

## Griffith University Art Collection Acquisition Policy

<b>Approving authority</b>	Vice Chancellor
<b>Approval date</b>	15 December 2017
<b>Advisor</b>	Chief of Staff
<b>Next scheduled review</b>	2021
<b>Document URL</b>	<a href="http://policies.griffith.edu.au/pdf/Griffith%20University%20Art%20Collection%20Acquisition%20Policy.pdf">http://policies.griffith.edu.au/pdf/Griffith University Art Collection Acquisition Policy.pdf</a>
<b>TRIM document</b>	2023/0001218
<b>Description</b>	This policy provides strategic direction for the development of the Griffith University Art Collection during the period 2017-21.

### Related documents

[Conflict of Interest Policy](#)

[Donations Received – Deductible Gift Recipient Requirements Policy](#)

[Griffith Archive Collection Policy](#)

[Griffith University Art Collection Deaccession Policy](#)

[Philanthropy and Fundraising Policy](#)

### External links

[The Museums Australia Constitution 2013](#)

[ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums 2013](#)

[\[Purpose\]](#) [\[Definitions\]](#) [\[Scope/Coverage\]](#) [\[Policy Emphasis And Review\]](#) [\[Policy Statement\]](#)

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## 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Griffith University Art Collection Acquisition Policy is to provide strategic direction for the development of the Griffith University Art Collection during the period 2017-21.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

**Acquisition** - the acceptance, through gift or purchase, of an art work into the Griffith University Art Collection.

**Griffith University Art Collection** – the body of objects acquired as exemplary visual artefacts held in title by Griffith University. This Collection is distinct from and managed differently to other works of art held elsewhere by the University.

**Art Collection Management** - A term encompassing all of the practices and procedures implemented by the University in acquiring, documenting, handling, accessioning, exhibiting, storing, securing, lending, conserving and disposing of University Art Collection items.

**Cultural Gifts Program** – The Cultural Gifts Program (CGP) is an Australian Government initiative that provides an incentive to private collectors to consider donating works of art to public institutions. The University is an endorsed Deductible Gifts Recipient (DGR) for the receipt of CGP donations of works of art.

**Museum** - The Museums Australia Constitution (2013) defines 'museum' as an organisation with the following characteristics:

*A museum helps people understand the world by using objects and ideas to interpret the past and present and explore the future. A museum preserves and researches collections, and makes objects and information accessible in actual and virtual environments. Museums are established in the public interest as permanent, not-for-profit organisations that contribute long-term value to communities.*

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### **3. SCOPE/COVERAGE**

This policy applies to the Griffith University Art Collection. This policy provides guidance on the items which will be accepted into the University Art Collection and details the criteria that are applicable in consideration of any Acquisition.

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### **4. POLICY EMPHASIS AND REVIEW**

Griffith University Art Collection policies are strategic planning documents and, as such, will be reviewed by the Director, Griffith University Art Museum, the Director, Queensland College of Art, the Pro Vice Chancellor (Arts, Education and Law) and the Vice Chancellor every four years.

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### **5. POLICY STATEMENT**

The Griffith University Art Collection, with over 4,400 works, is the largest university collection in Queensland and second-largest public art collection in the state. It reflects the diverse origins and progressive attitudes which have shaped the University, and provides a unique window into the development of the visual arts in Queensland and Australia during a period of vitality, experimentation and change.

Griffith University Art Museum is the centre within Griffith University which is responsible for, and dedicated to, the curatorial management, acquisition, housing, care and presentation of an evolving University Art Collection. As part of its responsibility to support teaching and research of art and visual culture, the University Art Museum gives the University Art Collection prominence through the organisation and presentation of exhibitions and associated public programs, and integrates its activities with Griffith University's strategic objectives.

The University Art Museum shapes and develops the University Art Collection through the combination of policy and industry standard museological practices. The standing of Griffith University Art Museum and the University Art Collection will be enhanced through strategic linkages with the cultural sector both in Australia and overseas.

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## 6. AUTHORITY AND DELEGATION

- 6.1 All acquisitions, whether by purchase or donation, require approval by the Director, Griffith University Art Museum. The University reserves the right to refuse donations at the discretion of the Director.
  - 6.2 The Director, as representative of the University, oversees the control, management and maintenance of the University Art Collection. The Director will oversee generation and dissemination of accession reports. Reporting of acquisitions made by gift/donation is via the University Art Museum to the Office of Development & Alumni, and the Vice-Chancellor. Griffith University's Donations Acceptance Committee makes decisions on whether gifts, excluding donations of art works received through the CGP, can be accepted.
  - 6.3 The Director has delegation to purchase art works for the University Art Collection up to a financial value determined by the Griffith University Art Museum (currently \$10,000).
  - 6.4 Purchases valued above the financial value determined by the Griffith University Art Museum (currently \$10,000) will be presented to the Director, QCA and the Pro Vice Chancellor (Arts Education and Law) for approval.
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## 7. ACQUISITION GUIDELINES

- 7.1 All art works acquired for the University Art Collection must support the mission and strategic vision of the Griffith University Art Museum.
  - 7.2 Proposed acquisitions for the University Art Collection must satisfy the following criteria:
    - 7.2.1 legal title can be transferred by the vendor/donor;
    - 7.2.2 Griffith University Art Museum will be compliant with conventions or legislation addressing the movement of cultural artefacts and the protection of endangered species;
    - 7.2.3 acquisition of works of art respect the cultural sensitivities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities;
    - 7.2.4 the University Art Museum is appropriately resourced to house and care for the proposed acquisition according to generally accepted museum practice; and
    - 7.2.5 the work of art is in, or capable of being returned to, an acceptable state of preservation. Exceptions are made if the deteriorated physical condition is integral to the meaning of the work, or if the object provides documentary, technical or aesthetic information to support University Art Collection objectives.
  - 7.3 Consideration must also be given to the work's ongoing viability, including assessment of such factors as:
    - 7.3.1 the work of art's potential for future iterations of public display, in terms of conservation and storage requirements, flexible options for future display of large, multi-part art works (if appropriate to the work and agreed to by the artist) and any financial and logistical considerations relating to its reinstallation;
    - 7.3.2 the presence of any technological elements that may become obsolete and whether these elements can be replaced or upgraded (with the agreement of the artist where applicable).
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## 8. COLLECTING AREAS

Works of art are acquired in order to strengthen existing areas of collecting focus, and/or to demonstrate emergent fields of artistic practice correlating with evolving strategic interests of the University, the University Art Museum and its advisors as the advocates of Collection relevance. Specific collecting areas have been developed over the course of the University's collecting history, while others exemplify the University Art Museum's strategic vision. Special circumstances for particular acquisitions may arise from time to time relating to exceptional stand-alone works of art or profile collections. This policy anticipates acquisitions decisions to be responsive to such opportunities for the benefit of Griffith University.

8.1 Collecting will be focused toward the following areas:

8.1.1 Contemporary Australian art (taken to be art made since 1970), with a special focus on:

8.1.1.1 Video and multimedia, including performance documentation;

8.1.1.2 Experimental forms;

8.1.1.3 Popular culture;

8.1.1.4 Photography; and

8.1.1.5 contemporary Australian artists' responses to and engagements with the Asia-Pacific region;

8.1.2 Contemporary Indigenous Australian and Torres Strait Islander art, including:

8.1.2.1 Works on paper;

8.1.2.2 Photography;

8.1.2.3 Sculpture; and

8.1.2.4 Painting;

8.1.3 Art which addresses political issues, with special consideration of:

8.1.3.1 Political posters;

8.1.3.2 Feminism and artistic discourses relating to gender;

8.1.3.3 Identity politics;

8.1.3.4 Environmental issues; and

8.1.3.5 Indigenous Australian and Torres Strait Islander issues and rights;

8.1.4 QCA Alumni, particularly:

8.1.4.1 gifts or donations offered by Alumni which significantly benefit and strengthen the University Art Collection in respect of its other collecting interests;

8.1.4.2 works supported by The Vice Chancellor's Alumni Acquisitions Fund; and

8.1.4.3 works by the alumnus of precursor institutions to the QCA/GU on a case by case basis.

8.1.5 Ceramics, with special depth in the areas of:

8.1.5.1 Queensland Art Pottery 1900-50, including artists associated with the L.J. Harvey School ; and

8.1.5.2 Works relating to the works of Philip McConnell and Dr. Carl McConnell.

8.1.6 Historical works of art that supplement collection strengths will be considered on a case by case basis.

8.1.7 Works of art by international artists offered for acquisition by gift/donation will be considered on a case by case basis.

## 9. PROVENANCE

- 9.1 'Provenance' refers to the history of ownership of a work of art. Works of art will only be acquired for the University Art Collection where the University has verification that legal title in the work of art can be transferred by the vendor or donor, and where the University's actions would be compliant with conventions or legislation addressing the movement of cultural artefacts.
  - 9.2 Works of art will not be acquired through purchase or accepted as gift in cases where there is any knowledge or reason to believe that the work of art was stolen or sold under duress.
  - 9.3 Griffith University observes the UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property 1970, to which Australia is a signatory. The Griffith University Art Museum follows stringent procedures to establish detailed provenance documentation and proof of ownership and origin, adhering to Australian and international museum best practice, as well as consulting lost and stolen art registers and local monitoring organisations where appropriate.
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## 10. MEANS OF ACQUISITION

Works of art can be acquired for the University Art Collection via two main channels — purchase or gift.

### 10.1 Purchase

- 10.1.1 Works of art can be purchased directly from dealers, agents, artists and collectors, or can be purchased at auction.

### 10.2 Gift

- 10.2.1 Donations of works of art to 2015 have accounted for almost 50% of the University's Collection with almost 30% donated by Artists.
  - 10.2.2 The gift of a work of art can be made in three ways: as a direct (or unencumbered) donation; as a donation through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program; or as a bequest.
  - 10.2.3 Donations offered through the Cultural Gifts Program must be demonstrated to conform to the Griffith University Art Collection Acquisition Policy. Griffith University Art Museum as the recipient provides assistance to potential donors in organising documentation and substantiation of the significance of the donation including valuations and liaising with the administrators of the Cultural Gifts Program. In some cases, the cost of valuing a work of art or collection may be paid by Griffith University.
  - 10.2.4 By bequeathing works of art, financial assistance or property to the University Art Collection and/or the Griffith University Art Museum, benefactors can directly contribute to the expansion and development of the University Art Collection. Bequests to the University Art Collection and/or the Griffith University Art Museum are managed with the assistance of the Office of Advancement.
  - 10.2.5 The Griffith University Art Museum recommends to all prospective donors that they seek legal and financial advice in matters relating to their gifts and the resulting tax and estate planning consequences.
  - 10.2.6 The University Art Museum reserves the right to decline a proposed gift if the work of art does not further the vision outlined in its Strategic Plan and the collecting priorities that are provided in the Acquisition Policy. On occasion Griffith University Art Museum may accept an object donated by bequest, which may later be deemed inappropriate for retention in the University Art Collection. Procedures for managing such works are detailed in the Deaccessioning Policy.
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## **11. MANAGING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Where there is a conflict of interest, perceived or declared, in the offer and/or acceptance of an acquisition, the issue shall be referred to the Director, QCA and the Pro Vice Chancellor (Arts Education and Law) for consideration, and if necessary, to the Vice President (Corporate Services). For further information regarding conflicts of interest see the Griffith University Conflict of Interest Policy.

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## **12. DEACCESSIONING**

- 12.1 Deaccessioning is a legitimate collection management activity that refers to the formal adjustment of records to reflect the removal of a work of art from the University Art Collection.
- 12.2 Griffith University Art Museum observes rigorous international standards for museums with regard to deaccessioning and the disposal of works of art, such as those outlined in the Museums Australia's Code of Ethics for Art, History & Science Museums and the ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums.
- 12.3 Griffith University Art Museum does not endorse the use of collections as a financial resource nor the application of funds derived from deaccessioning to any museum activity other than those which directly improve the University Art Collection, for example through the acquisition or conservation of works of art.
- 12.4 More information regarding deaccessioning and disposal procedures is contained in the Griffith University Art Collection Deaccessioning Policy.