



TEMPLATE FOR INPUT INTO THE AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE STRATEGY

Overview

This template should be used to provide comments on the content of the Australian Heritage Strategy.

Contact Details

Name of Organisation:	Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House
Name of Author:	Ms Daryl Karp
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Questions

Please add your comments for some or all of the questions provided with the Strategy's three high level themes below. If you have other information you wish to provide, please add this in the "Other comments" field.

1. Improve National Leadership

What are the most important things the Australian Government should be doing to offer leadership in heritage?

How can the Australian Government provide guidance and support for our national heritage—while still empowering other government, industry and community members to take responsibility and get involved?

What priority areas are important to you, your organisation or group?

What practical actions would you suggest to improve national heritage leadership?

The Australia Government has shown great vision and leadership in the development of this Australian Heritage Strategy (the Strategy). The Australian Government owns and manages over 300 heritage places on both the National and Commonwealth Heritage lists. In addition it manages ten cultural heritage and collecting institutions.

The Australian Government has an opportunity to continue to lead by example. The Strategy should recognise the leadership role the Australian Government plays in heritage and environmental management through the sites that it owns and manages, in particular those on the National Heritage List, such as Old Parliament House, and provide resources for their ongoing conservation.

Opportunities exist for institutions such as the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House (the Museum) to provide broad leadership and mentoring as custodians of and repositories for cultural heritage, through providing access to cultural heritage for education, research and social interest, including the digitisation of cultural and research resources. Through resourcing these places the Australian Government will ensure that heritage and broader commitments to education and social cohesion are met.



2. Pursue Innovative Partnerships

What partnerships are most needed within the heritage sector?

What heritage roles and responsibilities should be led by governments, peak heritage organisations or community groups in the 21st century?

How should resources be shared through heritage partnerships to ensure the greatest return on agreed priorities?

Can you provide examples of successful innovative partnerships you or your organisation have established?

Essential partnerships are required between training providers, heritage specialists, industry and heritage places.

The construction industry has an important role in maintaining heritage buildings. Heritage projects require a combination of practical trades and experience guided by specialist skills and knowledge.

In managing a place on the Commonwealth and National Heritage lists, the Museum relies on external contractors to undertake the essential work required to conserve, preserve and communicate the values and fabric of Old Parliament House.

Increasingly it is becoming difficult to find tradespeople with the required expertise and experience to undertake work on this early 20th century building. It is essential that the Strategy recognise and value the ongoing training and employment of those involved in traditional construction and repair trades through supporting training organisations, for example, the work of Australia ICOMOS and the Association for Preservation Technology (Australasia Chapter) with the Construction and Property Services Industry Skills Council, the Construction Industry Training Board of South Australia: Heritage Trades Program, the Holmesglen TAFE in Victoria and the Southern Midlands Council's Centre for Heritage and Oatlands in Tasmania in undertaking accredited courses in traditional building construction and repair trades.

Since 2010 the Museum has engaged in a five year project to upgrade the render across the entire façade of the Old Parliament House building. The joint skills of industry partners and the building's heritage management have ensured that excellent conservation outcomes have been achieved. One of the major successes has been partnering with industry and regulators to achieve better practice outcomes through an innovative approach to the removal, capture and disposal of lead waste.



3. Enable encourage communities to understand and care for their heritage

What should the Australian heritage sector be doing to help the Australian community better engage in heritage activities?

How can a shared understanding of our national heritage be developed and best celebrated together?

Do you have any examples of activities that have been successful in promoting local heritage to a broader audience?

What is the role of technology and new media in providing greater community access to heritage?

Heritage is something that we participate in, learn about and enjoy, as well as something we manage and protect. The Australian Government's cultural heritage institutions are uniquely placed to demonstrate national leadership in the value of heritage to Australian society. The definition and approach to management of heritage needs to be broad to capture the past-present continuum, and include all aspects of cultural heritage including social and spiritual value in addition to historic, aesthetic and scientific values.

Whilst we note that the Strategy is largely focused on heritage places, it is essential that there be a greater integration between the management of places (immoveable) and other forms of heritage such as cultural activities and objects, or collections (movable). A shared understanding of our national heritage would be further developed and better celebrated through greater acknowledgement of the connections between all forms of cultural heritage assets held by the Australian community.

The Strategy has the opportunity to address the role that heritage places and collections play in education and the specific role they play in understanding the story of nationhood. Over 600,000 students have visited Canberra since 2006 with the introduction of the Parliament and Civics Education Rebate (PACER) where they visit the national civic and cultural institutions, in particular Parliament House, the National Electoral Education Centre, the Australian War Memorial and the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House. Annually, 75, 000 students from across Australia participate in award winning education programs at the Museum that fuse technology, civics, history and collections. In a 2011 report on the PACER program the Australian Curriculum Studies Association (ACSA) assessed the extent to which the program supported students' civics and citizenship education. ACSA considered the unique attributes of visiting the national capital, the experience of the student visit and the quality of education programs and concluded that 'student learning outcomes are greater where education programs have been developed by educators who are able to articulate their pedagogical approach and learning outcomes and where programs are presented by education officers'. Approximately 66.8 per cent of schools receiving PACER visited the Museum. Comments made about their experience included 'the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House was FANTASTIC. The role play that occurred in the House of Reps chamber is still being talked about as a highlight of our camp' and 'the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House was fantastic with the new interactive areas.'



Digital technology and new media provide huge opportunities for audiences to access and contribute to Australia's cultural heritage. The online environment offers avenues for greater connections between places and collections. In 2011 the Museum collaborated with the National Archives of Australia (the Archives) to produce *Discovering Mildenhall's Canberra* <http://mildenhall.moadoph.gov.au>. The website brings together the Old Parliament House place and WJ Mildenhall's photographs of the construction of the building held by the Archives. Users can participate by adding geographic data to the images to provide more accurate location information, leaving comments, tagging 'favourite' images and adding historic or current images.

Other comments

The Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House is pleased to make a submission to the Australia Heritage Strategy and congratulates the Australian Government on this important initiative.

At a time of global political upheaval, the Museum plays a significant role in exploring and communicating the intrinsic value of democracy – the capacity for people to govern their own lives, to have their say. With an Australian perspective, in a country made up of over 200 nationalities, the Museum provides a space not just to celebrate our democratic traditions, but also to truly collaborate with our audiences and stakeholders. We embrace this opportunity to connect communities, encourage participation and value freedom.

Since Parliament moved to its new and permanent home, an active and award-winning program to conserve the heritage fabric of the National Heritage Listed building has been undertaken, alongside the launch of dynamic exhibition galleries which explore Australia's journey to democracy as the Museum of Australian Democracy.