



City of
STONNINGTON

Art Acquisitions Policy

Version 3



CITY OF STONNINGTON ART ACQUISITIONS POLICY

Policy Owner

Visual Arts Officer – Community and Wellbeing

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Approved by

Council

Review date

This document will be reviewed as required and no later than 4 years from adoption date.

In conjunction with the Art Acquisitions Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

Version history

Arts Acquisition Policy 2007 Adopted by Council on 2007

Art Acquisition Policy 2014 Adopted by Council on 2014

Art Acquisitions Policy 2022 Adopted by Council on 2022

Introduction

The City of Stonnington Council maintains a significant collection of contemporary works of art. The Collection dates from the late twentieth century to present day, spanning a wide variety of works including paintings, drawings, sculptures, prints and photographs. It presents the work of emerging, mid-career and senior contemporary Australian artists with a particular strength of the Collection being works of art that demonstrate a connection to the City of Stonnington. The Collection is a valuable community asset, displayed in publicly accessible locations throughout Council buildings and contributes to the vibrancy and cultural landscape of the municipality.

New works of art may be acquired only when the criteria of the policy are met.

This policy has been developed with respect to international museum codes of ethics and museum best practice and ensures Council's collecting practices are responsible, rigorous and consistent.

Purpose

This policy sets out guidelines and criteria for the acquisition of art for the City of Stonnington Art Collection.

Scope

The policy applies to all works of art under consideration for acceptance into the City of Stonnington Art Collection and to decisions made by any Council Officers who are responsible for assessing the acquisition of art. The policy informs works of art acquired for the City of Stonnington's Public Art Collection which have site specific requirements for display; these are set out in the Public Art Policy.

This Policy works in tandem with the Deaccessioning Policy which set out specific criteria that must be followed by the Committee when advising on the deaccession of an artwork.

The policy also sits within the broader vision, strategies and framework of the *City of Stonnington's Arts and Culture Strategy* and *Future Stonnington* (incorporating Council's *Community Vision 2040* and *Council Plan, 2021-2025*).

Objectives

The objectives of the policy are to:

- Provide specific and mandatory criteria to dictate the decision making process around the acquisition of works of art
- Ensure works of art are acquired in a transparent and ethical manner
- Ensure the provenance of acquisitions are verified, showing clear chain of ownership and valid legal title
- Ensure acquisitions are of the highest quality reflecting excellent artistic practice and achievement
- Develop the Collection by acquiring works of art that demonstrate a strong connection to the City of Stonnington and reflect the uniqueness of the municipality with its diverse identities, perspectives and communities
- Ensure the Collection is without gender bias
- Support the strategic directions of Council's Future Stonnington Plan of 'a thriving and unique place; an inclusive and healthy community; a people centred and future ready city.'

Acquisition Criteria

Council requires that new acquisitions meet **all** the following mandatory standards for acceptance into the Collection:

- Enhances, develops and/or consolidates existing collection strengths, themes and media.
- High quality, reflecting excellence in contemporary art practice
- Established and verifiable provenance
- Unconditional purchase or donation with valid legal title of ownership
- Good condition, intrinsically sound and reasonably resistant to deterioration to withstand display in a non-museum environment
- Can be managed, conserved and stored appropriately within the means of Council
- Will not pose a risk to public safety or hinder public access
- Respects the moral rights of the artist

Council also requires that new acquisitions meet **one or more** of the following criteria:

- Artists must have a demonstrated professional visual arts practice and in the case of emerging artists exhibit a strong potential and commitment to establishing a long term career in the visual arts
- Work produced by First Nations artists, with preference given to those from the Wurundjeri Woi Wurring People and Bunurong of the East Kulin nations
- Work produced by an artist who lives (lived) or works (worked), studies (studied) or made a significant contribution to the cultural development of the municipality
- Responds and/or demonstrates a connection to the people, culture and geographical location of the municipality

Policy

Acquisition Decision making and Process

Acquisitions for the Collection are made by means of purchase, commission, gift or bequest. The Visual Arts Officer identifies and puts forward works of art for acquisition according to the criteria set out in this Policy.

Council maintains an Art Acquisitions Advisory Committee subject to a Terms of Reference. Committee members identify and recommend works of art for potential acquisition. Proposals and commissions from external sources may also be considered against this Policy. All written proposals for new acquisitions are prepared by the Visual Arts Officer and submitted to the Committee.

The Committee reviews these proposals and determines whether the works of art should be recommended in accordance with the criteria. Recommendation of proposed acquisitions must be passed by a majority of the Committee. If agreed, proposed acquisitions are presented to Council for endorsement at a Council meeting. Each proposal will include an image, artwork details and a concise rationale statement from the Committee. If endorsed by Council, the artwork is thereby considered to have been accepted into the Collection and is then formally accessioned.

Definitions

Term	Definition
City of Stonnington Council	Council
City of Stonnington Art Collection	Collection
Art Acquisitions Advisory Committee	Committee
Accessioned	The process whereby a work is recorded as being part of a collection and given a unique identifying number (accession number).
Acquisition	Work of Art accepted into a permanent collection through purchase, donation, gift or bequest.
Bequest	A work of art or financial donation left to an institution as part of a deceased estate.
Collection	Works of art of various media acquired by the City of Stonnington Council that have been accessioned into the collection.
Commission	The act of requesting the services of an artist to create a work of art frequently for a specific location or purpose.
Deaccession	The permanent removal of a work of art from a collection.
Disposal	The means by which a work of art is permanently removed from a collection.
Gift	Work of art given to an institution with philanthropic intent and without the expectation of financial or material benefit or advantage.
Legal Title	Legal right of ownership to property.
Moral Rights	Rights of a creator to protect the ownership and integrity of their work.
Public Art	Works of art of various media created specifically for installation and display in the public domain.
Provenance	History and ownership of a work of art from the time of its creation to the present day from which authenticity and ownership can be determined.

Responsibilities

Party/parties

Roles and responsibilities

Council	Champion the commitment and principles for public transparency through leadership, modelling practice and decision making. Considers advice and recommendations of the Art Acquisitions Advisory Committee and makes formal decisions through council resolutions.
Director, Community and Wellbeing	Champion the commitment and principles for public transparency through leadership, modelling practice and decision making. Monitors the implementation of the Policy.
Manager Events, Arts and Culture	Ensures the policy is functional and in keeping with wider arts and cultural policies, plans and strategies.
Art Acquisitions Advisory Committee	Assess proposals for the acquisition and deaccession of works of art, and the commissioning of public art in accordance with the criteria set out in relevant policies. Advise on potential acquisition into the Contemporary Art Collection.
Visual Arts Officer	Prepares documentation for the Committee and ensures advice and recommendations comply with the criteria of the policies. Conducts a periodic review of the policies to ensure they are in keeping with industry practice and standards.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Council commits to monitoring processes, information sharing and decision making to understand the overall level of success in the Policy's implementation.

A periodic review of this policy will be undertaken to ensure any changes required to strengthen or update the policy are made every four years.

Officers are authorised to make minor editorial amendments as needed for administrative or updated information purposes (for example, but not limited to: changes to position and roles, references to legislation, definitions etc). Officers may also make amendments to the list of related documents at such times where reference material or guidelines require updating.

Related Legislation and Policies

There are a range of legislation, codes and Council documents that inform and support this Policy. These include, but are not limited to:

Legislation	Council documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries, 2016 • Australian Best Practice Guide to Collecting Cultural Material, Department of Communications and the Arts, 2015 • International Council on Museums (ICOM), Code of Ethics for Museums, 2013 • Continuous Cultures, Ongoing Responsibilities for Australian Museums Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage, Museums Australia, 2005 • Valuing Art, Respecting Culture: Protocols for Working with the Australian Indigenous Visual Arts and Crafts Sector, 2001 • Museums Australia, Code of Ethics, 1999 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art Acquisitions Advisory Committee Terms of Reference • Deaccessioning Policy • Public Art Policy • Future Stonnington (incorporating Council's Community Vision 2040 and Council Plan, 2021-2025) • Receiving Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy and Procedure • Reconciliation Action Plan • Conflict of Interest Policy • Mutual Respect Charter • Asset Disposal Policy • Asset Valuation and Revaluation Policy • Diversity and Inclusion Policy