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# **FIRST NATIONS MEDIA ARCHIVES**

# **Collection Management Plan Template for Use by First Nations Media Archives**

**THE BASIC PRINCIPLES**

In the management of First Nations media archives Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and Law are the guiding principles.

Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are essential cultural authorities at the centre of all decision making associated with management of the archives.

**Template**

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| PART 9 WHAT ARCHIVE PLANS AND POLICIES WE HAVE IN PLACE |  |
| PART 10 (Optional) OUR CHALLENGES |  |
| PART 11 (Optional) OUR ARCHIVE PARTNERS |  |

**Template Completion Guide**

**Part 1 The history of our Archive**

*What goes here:*

Your Archive probably grew organically over time simply by storing analogue and digital media that you have produced, and in some cases have had donated to you, or that you have purchased. By setting out a short history of how you came to call this collection of media the Archive you will get a sense of what is significant about your Archive.

**Part 2 What we hold in our Archive**

*What goes here:*

This part sets out your “policy” on what is considered an Archive object. It can de as detailed or as simple as you like. It will help sort out - through collaboration with your cultural custodians and community – what are the major media items you want to store and preserve for the future.

This stage is a very important “sorting” point. It provides the opportunity to ask the question about whether you will “save” everything no matter what, or whether you will make some selection decisions about what is important to preserve.

Analogue objects are going to deteriorate and analogue media players are going to become increasingly difficult to source beyond 2025. Digitisation is a long process. Is every analogue object important enough to preserve?

Digital objects need storage space, maintenance of the drive storage, back up, and viewing functionality. Is every digital media file important enough to take up long term storage? It is also important to make decisions on what “versions” of digital media you are preserving – full resolution/uncompressed plus lower quality versions, or just full resolution/uncompressed versions.

This can be a “backwards and forwards” stage, so give it time. You can look at it, by thinking about it in “topic” terms. For example, all Jukurrpa, ceremony, and stories from old people that have been edited into single productions will be preserved. Plus anything that shows the history of our organisation, and the history of our communities. Or you might think about in “object” terms. For example, production final cuts, 20 representative photos of each Sports Weekend or community event, log files of all “to-air” radio shows.

Due to the nature of First Nations media organisations, the majority of the Archive will be media objects produced by the organisation. However, also give some time to considering what media objects you will accept if donated – for example old photos from non-First Nations people who have worked or lived in community.

If you have developed a partnership with another organisation to store analogue media objects in archival storage conditions, this is the place to say it.

**Part 3 The size of our collection**

*What goes here:*

This is where you add numbers to complement the information in Part 2. Breakdown the collection into analogue and digital numbers split across media types. This will help with identifying to some degree the extent of work needed for work such as digitisation, as well as estimate the digital storage space you will need. (See later in this Manual for an estimator). There is no real need to add the number of items into the section, but make sure you record it on a template somewhere as the size of the Archive is a critical issue in storage and digitisation planning.

**Part 4 What isn’t kept in our Archive**

*What goes here:*

This is a straightforward part, and essentially describes what hasn’t been included in Part 2. You can choose to leave it out, but it might be useful should there be a need to specifically name something for management or technical purposes.

**Part 5 How cultural content in media in our Archive is managed**

*What goes here*

This part will be informed by the Cultural Custodian consultation and its outcomes. Information in this part includes information about:

* The labels for tagging cultural content - open, sorry, restricted women’s, restricted men’s, etc
* Who makes those decisions
* How consultation is managed
* How cultural complaints are addressed

It also sets out the principles relevant to Indigenous and Cultural Intellectual Property.

If considered important, it may be useful to set out the conditions for digitisation of culturally restricted analogue media objects.

**Part 6 Who can use our Archive and the conditions of access**

*What goes here*

Who views and listens to Archive objects is a critical aspect of proper cultural management of media objects of course. In part this is managed through the media tags set out through the Part 4 process. However, there will be requests for special access at times and it is useful to set out access guidelines for categories of users.

**Part 7 How we record what’s in our Archive store it and make it available**

*What goes here*

The tools and software used for recording what is in the Archive and making it available, need to be appropriate to your staff skills base and the expectations of your community for access and cultural management.

In addition, the Collection Management Plan provides an opportunity to make decisions on whether now or in the future you want to be able to share records with other Archives you approve for sharing. This doesn’t mean that you need to share the media of course but you may choose to do so for some media. This can be useful when neighbouring Archives have common language groups and Nations.

If your Archive wants to share records now or in the future the tools you choose need to use “archive industry standard” fields and ways of describing content.

Preservation for the future also means that both analogue and digital media need to be properly stored.

**Part 8 Who our Archive staff are**

*What goes here*

This part is *not* about setting out the names of people. Instead it is for setting out the general principles for staffing and may identify key positions. As for other parts it can be as detailed or as simple as needed.

**Part 9 What Archive plans and policies we have in place**

*What goes here*

The Collection Management Plan can’t set out everything. This part is to provide links and references to other documents that guide the management and operation of the Archive.

**Part 10 Our challenges (optional)**

*What goes here*

This optional part may be useful for setting out plans and programs for addressing weaknesses and gaps, or realising opportunities, In the management and operation of the Archive. It can support forward thinking for funding as well as building suitable partnerships.

**Part 11 Our partners (optional)**

*What goes here*

This part may be useful for documenting organisations with whom your Archive is doing collaborative Archive work, and may set out the type and extent of collaboration. This can be useful for transparency with the Cultural Custodians group and community members.