's *Greening of Government Operations Framework*, is committed to sustainability being achieved through changes in its own practices so as to minimise environmental impact.

Collection Insurance

The Cultural Collection is covered the South Australian Government Captive Insurance Corporation (SAICORP). When there are exhibitions at the Botanic Gardens that are on loan SAICORP must be advised of the collections' value.