

Exhibitions Policy

Summary

Exhibitions Policy	
Description of Policy	This policy sets out the principles the Gallery adheres to and the factors it considers in fulfilling the NGA's Exhibitions Program.
Policy applies to	NGA wide
Policy Status	New policy
Approval Authority	Council
Responsible Officer	Adam Worrall
Contact area	Exhibitions and Collections Services
Date of Policy Review*	October 2019
*Unless otherwise indicated, this policy will still apply beyond the review date.	
Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Local Protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGA Policy on Policy Development • NGA Risk Management Framework and Policy • NGA Inward Loan Policy • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Rights and Engagement Policy • Due Diligence and Provenance Policy • Freedom of Information Policy • Record-Keeping Policy • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reconciliation Action Plan (in development) • Art Acquisitions Strategy • Code of Ethics • Fraud Strategy • Protection of Cultural Objects on Loan Scheme Guidelines • Australian Government International Exhibitions Insurance Scheme Guidelines

Approvals

Position	Name	Endorsed	Date
Deputy Director	Kirsten Paisley	Yes / No	
Director	Gerard Vaughan	Yes / No	
Council	Audit and Risk Committee	Yes / No	

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1. Policy

Exhibitions Policy

2. Scope

This policy applies to all activities relating to the Exhibition Program of the National Gallery of Australia (the Gallery), and applies to all NGA staff.

3. Purpose

The Gallery and its functions are determined by the *National Gallery of Australia Act 1975*. The principal functions of the Gallery, as outlined in s6 of the Act, are to:

- To develop and maintain a national collection of works of art;
- 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,
- To use every endeavour to make the most advantageous use of the national collection in the national interest.

4. Definitions and abbreviations

In this policy,

Council member

means a member of the Gallery's governing Council appointed in accordance with the Act.

Director

means the Director of the Gallery appointed under the Act and includes a person appointed by the Minister as acting Director.

Exhibition program

means the forward program and schedule of temporary, collection and travelling exhibitions

Gallery

means the National Gallery of Australia, a statutory authority established in accordance with the Act.

Exhibitions Committee

means the committee established to review and discuss the exhibition program quarterly. The committee comprises the Director, Deputy Director, Assistant Directors, Chief Financial Officer and representatives from Curatorial, Conservation, Exhibitions, Registration, Visitor Services, Risk Management and Travelling Exhibitions.

Temporary exhibition

means an exhibition of works of art on display at the Gallery including inward loans and/or commissions and may include works drawn from the collection.

Travelling exhibition

means an exhibition of work(s) of art that may include works drawn from the collection, inward loans and/or commissions that the Gallery tours to other venues

5. Policy principles

The 1966 Lindsay Report, resulting from the “National Art Gallery Committee of Inquiry” commissioned by Prime Minister Menzies, is the NGA’s founding document. The Lindsay Report placed its greatest emphasis on Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australian art, on modern art worldwide and on “works of art representing the high cultural achievement of Australia’s neighbours in southern and eastern Asia and the Pacific Islands”. These remain the 3 major collecting areas for the NGA.

Through our Exhibition Program, we seek to achieve a balanced representation of our three priority collecting areas:

- the art of Australia;
- the art of our region, the Asia-Pacific;
- the great global art movements, with emphasis on 20th and 21st century.

Across these three focus areas, we seek additionally to present a balance of contemporary and historical art; to complement the NGA’s own collection with significant national and international loans; and to ensure that we provide audiences with extraordinary opportunities to see art from eras, cultures and collections that are not otherwise easily accessible within Australia.

The Exhibition Program will also take into account a diverse range of media and art forms.

The development of the Exhibition Program will consider the following key priorities:

- I. exhibitions drawn from the national collection, which champion the NGA’s own research and scholarship;
- II. national leadership agenda and associated objectives appropriate to a national cultural institution;
- III. audience popularity and demand.

Consideration will also be given to budget and resource implications, projected audience segments and school’s attendance, the availability of loans and appropriate timing of the exhibition.

5.1 Exhibition development process

In addition to following the guiding principles outlined above, exhibition projects will be carefully evaluated for financial feasibility prior to commencement. This includes consideration of:

- projected financial outcomes
- balancing the need for ticket revenue with un-ticketed exhibitions regarded as important for Australian audiences
- ensuring adequate funding is provided

The Assistant Director, Exhibitions and Collections Services, with the CFO, will develop a budget and risk assessment for any exhibition with expenditure projected to be over \$500,000. The budget will present a break-even position for the exhibition, but will also indicate a worst-case scenario and a conservative best-case scenario.

Any exhibition requiring high investment, or with demonstrated associated risk, or requiring both a formal and legally binding commitment to an external institution or lender will be approved by Council prior to commitment being undertaken with third parties, or with a minimum of 18 months prior to an exhibition opening at the NGA.

Once an exhibition concept has been endorsed and included in the program, a Project Meeting will be called, with representatives from relevant areas of the NGA invited to discuss in more detail the resource and budget breakdown. A detailed exhibition proposal form will be developed with the Project Team. This will include key milestones as identified in our Project Management Guidelines, which includes, for example, Council approval, approval at Exhibitions Committee, presentation at SET Meetings, Expenditure Projection, Risk Assessment and Budget Development, NGA Fundraising and/or Partnership Scoping, NGA Federal Government Budget Bids, NCITO and AGIEI Program. The Project Team is responsible for reporting to the Director and relevant senior staff on progress and issues arising. From time to time, as appropriate, the Director will convene detailed briefing meetings on plans and progress.

While it is important to have the three-year forward program confirmed for major exhibitions, in order to facilitate planning, enable fundraising opportunities to be developed and loans to be negotiated, the exhibition program must retain sufficient flexibility to allow exhibition and display opportunities to be capitalised upon.

During the various phases of the exhibition development, the Project Team (Including members of Curatorial Staff) will undertake and document due diligence research, risk assessments and decision making in regards to loans. These will be in line with the Gallery's Due Diligence and Provenance Policy and Inwards Loans Policy and their procedures.

5.2 Programming of display spaces

The NGA has five gallery spaces dedicated to changing exhibitions, and also has a program of contemporary art interventions that occur throughout the building's public spaces.

Temporary Exhibitions Gallery

Australian Art: Project Gallery

International Art: Orde Poynton Gallery

Contemporary Art Galleries: 9 & 10

NGA Play

The Temporary Exhibitions Gallery will display ticketed exhibitions as a first priority, including Australian or international loans supplemented by works from the NGA collection. Exhibitions of special national or regional significance may also be displayed in this Gallery, such as the National Indigenous Art Triennial.

The Project Gallery and Orde Poynton Gallery will mostly display free exhibitions focused on the strengths of the NGA permanent collection and may be supplemented by external loans. The programming of these galleries will give Australian art a prominent place within the overall display, ensuring it is conceptually at the heart of the exhibition program.

In parallel, our major exhibition endeavours will provide audiences with the annual opportunity to experience art representing each of our three priority areas: Australian art, the art of our region, the Asia-Pacific; and the great 20th and 21st century art movements globally.

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

NGA PRIORITY	MAJOR EXHIBTN GALLERY (TEG)	AUSTRALIAN ART (PROJECT GALLERY)	INTERNAT. ART (ORDE POYNTON)	CONTEMP. ART (GALLERY 9 AND 10)	NGA PLAY	CONTEMP . ART INTER-VENTIONS	TOTAL #
Australian Art	1	3	0	1	1	1	7
Art of the Asia-Pacific region	1	0	1	1	Every 2 years	Every 2 years	4
The great global art movements	1	0	1	1	Every 2 years	Every 2 years	4
Total number of exhibitions per year	3	3	2	3	2	2	15

5.3 Funding and revenue

We will continue to assess the opportunity to grow the volume and mix of ticketed exhibitions and will consider alternative business models for future exhibitions, including:

- Private patronage of exhibitions
- Collection development funds for commissioned artworks also presented as exhibitions
- Lower cost ticketed exhibitions
- Opportunity for risk sharing of blockbuster/high risk projects with other venues or presenting organisations
- International touring as an income generating project

NGA Council Exhibition Fund should be considered for supporting new and ground-breaking projects that may not attract high visitation, but are important with respect to collecting, exhibition and brand positioning priorities. Priority will be given to non-ticketed (no income producing) exhibitions.

We will consider charging for exhibitions where there is a possible paid audience over 40,000 visitors. There will be exceptions to this principle in cases where the NGA already owns the entire content of the exhibition in which case no ticket charge will apply. We will also continue to seek corporate sponsorship and private donations at varying levels to help underwrite the exhibitions program.

Major exhibitions will be budgeted with a conservative break-even point.

Some specialised exhibitions may be free. These exhibitions are valued for their contribution to our strategic objectives relating to education, audience development and scholarship, or to our leadership priorities as a national institution. These exhibitions will be paid for through our operating grant, Government grant schemes or alternative funding sources (though in appropriate circumstances free entry shows can still attract sponsorship). Providing these exhibitions is important to our leadership as a national cultural institution and to engaging and enhancing our visitors' knowledge, imagination and understanding.

5.4 Contemporary art projects

As part of our goal of presenting a balanced program of Australian art, art from our region and the great global art movements, the NGA will provide a strong focus on contemporary art and on collaborating with living artists.

Our Exhibition Program will feature contemporary art spanning Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australian works, the best contemporary art of the Asia-Pacific and international visual culture of the 21st century.

Led by the Department of Global Contemporary Art Practice, and in consultation with Senior Curators of all collecting areas, the NGA will include contemporary art projects in its Exhibition Program every year. Contemporary art projects will be made up of purchases, some artist commissions, loans, and works from the NGA collection.

Commissioning of artists will follow the procedures outlined in the NGA Art Acquisition Policy, specifically section 4.4.4 'Methods of acquisition: Purchase: Commission'.

A major aspect of these displays will be to communicate with and build younger audiences, and the Contemporary curators will aim to deliver artist-focused installations and special events working with the marketing, events and education teams.

5.5 Travelling Exhibitions

The NGA Travelling Exhibitions Program (Travex) enjoys a strong industry and public profile in regional, remote and metropolitan communities throughout Australia, and offers a diverse and high-quality program of exhibitions. The program has become an essential part of our national remit to provide access to the national collection.

Currently the NGA's Portfolio Budget Statement requires us to release a minimum of four exhibitions a year. At any one time there can be up to ten exhibitions being developed, on the road or being acquitted.

Since 1988, over 10 million people have visited more than 150 exhibitions at over 1500 locations outside Canberra in every state and territory in Australia.

Travelling exhibitions will be drawn from our temporary exhibitions program. This is to minimise extraneous work load and maximise the impact of effort made in exhibitions production. Occasionally exhibitions will be created without intended display at the NGA. Exhibitions are generated and selected with a venue scale in mind, and are then marketed to suitable venues in that bracket. There are a multiple venues throughout Australia that have adequate temperature and humidity controls to be able to take sensitive items from the national collection, and exhibitions are matched to venues that we know can meet the required conditions for different items from the collection.

We will also continue to develop and tour exhibitions that can tolerate less strict environmental conditions, so we can tour to other regional and remote venues around Australia.

5.6 International Travelling Exhibitions

In the life of this strategy resource will be allocated to investigate the potential of a new International touring program, designed as a commercial initiative to offset the broader exhibition costs. A further consideration is the reciprocal lending opportunities, fundraising opportunities and relations that international touring may provide.

The development of an international touring program is a worthy consideration with respect to both government priorities relating to trade and bilateral relations but also for the potential to derive a new revenue stream for the gallery's operations.

Effort will be put to touring routes, which are aligned with government, are cost effective and match international markets to the strength of the collection.

6. Responsibilities

6.1 Council

- The overall exhibition program will be presented to the NGA Council, in line with the Council Charter of responsibilities.
- NGA Council must approve any specific exhibition requiring high investment, high levels of risk, or requiring a commitment to an external institution or lender. Approval must be sought prior to commitment being undertaken with third parties, or with a minimum of 18 months' notice from exhibition commencement date.

6.2 Director and Senior Executive Team

- The Director, Deputy Director and Assistant Director, Exhibitions and Collections will discuss and assess exhibition proposals, which may be internally generated or externally negotiated.
- Exhibition proposals may be generated by the Senior Executive Team and/or Curators and presented at a SET meeting or the quarterly NGA Exhibitions Committee.

6.3 Curatorial

- An NGA Curator will be responsible for the curatorial development for internally curated exhibitions.
- An NGA Curator will be assigned to oversee content for any externally curated exhibitions.

6.4 Head of Exhibitions

- NGA Head of Exhibitions will be responsible for assigning a cross-functional Project Team, Project Manager and ensuring the appropriate implementation of the Project Management Methodology.

6.5 Project Manager and Curator

- Responsible for consulting individual work groups regarding the many supporting activities and deliverables relating to exhibitions, with Exhibition Project Meetings being the primary vehicle for formal information sharing.

7. Related content

Legislation, policies, procedures and guidelines that relate to this Exhibition Policy

NGA Act 1975

Protection of Moveable Cultural Heritage Act 1986

Financial Management Act 1996

Financial Management Regulation 2005

Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012

Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013

Information Privacy Act 2014

Freedom of Information Act 2016

8. Policy review date

September 2019

9. Revision history

Version	Date	Responsible officer	Comments
	Month and Year	Title of the person approving document (same as in the footer)	Briefly describe the amendments