



STATE LIBRARY OF QUEENSLAND
CONTENT STRATEGY

Collections are intrinsic to State Library of Queensland's mission, identified in the *Libraries Act 1988*, to "contribute to the cultural, social and intellectual development of all Queenslanders." The role of collections at State Library has remained remarkably consistent through the organisation's history. Three key functions have continued through different organisational iterations:

- To provide a thorough documentary record of Queensland, making publicly available a repository of content able to be interpreted and used to create new knowledge;
- To provide information to Queenslanders, supporting their research endeavours;
- To support Queensland public libraries meet the information, learning, recreational and creative needs of their communities.

Users continue to seek out the content within State Library's collections, in order to meet their individual needs. In a traditional library setting, the content and the physicality of collection items were inherently linked. To access the content, a user had no choice but to locate the physical object. Digital technology has disrupted this long-established model. Users are now able to access content without a physical carrier. In many cases, content is created only in digital format: a "born digital" item. This shift towards a culture of access and new possibilities made possible by the digital prompts the key questions, "what content does State Library need and how it should make it available, to meet both its current and future commitments?"

Libraries play a pivotal role in life-long learning and enriching people's lives. The mechanisms available to achieve this objective have broadened considerably. Providing access to physical collections is now just one way that State Library can benefit its users. More than ever, State Library must adapt its approach to put the user at the centre. Being responsive and using the opportunities of digital technology will ensure that State Library is able to continue to meet users' expectations.

State Library's collections, particularly within the John Oxley Library, provide the organisation with a point-of-difference. As its most significant asset, the collections of State Library need careful, consistent and sustainable management. Furthermore, the potential within these collections must be realised with focused engagement activities designed to meet specific outcomes.

This Content Strategy provides a framework for the holistic management of collections at State Library. It articulates the intent for State Library's collections and how the organisation assigns value to its various categories of content, taking into account all stages of the collection lifecycle, from selection to engagement. This strategy ensures that State Library's content activities align with the guiding principles of the *Libraries Act 1988*, support State Library's Strategic Plan *Towards 2020* and continue to meet the needs of users in a changing technological environment.

Collection Development, Access and Engagement Guidelines complement this high-level strategy. These living documents outline operational details on the content that State Library acquires, how it makes it accessible, and the processes to ensure public engagement.

This Content Strategy represents a continued development of State Library's thinking towards collections and the people they serve. It positions the organisation as a leader in contemporary approaches to collection management by adopting an outcome and client-focused approach to all collection activities. We look forward to working with our staff, partners, donors, researchers, collaborators and supporters to implement this strategy.

Vicki McDonald
State Librarian and Chief Executive Officer

Vision Statement

State Library of Queensland is a leading collector of Queensland's documentary heritage, capturing the essence and distinctiveness of Queensland for current and future generations. It also plays a key role in serving all Queenslanders, through state-wide library services and partnerships with over 340 public libraries, including 23 Indigenous Knowledge Centres (IKCs). Through focused collections and centres of engagement, State Library continues to meet the information needs of Queenslanders, providing a range of resources that are up-to-date and relevant.

This Content Strategy is a high-level vision that provides a common approach to all of State Library's collection activities. It guides State Library's collection development, management and engagement to ensure that the organisation is able to provide the content its users need now and in the future.

Intentional Collecting

State Library's collections must serve multiple purposes. At any one time, through collections, State Library may support a journalist's research, inform a small business owner or convey childhood recollections. To serve these different functions, State Library must be clear on why it collects particular material. As an organisation, State Library must be an intentional collector. For every collection management decision, it is pertinent to ask how value is being added by taking that action, whether it be acquiring a book, describing a map, digitising a photograph or exhibiting a painting.

By clearly identifying what content is important, and why it is important, State Library can resource and effectively prioritise collection management activities. Before any decision is made, it is essential to confirm the intent for each collection. The content managed by State Library falls into four broad categories: Memory Collections, Information Collections, Public Library Collections and Extraordinary Collections.

Selection Criteria

State Library's collections are assessed according to three broad criteria: content, usage and viability. This common approach to assessment allows a comprehensive view across all collections, allowing State Library to be deliberate and consistent in making collection decisions.

These criteria inform the full scope of collection management tasks including selection, description, preservation, storage, digitisation, access, engagement and deselection. To gauge the level of value in undertaking any content-related activity, these three criteria must be considered collectively and in conjunction with the collection's intended purpose.

Each collection will require different factors to be taken into consideration. For example, Memory Collections, which provide a documentary record of Queensland and are preserved long-term, have less focus on high, immediate usage. An Information Collection, for example a subscription to a database, however, may need to demonstrate high levels of current usage to justify its renewal.

Content

An assessment of content looks at beneficial or important qualities of an item or collection. The following factors may contribute to that overall assessment:

- Level of historical significance
- Level of cultural significance
- Provenance
- Uniqueness – availability of content available through other institutions
- Representation – ability to provide new information above what is currently in the collection
- Quality of information
- Currency of information
- Documentary value
- Research value
- Aesthetic appeal
- Recreational value

Usage

Usage is a key consideration for making decisions around State Library's collections. The following factors contribute to determining the extent of an item's benefit to users:

- Level of current usage
- Level of anticipated usage
- Interpretive potential for engagement (physical and online)
- Ability to meet needs of target audiences
- Alignment with broader agendas or strategies
- Potential for re-use and creation of new knowledge

Viability

In making any collection decision, consideration must be given to the following issues that may impact the State Library's ability to make that item accessible. They may include:

- Physical condition
- Copyright status
- Access restrictions that limit access, usage and engagement opportunities
- Level of description required
- Level of arrangement and ordering required
- Preservation requirements (physical and digital)
- Storage requirements (physical and digital)
- Cost of acquisition and maintenance

Engagement

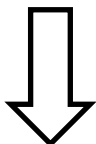
State Library is committed to engaging users through its collections. Different approaches to engage users will apply to each collection category and be driven by the desired outcomes. This will acknowledge the varying depths of engagement possible: from users simply viewing collection items through to intensive research and re-use of the collection to create new knowledge. This engagement is also only possible when collections are discoverable and accessible to users.

Legislative and policy framework

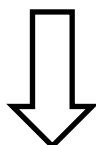
Principles

Eight principles relating to State Library's function are within the *Libraries Act 1988*. The following outlines State Library's commitment to each, in the context of the Content Strategy.

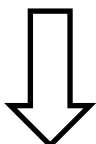
Libraries Act
1988



Towards 2020:
State Library
of Queensland
Strategic Plan
2016–2020



State Library
of Queensland
Content
Strategy
(reviewed
every three
years)



Collection
Development
Guidelines
(reviewed
annually)

Collection
Access
Guidelines
(reviewed
annually)

Collection
Engagement
Guidelines
(reviewed
annually)

Leadership and excellence should be demonstrated in providing library and informational services;

1. We will demonstrate excellence in our collection-related activities through a rigorous process of defining, measuring, analysing and improving our ability to meet users' needs, both now and in the future.
2. We will play an important leadership role in collaborating and coordinating collection-related activities across institutional and government boundaries to ensure Queenslanders are able to attain what they seek most dearly: access to content.

There should be responsiveness to the needs of communities in regional and outer metropolitan areas;

3. We are committed to providing the widest possible access to our content.
4. We will ensure our collecting reflects the breadth of the state.
5. We will work in partnership with Rural Libraries Queensland and Indigenous Knowledge Centres to support their communities' content needs.
6. We will work with all Queensland public libraries to ensure efficient and effective access to a range of online and specialist resources.

Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures should be affirmed;

7. We will recognise the diversity and uniqueness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
8. We will recognise the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to their own cultural heritage.
9. We will actively collect, preserve and engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage to ensure knowledge is maintained and contributes to a deeper understanding of Queensland.
10. We will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to ensure the broadest access to their cultural heritage in accordance with their perspectives, protocols and cultural values.

Children and young people should be supported in their understanding and use of library and informational services;

11. We will provide a range of resources to engage and excite children, young people and their families.
12. We will engage with schools and the education sector to ensure our collections are relevant and utilised by children and young people.
13. We will collect the experiences of children and young people to ensure a full record of Queensland's documentary heritage.

Diverse audiences should be developed;

14. We will ensure that our collections reflect the diversity of Queensland and are accessible to all Queenslanders.

Capabilities for life-long learning about library and informational services should be developed;

15. We will support life-long learning by empowering users to discover, use and re-interpret content through their lives.
16. We will build the digital literacy of our communities by providing a range of resources and learning experiences.

Opportunities should be developed for international collaboration and for cultural exports, especially to the Asia-Pacific region;

17. We will seek opportunities to take our unique Queensland content to world-wide audiences.
18. We will provide opportunities for Queensland residents to engage with design and culture from the Asia-Pacific region.

Content relevant to Queensland should be collected, preserved, promoted and made accessible.

19. We will recognise the richness of Queensland's documentary heritage, including the contemporary, and actively collect, preserve, promote and share it.
20. We will support public libraries to engage with their local community and build documentary heritage collections.

Memory collections

Objective

To contribute to a greater understanding of Queensland.

A wide range of content both contemporary and retrospective is collected to reflect events, people, places and ideas that continue to shape Queensland. These collections are a resource for current and future generations wishing to understand Queensland.

Relevant collections

- John Oxley Library Collection

Intent

State Library is a lead collector of Queensland's documentary heritage. The John Oxley Library, founded in 1934, has a long-standing tradition of housing Queensland's collective memory. Content belonging to this category is retained as an important record of Queensland's history, past and present. Within this category, there are many named collections, each with their own particular provenance and associations.

It is critical that the management of these collections, at each stage of the lifecycle, contribute to developing a deeper picture of Queensland and its history. The content of these collections is paramount, with levels of public usage and viability issues being contributors to the overall value of an item.

Selection

Materials are collected for their research value and historical significance. Other factors that may be considered are provenance, context, representation, uniqueness, condition, completeness, integrity and interpretive potential.

Our challenge is to proactively seek material that represents the diversity of the Queensland experience while simultaneously managing an extensive existing collection. Material may be acquired in a range of formats, from traditional paper-based materials and photographs to digital images and files. We play a key role in digital archiving, ensuring future access to the state's digital heritage. We collect both original materials such as diaries, letters and oral histories and published materials with a link to Queensland, including via legal deposit.

Engagement

We are committed to providing effective channels for the community to discover, access, use and re-use Queensland's documentary heritage. Increasing the visibility collections will be a priority. As a custodian of these unique and significant collections we are committed to increasing access, whether through digitisation, enhanced description or full-text indexing.

Through a wide range of activities we aim to provide multiple levels of engagement with our collections including: online engagement, exhibitions, tours, events and fellowships. We will actively build and connect with the community to foster deeper engagement with the memory collections, encouraging debate and discussion across the breadth of topics relevant to Queensland.

Information collections

Objective

To provide information to Queenslanders, supporting their research endeavours.

Through different channels, State Library manages and contributes to collections that meet the needs of communities throughout Queensland. Through centres of engagement designed for specific target groups and through State Library's physical and online presence State Library makes collections accessible to meet Queensland residents' information needs.

Relevant collections

- State Reference Library Collection
- Asia-Pacific Design Library Collection
- Government Research and Information Library e-resources

Intent

The value of these collections lies primarily in their usage. They are not retained in order to contribute to the state's collective memory. They are intended to meet a specific need, to provide relevant information efficiently and effectively to the Queensland population. It is vital these collections remain responsive and relevant to changing community needs.

These collections underpin State Library's commitment in the *Libraries Act 1988* to provide reference and informational services to the state. State Library maintains collections to provide for the information needs of all Queensland residents as well as focused collections intended to meet the specific requirements of identified priority groups.

Selection

The value of the information collections is in its use. The collecting focus is responsive to the future research needs of our community. Particular attention is given to the quality and currency of information provided by these collections. A digital first policy applies to selecting new material.

Engagement

State Library is committed to providing people throughout the state with information and building their capability to find that information. Through unmediated access to content and the support of skilled library staff, access to information should be intuitive and efficient. State Library also support several communities of interest via targeted online and onsite engagement.

Public Library Collections

Objective

To provide:

- Collections to public libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres operating in Local Governments under 15,000 that represent the widest possible coverage of subjects, formats and genres to cater for the diverse needs of the whole community, while adapting to emerging trends and formats as appropriate.
- Specialist collections and resources for Queensland libraries to meet the identified needs of Queenslanders through the most appropriate channel.

Relevant collections

These collections are managed directly by State Library to enable public libraries to meet the diverse needs of their communities, utilising centralised management and economies of scale:

- Rural Libraries Queensland (RLQ) and Indigenous Knowledge Centre (IKC) collections provide quality resources to rural, remote and Indigenous communities.

Specialist collections for all Queensland public libraries provide:

- eResources providing access to digital content
- Language other than English (LOTE) collections
- Learning and literacy collections enabling experimentation, innovation and quality programming through access to a range of resources

Intent

These collections support the information, recreation and cultural needs of the community they serve.

Collections provide a balanced, appealing, high quality and well organised range of resources, including popular, bestselling and enduring works.

They are evidence-based, high turnover collections that meet a need.

Selection

Resources are provided in a range of formats and languages to ensure collections are inclusive and accessible.

Collections are flexible and constantly changing. Multiple copies may be acquired for popular resources, and items with limited usage may be withdrawn.

Collections include resources for all community members, from babies to the aged, and support literacy and lifelong learning.

Engagement

Each public library serves their community and provides a safe, welcoming destination for all. Collection-based programs and partnerships enable public libraries to build communities which are informed, engaged, empowered and participative.

Extraordinary collections

Objective

To provide exceptional examples and context of books as objects.

This collection showcases material which interprets the physicality and format of the printed book as well as reflecting its art, craft, history and impact.

Relevant collections

- Australian Library of Art Collection
 - Australian Art Research Collection
 - Artists' Books Collection
 - History and Art of the Book Collection
 - Lindsay Collection of Pat Corrigan

Intent

State Library has a strong tradition of collecting items that demonstrate the history of the book, that showcase technological advances in printing and that, as particularly fine examples of library materials, engage the public's imagination.

These items form a representative collection of fine printing and rare publications intended to elicit wonder from the public. They must be of high historical significance to the history of book, rather than to a collective understanding of Queensland. High public appeal and high accessibility are essential to State Library's extraordinary collections.

Selection

These collections are built upon a history of collecting exceptional examples of bibliographic and printed material, often with the generous support of individuals and businesses. Development of these collections will be highly-considered, representative and tightly-honed.

Engagement

State Library is committed to showcasing its exceptional bibliographic material.

Through a range of activities we aim to provide physical experiences with these collections, providing the public with an opportunity to see and engage with unique library materials.

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