

# Knox Civic Art Policy

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Approval by:	Council	Responsible Officer:	Manager Active and Creative Communities
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## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework to guide the management of the Knox Civic Art Collection, including artwork acquisition, asset management, exhibition, conservation and deaccessioning of an indoor collection of artworks owned by Council.

## 2. Context

Local Governments play an important role in collecting, displaying and managing artworks that reflect the unique history, social character, cultural heritage and contemporary vision for a municipality. Civic Art Collections encourage community access to, and appreciation of the arts and support arts, generate discussion and contribute to a positive connection to place. Collections support arts development, placemaking and build a unique identity of a municipality. Overtime, artwork collections build in cultural, historical, social and economic value, presenting an excellent financial investment opportunity for Council, and can reflect the values held by the organisation.

The Knox Civic Art Collection ('the Collection') currently comprises a variety of paintings, photographs, ceramics, textiles, and works on paper. The Collection is an investment made by Council in the Arts, and is managed and insured as a Council asset, with the intention to be enjoyed by the Knox Community.

This Knox Civic Art Policy ('the Policy') outlines the purpose, scope, objectives and processes related to managing the Collection in line with industry practice. It also provides guidance for Council when making a selection of artworks that are relevant to Knox in terms of reflecting the shared history, culture, unique character and contemporary aspects of community life, as well as supporting good investment practices in high quality arts assets.

Knox has a limited capacity to exhibit and display the Collection, with no current civic gallery, and is also limited by restricted storage. The majority of Collection items are currently displayed in indoor, public spaces in Council owned buildings, with semi-regular rotation with works in storage.

## 3. Scope

The Policy provides a framework for:

- The assessment and approval process for acquiring artworks into the Knox Civic Art Collection through purchase, commission, donation or bequest
- The accession, cataloguing, maintaining, insuring and storing items in the Collection
- The exhibition and display of Collection items
- The deaccession framework for the disposal, sale, return or removal of Collection items
- Council's investment and financial management of the Collection
- Unless acquired into the Civic Art Collection in accordance with Section 6.3, management of Heritage and Memorabilia items and the Heritage and Memorability Collection are outside the scope of this policy

## 4. References

- 4.1 Community & Council Plan 2021-2031
- Goal: Connection, Resilience and wellbeing  
Knox is a place to call home. Our community is strong, healthy and we support and respect each other.
- 4.2 Relevant Legislation
- Local Government Act 2020 – Conflict and Interest Provisions
  - Copyright Amendment Act 2000
  - National Association of Visual Arts Code of Conduct
- 4.3 Charter of Human Rights
- This policy has been assessed against and complies with the charter of Human Rights.
- 4.4 Related Council Policies
- Public Art Policy
  - Election Period Policy
  - Councillor Code of Conduct
- 4.5 Related Council Plans, Strategies and Procedures
- Knox Arts & Cultural Plan
  - Relevant Neighbourhood Renewal and Structure Plans
  - Open Space Strategy
  - Retail Activation Strategy
  - Strategic Procurement Framework
  - Asset Management Strategy
  - Terms of Reference, Knox Arts and Culture Committee
  - Gender Impact Assessment Framework
  - Civic Art Condition Report
  - Civic Art Acquisition Report Template
  - Civic Art Deaccession Report Template
  - Civic Art Deed of Gift Template
  - Civic Art Loan Agreement Templates

## 5. Definitions

Civic Art	Indoor Collection of artworks owned by Council
Commission	Purchase of an artwork that is to be designed and fabricated for a specific purpose.
Public Art	Temporary or permanent artwork situated within a public, outdoor realm.
Acquisition	Purchase of a pre-existing artwork
Deaccession	A process by which Council may legally and formally remove items from its collection.
Accession	An accession is an acquisition that an institution formally adds to its collection and is administered through the collection policy.
Arts and Cultural Development	Utilising the arts as a means for community engagement and development, usually with a Public Art outcome that contributes to placemaking.
Conservation	Is the preservation of art and items of cultural importance through examination, documentation, treatment and prevention of deterioration measures.
Restoration	The act of restoring or the condition of being restored
Maintenance	The process of preserving the condition of an item or the situation or the state of being preserved
Heritage and Memorabilia Collection	This includes commemorative plaques, Mayoral attire, (including but not limited to robes and chains), printed photos of Council project and programs, ceremonial gifts, Councillor photos and Mayoral photos, certificates and awards.

## Donations

A process by which an existing or commissioned artwork is gifted to a collection at no cost to the institution.

## 6. Council Policy

The following provides a framework for the Knox Civic Art Collection management including processes that support good governance and a high quality collection that can be enjoyed by the Knox community.

### 6.1 Collection Objectives

The objectives of the Knox Civic Art Policy are as follows:

- To provide a clear framework for the acquisition of items into the Collection
- To manage the Collection assets using a best practice model
- To support access and enjoyment of the Collection through public exhibition and display
- To inform a clear rationale for deaccession of works from the Collection
- To guide sound financial management, investment and resourcing of the Collection
- To support arts and cultural development, placemaking and civic pride.

### 6.2 The Art Assessment Panel (AAP)

The Art Assessment Panel (AAP) is a working group that makes recommendations about the acquisition and deaccession of civic art collection items, alongside the Knox Civic Art Policy. This group is also responsible for recommendations related to the Knox Public Art Policy.

Membership of the AAP comprises:

- Up to six internal officers from a range of relevant service areas across Connected Communities, City Strategy & Integrity, and Infrastructure Directorates; plus
- Between two and four community members from the current Knox Arts and Culture Committee, nominated at the commencement of their term, and reflected in the Committee Terms of Reference; plus
- At least one Councillor will be nominated from the Arts and Culture Committee, and will take on the role of Chair. Where multiple Arts and Culture Committee Councillors' wish to take part in the AAP, the role of Chair will be given to the Mayor or Deputy Mayor, or negotiated where this does not apply.

Meetings will be scheduled on an ad-hoc basis as required. Consultation and recommendations of the AAP may also be undertaken via email communications. Recommendations of the AAP will be captured in a group consensus Civic Art Acquisition or Deaccession Report.

### 6.3 Acquisition Framework

Acquisitions may take place by way of purchase, commission, donation or bequest. Artworks may be purchased from reputable galleries or directly from the artist (if not represented by a gallery), legal owner, by commission, or via Council initiated art projects and programs. Items purchased for the Knox Civic Art Collection are procured through the Knox Civic Art Collection budget, which is reviewed annually. Artwork acquisition is implemented using the following framework.

#### 6.3.1 Acquisition Selection Criteria

All artworks must meet the following **essential criteria**:

- Be in a sound condition, with no extraordinary conservation, restoration or storage requirements
- Complement the existing Collection items without duplication of existing Collection items

- Be an authentic/original item, with detailed documentation of the provenance of the item confirming legal ownership
- Be offered unconditionally and without restriction, including the Council's right to deaccession
- Have the capacity for safe and accessible display in public and civic spaces
- Have standard and achievable storage and maintenance requirements

All artworks must meet at least one of the following **assessment criteria**:

- Increases the representation of works in the collection by Victorian based First Nations artists, with additional preference for Wurundjeri and Bunurong artworks
- A work of excellence that contributes to contemporary and innovative arts practice
- Is significant to the local history and unique character of Knox
- Is a high caliber work by respected emerging, mid-career or established artists who have or had a connection to Knox (live, work, study in the area)
- Reflects current social, cultural and environmental issues that relate to Knox
- Contributes to the existing collection in a way that builds on future exhibition theming.

### 6.3.2 Acquisition Approval Framework

Acquiring artwork into the collection must undergo a transparent and consistent assessment and approval process, as follows:

- Arts and Cultural Services will identify and respond to opportunities for artwork acquisition, and where items are identified as suitable for acquisition, will prepare an acquisition brief to the AAP, providing an initial selection criteria assessment.
- The acquisition brief shall include a discussion of the financial implications of the proposed acquisition, and the estimated valuation of the acquisition, noting for proposed acquisitions:
  - a) of \$5,000 and over, an independent market valuation must be obtained from Council's preferred art valuation service, or the artist's represented gallery;
  - b) below \$5,000, the market value will be determined through recent sales prices of a similar work by the artist or works of comparable artist at same career stage.
- For works in specialised fields of art, the AAP may invite recommendations from specialists with acknowledged expertise in the area, when deemed beneficial.
- The AAP must reach a majority consensus for a proposed acquisition of artwork into the collection, which will be captured in an Acquisition Report.
- The Manager of Active and Creative Communities will approve the Acquisition Report and may elect to consult, inform or seek endorsement from the Mayor or Councillors at their own discretion.
- The financial acquisition process will be undertaken in accordance with Council's Strategic Procurement Framework; or where an acquisition is rejected, the relevant stakeholders will be informed with a written rationale.
- A Deed of Gift Form will be completed by council and signed by both the donor and the Council to transfer ownership of item/s.

*Heritage and Memorabilia items:*

- Refer to the definition of Heritage and Memorabilia Collection in this Policy as per Item 5.
- Heritage and Memorabilia items are not governed by the Civic Art Policy or acquired into the Civic Art Collection unless determined by the AAP as meeting the acquisition criteria and formally acquired into the collection in accordance with this section.

#### 6.4 Deaccession Framework

Deaccession is the process by which the Council may formally remove items from its Collection as part of responsible collection management process, and implemented using the following framework.

##### 6.4.1 Deaccession Criteria

Artworks for deaccession from the collection must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Poor condition or have suffered irreparable damage
- No known provenance
- Have a legal ownership other than that of Knox City Council
- Pose a risk to public safety, which cannot be mitigated
- Is an item that cannot be effectively stored, maintained or installed within current resource
- Lost or stolen without possibility of recovery
- Copies, duplicate or reproductions of items already in the collection
- Works that no longer reflect Councils' values.

*Items cannot be proposed for deaccessioning:*

- On purely aesthetic grounds
- If they have been in the collection for less than five years
- If they have a legal encumbrance that prohibit them being deaccessioned.

##### 6.4.2 Deaccession Approval Framework

Artworks for deaccession from the collection must undergo a transparent and consistent assessment and approvals process, as follows:

- Arts and Cultural Services will identify and respond to the need for artwork deaccession, and prepare a deaccession brief to the AAP, including an initial assessment based on the deaccession criteria, and the financial and risk implications of keeping or removing the work/s
- For works in specialised fields of art, the AAP may invite deaccession advice from specialists with acknowledged expertise in the area, when deemed beneficial.
- The AAP must reach a majority consensus for a proposed deaccession of artwork, which will be minuted and include a Deaccession Report
- The Deaccession Report must be approved and signed by the Director Connected Communities, who may elect to consult, inform or seek endorsement from the Mayor or Councillors at their own discretion
- After obtaining formal written approval, the deaccession will be implemented as per Item 6.4.3.

##### 6.4.3 Method of disposal

Artworks approved by the Director for deaccession will be marked in the collection storage as a 'Deaccessioned Item' for a 'cooling off period' of 12 months. This time is provided to allow any further information about the items that may come to light, such as relevance, value and provenance, and follows a best practice methodology.

After the cooling off period, disposal by the following methods:

- Return the item to the donor, if donor can be found and in agreement.
- Return artwork to artist or, if deceased, their direct descendants.
- Gifting the item to another collecting institution if one can be located and willing to accept the item.
- Sell the item at public auction or by tender. Funds to be reinvested as per Council's Asset Management Strategy.
- Destruction will only be considered for an item if it were in very poor condition and had irreparable damage or cannot be housed in another Collection.
- All decisions and actions related to the deaccession and disposal process must be fully documented and recorded on the collection database.

#### 6.5 Access to the Knox Civic Art Collection

The Knox Civic Art Collection aims to be accessible and enjoy by the community through implementing:

- Displays in public areas within council owned, managed or tenanted venues.
- Exhibited, where relevant, as part of broader Council exhibition programs.
- Listed as a comprehensive online gallery collection, available for viewing on Knox City Council's website.
- Where viable, offer artworks as outward loans, as detailed in Item 6.6.
- Online enquiry portal for donations, bequests and research.

#### 6.6 Loans

The collection is available for loan outwards to accredited institutions, professional Galleries, Service Agreement Partners, and/or museums, whereby the following is achieved:

- A loan contract, value of works and condition report shall be issued and co-signed by Coordinator Arts and Cultural Services and the Manager of the loaning institution
- The borrowing institution shall accept all responsibility for wall-to-wall insurance, crates, shipping, and repair costs associated with the loan unless otherwise specified in the loan contract
- Inwards loans may be undertaken for short term projects and exhibitions conducted by Knox City Council. An inward loan contract must be completed and all specifications approved by the lender
- Conditional long-term loans will not be accepted.

#### 6.7 Maintenance and Storage

Council is committed to the preventative conservation of the Collection according to recognised museum standards. Council only engages qualified and accredited conservators and approved contractors to advise and work on the care, repair and maintenance of the collection.

The nominated officer from the Arts and Cultural Services Unit will be responsible for the day to day preventative conservation protocol.

An audit of the collection will be conducted every 4 years or otherwise in accordance with relevant Council policies and procedures.

Council's collection items not on display are housed in purpose built storage. Identification labels will be placed on storage boxes and shelves and linked to the collection records to further reduce handling, as per industry best practice.

The costs associated with storing and maintaining the collection will be covered through the capital allocation for Artwork Renewal, and reviewed annually.

#### 6.8 Insurance

All works in the collection are covered under Knox City Council's insurance policy, to the value at the time of acquisition, with options for revalue as required as part of the annual insurance policy. Artworks on loan for exhibition will be registered with Knox City Council's Insurance Officer, and reviewed alongside the Insurance Policy requirements on an annual basis.

## 7. Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this policy. Where an update does not materially alter this policy, such a change may be made administratively. Examples of minor administrative changes include changes to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or legislative references, or minor changes to processes that do not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this policy, it must be considered by Council, or a Delegated Committee.