



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

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Questions

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?

N/A

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?

N/A



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?

N/A

Other comments

1. Clarification of the scope of the Australian Heritage Strategy

The Australian Heritage Strategy, when finalised, will provide national leadership for an important part of Australia's heritage activity. However the draft, in its current form, is not explicit in scope or precise in the language used, particularly as it intersects with collecting organisations such as libraries, museums, archives and galleries.

"Heritage" is defined broadly in the draft (see the definition and diagram on p.12) but the Strategy and its recommendations address only those parts of heritage that are within the sphere of the Department of Environment and under the legislation that governs the work of this Department, i.e. Australia's immovable heritage - the sites, places and natural environment.

The Australian Heritage Strategy addresses only the domain illustrated by the bottom half of the diagram on p.12. Though moveable heritage may be called upon to enhance the understanding of immovable heritage (the top half) it is not within the scope of the Strategy.

Australia's moveable heritage, which is collected and preserved by major public institutions such as the members of National & State Libraries Australasia (www.nsla.org.au), constitutes a significant portion of our nation's cultural heritage and research infrastructure. Libraries have a broad purpose and mission – to enable education, business development, literacy, critical thinking, equality of access to information and knowledge, and to preserve and make available Australia's culture and history for future generations.

The range of challenges and issues that libraries are addressing, particularly as information is increasingly digital, cannot be considered to fall under the Australian Heritage Strategy as it is currently drafted.

The scope of the strategy must be explicitly stated and the implication that it addresses moveable heritage removed.



2. Libraries and Collecting Institutions as Partners

Though outside the scope of the Australian Heritage Strategy, libraries and collecting institutions are important partners for the sector in addressing the challenges affecting Australia's immoveable heritage.

Libraries support the understanding and analysis of immoveable cultural heritage and we collect and make available the primary source materials, publications and the outcomes of research in many forms, eg. oral histories, maps, photographs, sound recordings, film, environmental assessment plans, government publications, born digital materials, original archives and journals.

The heritage workers, custodians and communities engaging directly with Australia's immoveable heritage rely heavily on library collections and services to do their work.

The Strategy currently recommends fostering greater collaboration between the heritage and tourism sectors. There is an opportunity to broaden this to also focus on opportunities to partner with collecting institutions, to develop new programming and improve reach into the community. Libraries, both public libraries and the State/National Libraries, have deep engagement with their communities, and there are opportunities for local, regional and national partnerships.

The priority of the Australian Heritage Strategy (p.25) to "promote greater knowledge and engagement with our heritage" points directly to the need to explicitly recognise libraries as key partners.

3. Role of specific examples in the Draft Australian Heritage Strategy

In line with clarifying the scope of the Australian Heritage Strategy concerning immoveable and moveable heritage, some specific examples mentioned should be reviewed.

As a general comment, the inclusion of examples across the Strategy without the context of why these are singled out and not others can distract from the national leadership message.

National & State Libraries Australasia

www.nsla.org.au

National & State Libraries Australasia (NSLA) represents the State, Territory and National Libraries of Australia and New Zealand. These ten major public research libraries work together to enable people to access, use and share local and global knowledge and ideas.



During the 2012-2013 financial year:

12 million people	visited our library buildings
171 million pages	were viewed on our websites
2,885 terabytes	of digital collections were stored
\$38.6 million	was the total spend on collections
\$5.3 billion	was the asset value of our collections
\$1.07 billion	was the asset value of our buildings/sites

Please note: Each of the ten NSLA member libraries works within different government jurisdictions. The National Library of New Zealand is part of the Department of Internal Affairs, a New Zealand government department. The views expressed in this letter should not be taken to reflect the views of the National Library of New Zealand nor of the New Zealand Government.