



Institute Building, North Tce (corner Kintore Ave), Adelaide
PO Box 263, Rundle Mall SA 5000, Australia

Tel : + 61 (8) 8207 7287 Fax: + 61 (8) 8207 7207

info@collectionscouncil.com.au
www.collectionscouncil.com.au

Submission to the Productivity Commission

Contribution of the Not for Profit Sector: Response to the Productivity Commission Issues Paper

10 June 2009

Authors	<p>The following people have contributed to this submission on behalf of the Collections Council of Australia:</p> <p><i>Ms Margaret Birtley</i> Chief Executive Officer Collections Council of Australia Ltd</p> <p><i>Ms Alexis Tindall</i> Project Officer Collections Council of Australia Ltd</p> <p><i>Ms Veronica Bullock</i> Development Officer Collections Council of Australia Ltd</p>
Organisation	Collections Council of Australia Ltd
Type of organisation	Not for profit; limited liability company
Address	PO Box 263 Rundle Mall SA 5000
State	South Australia
Contact details	Email: info@collectionscouncil.com.au Telephone: +61 8 8207 7287
Declaration of interests and affiliations	None of the contributors has any direct personal interest in the matters addressed by this submission.

Contribution of the Not for Profit Sector

A response to the Productivity Commission Issues Paper, circulated April 2009.

About the Collections Council

The collections field includes natural and social history museums, art galleries, libraries, archives, Indigenous keeping places and knowledge centres, historical societies and collections held in schools and universities, community organisations and businesses. Collections are an integral part of Australian life and play a role in documenting and interpreting Australian identity, values and achievement.

As the peak body for cultural and scientific collecting organisations in Australia, the Collections Council of Australia (CCA) was initiated and is supported by the Cultural Ministers Council. We speak with one voice for collections in Australia, on matters of shared interest. Our aim is to ensure the nation-wide sustainability of collections, wherever they are held. Keys to achieving this aim include:

- Coordination of effort across the collections field;
- Strengthening of links between the collections field and other fields such as community, education, industry, government and research; and
- Stimulation of greater awareness and use of collections.

Information about our full range of projects is available at www.collectionscouncil.com.au.

This submission

The CCA appreciates the opportunity to provide input to this study of the Contribution of the Not for Profit Sector. We are also pleased to have participated in a Roundtable discussion held in Adelaide on Tuesday 19 May 2009.

This written submission builds on discussion that took place at the Adelaide Roundtable and responds to the Issues Paper circulated by the Productivity Commission in April 2009.

The CCA's interest in the Productivity Commission's Study of the Contribution of the Not for Profit sector reflects our role as a peak body for archives, galleries, libraries and museums in Australia, all of which operate as not for profit organisations. This area is incredibly diverse, and faces particular challenges. Organisations of interest to the CCA can be funded by Federal, State or Territory or Local Government, or not funded at all. Many exist within other not for profit

structures, such as universities, schools, churches, hospitals and community groups.

The work of not for profit collecting organisations contributes to the broader economy in many ways. Collecting organisations contribute to the tourism economy, and to research and innovation.

The CCA's submission should be considered a collection of comments and observations, and it should be noted that some issues discussed below apply to different parts of the sector, and few can be universally applied.

The CCA will be pleased to discuss this submission further.

1. Scope of the Study

In this section the CCA:

- *Comments on the potential of the present study*
- *Comments on findings and recommendations of previous inquiries that have not been acted on by government.*

The CCA acknowledges the breadth of the not for profit sector, and appreciates this effort by the Productivity Commission to capture the contribution of the sector in its broadest form.

At a roundtable meeting in Adelaide on 19 May 2009, representatives from the Productivity Commission commented that Federal Government initiated research into the not for profit sector had been undertaken on a number of occasions in the last decade. The CCA believes in the importance of reviewing such research on a regular basis, in order to capture impact of changing policy, and economic shifts and trends. For example, trends in volunteering, a key element of the not for profit workforce, may be affected in coming years as the impact of increased unemployment prompted by the economic downturn is felt, and as the 'Baby Boomer' generation approaches retirement. Each generation brings changes in the availability, preferences, attitudes and abilities of volunteers.

The CCA notes the draft framework proposed by the Productivity Commission for capturing the contribution of the not for profit sector. If this framework was approved as an effective measure, that contribution should be recorded and reported at appropriate intervals to help capture such trends.

Collecting organisations in the not for profit sector at the Commonwealth level are also affected by the report *The Efficiency Dividend and Small Agencies: Size Does Matter* released by the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit in December 2008. This report arose from the Inquiry into the effects of the ongoing efficiency dividend on smaller public sector agencies and made recommendations regarding the funding of collecting organisations that have not yet been acted upon. The CCA made a submission to that Inquiry, which recommended either exemption from the efficiency dividend for collecting organisations, or alterations to the method of calculation.¹

The Joint Committee found that federally funded cultural agencies, such as the National Library of Australia, National Gallery of Australia and National Museum, 'have a legislated mandate to grow and develop their collections' which 'does not sit well with the efficiency dividend's goal of harvesting their resources for government priorities'. The report also commented on the unintended impact of accounting for depreciation on these agencies with large asset holdings.² Recommendations 3 and 8 propose changes to the funding model for such organisations.³

Federal funded collecting organisations and other interested parties are waiting for the Government's response to this report, and were disappointed that it was not delivered in time for the 2009-10 Federal Budget.

2. Measuring the contribution of the not for profit sector

In this section the CCA:

- *comments on specific issues in measuring the contribution of diverse Australian collections;*
- *comments on the Productivity Commission's Draft Overarching Framework for Measuring the Contribution of the Not for Profit Sector, and its application to collections;*
- *refers to international trends and debates in the measurement of the cultural sphere.*

The CCA supports the development of a conceptual framework for measuring the contribution of the not for profit sector. A sound, sector-wide accepted framework could facilitate regular measurement, determination of trends in the sector and development of policy responses.

Measuring the contribution of the collections field can be challenging. The organisations represented by the CCA include not just archives, galleries, libraries and museums, but also historical societies, herbaria, zoos, botanic gardens, Indigenous keeping places and knowledge centres, and many others.

2.1 Mapping the sector

The number of collecting organisations would be considered by many to be a measurable element of the not for profit sector, but recent work by the CCA has proven inadequacies in the available statistics. Drawing on data from 2004 to 2008, ABS statistics propose numbers of museums, galleries, libraries and archives somewhere near 2,000 and the number of people working in those organisations as more than 30,000.⁴

The CCA has recently collected its own data on the scope of the nation's collections, resulting in a database of approximately 5000 Australian public collecting organisations. This database has been developed as a result of the CCA's relationship with peak and professional bodies in the collections field, among others. The final stage of data collection included self-nominated groups.

The database includes a vast diversity of not for profit organisations, from the National Museum of Australia, with an operating budget in the millions⁵ and 250 staff⁶, to the Western Australian Eastern Goldfields Historical Society, operating thanks to the work of more than forty volunteers⁷, as well as school and church archives which sometimes depend on the work of a sole part time staff member or volunteer. All of these organisations manage and care for significant collections, contributing to the Distributed National Collection. The Distributed National Collection is defined in *Significance 2.0* as 'the sum of all the heritage collections of significance to the nation', 'held by a wide range of organisations and individuals, and found across the country.'⁸

Data collected by the ABS generally relies upon registered business details. As organisations that employ paid staff are registered, numerical inaccuracies are

unlikely to impact on measures of those working in the sector, but under-estimation will impact the calculation of volunteer contribution to the sector.

Many small volunteer run collections are not incorporated, and still more exist within other organisations. Examples of these include archives, museums and historical committees that sit within churches, schools, hospitals, and corporate businesses. Many collections workers and volunteers thus work in organisations which would not describe the management of collections as their core business.

Funding sources for these organisations are similarly diverse. Most organisations, if funded, draw on a combination of sources. These can include federal, state or territory and local government contributions, channelled through heritage, arts, education, tourism, science or research funding or community grant arrangements. Many organisations also depend on such authorities for other essential support, with collections often housed in local government owned buildings, heritage listed buildings owned by the National Trust, or co-located with other services, such as community centres.

The CCA notes the Commonwealth's input to administrative costs for environment and heritage organisations through the Grants to Voluntary Environment and Heritage Organisations (GVEHO) program. This program provides contributions of between \$1500 and \$87,000 to relevant organisations. While this is an invaluable contribution to some larger beneficiaries, particularly those who are able to secure three year funding arrangements, the CCA believes that the program could be expanded.

2.2 Draft Overarching Framework for measuring the contribution of the not for profit sector

The CCA has considered the challenge of measuring the contribution of the collections field within the Productivity Commission's Draft Overarching Framework, distributed in the Issues Paper. Particular aspects of the collections field represented in the framework are discussed below.

2.2.1 Inputs

As previously discussed, existing measures of the 'comprehensive data' available regarding numbers of organisations, employment and volunteer input are considered by the CCA to be inadequate. The CCA urges the Productivity Commission to broaden the measure of inputs beyond statistics available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, and encourages engagement with peak bodies and other representatives of the sector.

Funding

The manner in which collections organisations are resourced may be challenging to capture. Many collecting organisations are funded from a diversity of sources, such as a combination of grants from all three tiers of government, sourced from a variety of portfolios, in kind support from local government or related organisations, entry and user fees and donations.

Case Study #1***Public Libraries in South Australia***

Core business activities of South Australian public libraries include acquiring, managing and ensuring access to the collection of books. These activities are jointly funded by State and Local Governments. Public programs can be funded by other sources, including education, arts and community development authorities in all levels of government. Services for housebound library patrons may be incorporated into Home and Community Care services, which draw jointly on federal and state and territory governments. School holiday programs for children may be funded through a combination of participant fees and subsidy from local government. Other sources of income include donations, fines and fees, and volunteer time.⁹

Some collections also benefit from commercial sponsorship. Many sponsors who take up such opportunities do so to encourage community education about their industry's heritage, products or practices. Examples of such relationships include Australian Wool Innovation's support of the Powerhouse Museum's exhibition *200 Years of Australian Wool in Fashion*, and Holden's sponsorship of the *Holden Pavilion of Australian Motoring* at the National Motor Museum.

Direct Economic Contribution

The Productivity Commission model of measuring employment and other costs can be useful, providing effort is made to ensure that the number of collecting organisations considered is accurate, as described previously.

As previously discussed, inaccuracies in the number of collecting organisations as documented by the ABS will lead to flow on inaccuracies in capturing the contribution of the workers and volunteers across the collections field. This is most likely to be felt in the enumeration of the volunteer contribution.

As a part of the cultural sphere, the CCA is also concerned about the inadequacies of recorded statistics about arts and cultural workers. The transient and short term work of many workers in the cultural sphere means inaccuracies in such measurements. While this is more keenly felt among performing and visual arts, many collections sector workers work on a short term basis, such as freelance curators, art handlers and exhibition designers. Failure to account for occasional work may lead to misinterpretation of labour statistics in the arts and cultural sphere.

The CCA believes that improvements in data collection could include collection of labour force statistics at different times of year, and more in-depth querying of experiences and intentions regarding work over longer investigation periods than those presently used by the ABS. It may also be possible for the ABS to collect such information through the General Social Survey and Household Surveys.

In-kind support

Capturing and applying a value or measurement to the work of the volunteer community in collections is also difficult. Volunteering in this field takes many forms, some of which are described below:

- Collection management staff – Collecting organisations with small or no budget rely on the contribution of volunteers to document their collection,

- including background research, registration, ongoing collection management and de-accessioning;
- Front of House staff – many organisations rely on volunteers to provide services to the public, including staffing entrances, conducting tours, operating souvenir shops and supervising galleries;
 - Research – in all kinds of collections, volunteers conduct historical, social and scientific research;
 - Governance – many major funded organisations, and most small and unfunded organisations rely on volunteer boards of directors, and reference groups.

In unfunded organisations, the entire output of the organisation is reliant on this work. In publicly funded organisations, whether through ongoing Federal, State and Territory or Local Government funded organisations, the volunteers amplify the value of invested public funds, without which many organisations would need to limit their operations.

The broader cultural sphere benefits from a skilled volunteer labour force, often with specialized skills that should be accounted for in economic evaluations. Many artists, recent graduates, and those only able to access short term work use volunteering to make professional contacts, supplement their work experience, and develop their skills. The cultural sphere, including collections, benefits from volunteer work of an under-utilised labour force.

The nation's collections benefit from the support of local governments around the nation. Many historical societies and community archives, staffed entirely by volunteers, depend upon peppercorn or free rental to house collections, and provision of space in which to exist. This often happens within heritage buildings, which, in some circumstances, require extensive maintenance. Many are housed in co-location with libraries or galleries, and in council offices. The incorporation of these societies and archives into local volunteering programs, and involvement in community public liability insurance arrangements, provides integral support to ensure that these societies can continue.

Many corporate organisations contribute to the nation's heritage by accommodating and exhibiting their own collections, via not for profit entities. Good examples of these are the Westpac Museum which traces the history of Westpac banking in Australia since 1817, and the Ford Discovery Centre, in Geelong, which exhibits the history of Ford automobile manufacturing in Australia since 1925.

2.2.2 Outputs

Outputs of collecting organisations are extremely diverse. Elements to be considered (with areas of the draft framework in which they could be considered suggested in brackets) include:

- Ongoing care of community assets, such as publicly owned artistic, scientific, historical and cultural collections (Service, Social Endowment)
- Education programs that add value to traditional school curricula (Service)
- Opportunities for further education, including independent study, creative and artistic inspiration (Connecting the community)

- Research, including provision of research literature through libraries, scientific and historical research conducted within museums, and social, cultural and historical research conducted through archives (Service, Advocacy)
- Leisure and entertainment, including engaging exhibitions, public programs, tourist attractions, hosting and organizing academic symposia and artistic performances (Service, Connecting the community)

One of the key outputs of this area is the long term care of collections. The long term preservation of these community assets poses a challenge for the draft framework as it can be considered an output, outcome and impact.

2.2.3 Outcomes

The Productivity Commission has detailed five types of outcomes to be measured in the draft overarching framework for measuring the contribution of the not for profit sector. Each of these outcomes can be applied to the collections field. A brief summary of some outcomes, and the category to which they apply are suggested below:

- Community engagement, of visitors and users of collections, and volunteers (Service, Connection, Consumption Outcomes)
- Long term preservation of historical, artistic, scientific and cultural records, objects and artifacts (Service, Advocacy, Existence Outcomes)
- Support for the nation's cultural heritage (Existence Outcomes)
- Education at all levels, including lifelong learning (Service, Connection, Consumption Outcomes)
- Culture and Heritage based tourism (Service, Consumption Outcomes)

Collections of all kinds play a role in education programs, leisure activities and tourism. Outcomes can include engagement of students with alternative non-classroom education, and the entertainment and broadening of experience of the art gallery visitor or library user.

For the information of the Productivity Commission, a description of the 'Uses of Collections' developed by the CCA is provided at Appendix 1.

Users of collections and volunteers who work with collections experience connections with the broader community. Users of collections (including students, children, visitors and adults) seek and find artistic inspiration, spurs to scientific inquiry, and explorations of their family and community history.

Enormous social capital is generated by the collections sector. The ABS Social Capital framework identifies culture, language, history, arts and cultural events as contributors to social capital.¹⁰ The outputs of the collections field, including exhibitions, education programs and leisure activities provide a cultural contribution to the generation of social capital.

High rates of volunteering in this area create valuable community connections for those volunteers. The social capital benefits of volunteering are well documented, and the benefits to those who volunteer in collecting organisations are equivalent to those in many other not for profit organisations. Older volunteers are likely to have better connections to supportive community networks, while their volunteer

work helps maintain physical and cognitive activity. Younger volunteers see volunteering as ‘an opportunity to learn new skills, gain a reference, and potentially create a pathway to paid employment’, while those from culturally diverse backgrounds and non-English speaking communities often see volunteering as ‘a way of increasing their understanding of the broader Australian community, an opportunity to practice English skills, and the chance to meet new people and create social networks’.¹¹ The opportunity for intergenerational connection increases through valued local collecting organisations.

Case Study #2

During a 1999 printmaking workshop for artists in Museum Victoria, a group of Indigenous Victorian women were shown an historic possum skin cloak, once a common garment among Indigenous communities in the south east of Australia. Moved by the stories of the cloaks and the connection these garments provided to their ancestors, the women commenced the *Tooloyne Koortakay* project. The disappearance of the possum skin cloak in favour of government distributed blankets in the nineteenth century demonstrated a loss of cultural heritage. The *Tooloyne Koortakay* project brought together all known documentation about the cloaks, consulted with contemporary tribal elders about the associated practices and history, and the group of women created a new cloak in a traditional manner.

The resulting cloak, records of the experience of making the cloak and documentation the women used to inform the project comprised the *Tooloyne Koortakay* collection, exhibited at the Melbourne Museum, and now part of the First Australians Gallery in the National Museum of Australia.¹² The project also generated a film and a book, *Wrapped in a Possum Skin Cloak*. Participants were also involved in the 2006 Commonwealth Games and 2008 Festival of Pacific Arts in American Samoa.¹³

The use of the collection has inspired an artistic project, educated the community about a significant part of Australian history and generated considerable community benefit, both in the revival of lost arts, and in improving the connection of relevant Indigenous communities with their history.

2.2.4 Impacts

The CCA notes that the six nominated fields of impact detailed in the draft framework reflect aspects of social capital, similar to that detailed in the Australian Bureau of Statistics’ Social Capital Framework.¹⁴

The impacts of the collections field include a number of unique elements, the value of which should not be discounted in relation to the contribution of this segment of the not for profit sector.

Future use of collections

The CCA recommends that the future benefit of collections should be accounted for in some manner.

Future benefits of collections may include as yet unrealised research potential, and providing inspiration for future creative or scientific excellence.

Case Study #3

The library of information contained within museum and herbarium specimens can be used for a range of purposes. Examples nominated by the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG) include:

- analysis of past distribution of animals (a good example is the endangered night parrot);
- the use of samples from museum specimens for molecular studies to understand phylogenetic relationships with related taxa;
- ascertaining information on life histories, including variation in morphology and sexual dimorphism etc;
- specimens may include information on gut contents, therefore indications about species' diet;
- Museum collections can also be sub-sampled for evidence of pesticides and heavy metals, such as DDT residues in egg shells.

Distributional data held in museum collections is used by a range of land use organisations including Local, State and Federal Governments to make informed decisions about selecting and proclaiming areas of high conservation value. In some cases, particularly with invertebrate distribution, museums may provide the only useful data.¹⁵

Case Study #4

The goals of the Atlas of Living Australia are an example of contemporary collecting organisations thinking about the future benefit inherent in their collections. Frank Howarth, director of the Australian Museum, describes the goal of museums to 'hold catalogues of the past that help us inform our decisions in the present and solve problems in the future'. Atlas of Living Australia partners are tackling the challenge of making sure that the necessary objects and specimens are accessible, and useful in the right format at the right time.¹⁶

Some research potential locked in collections may depend on yet-to-be-developed technology before it can become accessible.

Case Study #5

In 2007, the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery led a project to build a traditional Aboriginal bark canoe, the first full-sized canoe made in the state by the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community in more than 170 years. The project team, bringing together museum staff and members of the Tasmanian Indigenous community, used modern CT technology to scan models of bark canoes made at Wybalenna in the 1830s, to determine their structure, and build a new bark canoe in the traditional style.

The resulting canoe is now a feature of the 2008 State Tourism Award winning Tasmanian Aboriginal Gallery (*ningenneh tunapry*) at TMAG, and the project won a ACTKM Knowledge Management Award. More important, however, is the community strengthening impact of this effort to revive traditional practice, and re-discover knowledge that had been lost to the Tasmanian Indigenous community.

The project has been the single most significant project for cultural retrieval ever undertaken in Tasmania. It is through this project and *ningenneh tunapry* that the

TMAG and the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community have developed a very good working relationship that can only get better in the years to come.¹⁷

Existence and non-use value of collections

The CCA recommends the work done to record existence value and intrinsic value in culture, heritage and the arts. In 2005 The Allen Consulting Group published *Valuing the Priceless: The Value of Historic Heritage in Australia*.¹⁸ This report demonstrated high levels of support for heritage spending among surveyed Australians, and a high appreciation of the option value and existence value of heritage places. This study recorded broad agreement with the statements 'It is important to protect heritage places even though I may never visit them' and 'Heritage is part of Australia's identity'.¹⁹

The CCA believes that surveys in relation to the nation's collections would show similar appreciation of the value of collections among Australians.

The positive social capital impacts of collections cannot be understated either. The CCA believes that collections play a critical role in safekeeping and celebrating the diverse cultural heritage of Australia. Well preserved, documented and utilized history, art, and heritage record and interpret Australian identity, values and achievement. The shared social and cultural history evident in these connections with the past generates enormous social capital.

Intrinsic value of collections

A final challenge in capturing the contribution of the collections field is developing a measure of collections' intrinsic value. This can be considered as part of contemporary debate about the value of culture. Access to culture, particularly to excellence in culture, has enormous social capital benefit of its own accord. As UK MP Tessa Jowell, Minister for Culture at the time, explained 'Too often politicians have been forced to debate culture in terms only of its instrumental benefits to other agendas – education, the reduction of crime, improvements in wellbeing – explaining or in some instances almost apologizing for our investment in culture only in terms of something else'. Jowell continues, urging the community and parliamentarians to value culture simply for 'what it does in itself', calling for 'a culture that is of the highest standard it can possibly be, at the heart of this Government's core agenda, not as a piece of top down social engineering, but a bottom up realization of possibility and potential'.²⁰

This need to capture the intrinsic value of arts and cultural experience is also acknowledged in the conclusion of research conducted by the Cultural Ministers Council Statistics Working Group titled *Social Impacts of Participation in the Arts and Cultural Activities*, released in 2005. This report explains that while it is important to measure the instrumental value of arts and culture, policy makers must remember that 'culture, in its widest sense, improves the quality of life. It refreshes and expands the capacity of the mind and body, and provides intrinsic benefits, which go a long way towards providing the rights of citizenship which in themselves encourage active and responsible citizens'.²¹

3. Enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the not for profit sector

In this section the CCA:

- *Comments on the access to human and financial resources*
- *Comments on the work within the sector to ensure efficiency and effectiveness*

Regulatory burden on not for profit organisations

The CCA applauds the shift in recent years away from the awarding of very small grants with very high regulatory burdens. This is perceived to be a response to the calls from the not for profit sector.

Access to financial resources

An area that has seen under-resourcing in the collections field is the contemporary shift towards digitisation of collections. The allocation of resources to tangible aspects of the cultural sector, such as built heritage and high profile buildings, is a good value investment, resulting in immediate outcomes evident to tourists and the community. A key current financial concern of collecting organisations is digitisation, and the challenge of collecting contemporary 'born digital' material.

Australia's collections suffer from under-capitalisation, resulting from project based funding grants, rather than long term commitments to operational funding that would allow for forward looking investment. Contemporary users of digital technologies expect collections to be digitally accessible, and generally assume that because some collections are digitally accessible, all are. This misperception results in a scenario where Australian collections are not meeting users' or their own expectations in relation to digitisation.

Collections field efforts to evaluate efficiency and effectiveness

The CCA has a broad network of relationships with peak bodies from the four collecting domains, such as the Council of Australasian Museum Directors, the Council of Australian Art Museum Directors, National and State Libraries Australasia, Council of Australasian Archives and Records Authorities, Museums Australia and the Collections Australia Network. Good communication between these peak bodies provide opportunities for collecting organisations to work collaboratively, conduct reflexive research and work towards efficiency and effectiveness in the sector. The work of the National Taskforce on Standards to develop the *National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries*²², released in 2008, is an excellent example of this sector generated work. The collaborative taskforce brought together representatives of collecting organisations from every state and territory.²³

In 2008 representatives from the collections field worked with the Australian Bureau of Statistics on a project designed to generate comparable statistics for cultural heritage organisations.²⁴ The ABS National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics has worked with the Cultural Ministers' Council Statistics Working Group and other key stakeholders on the gaps in available data for the cultural sector. The resulting information paper was circulated to relevant

organisations in April 2009, and should lead to the collection of comparable statistical data across collecting domains and organisations. Scheduled review of the implementation of these measures in April 2010 will determine further improvements that can be made.

4. Service delivery

The CCA does not have any comment to make on service delivery in the not for profit sector.

5. Trends and Developments

Volunteering trends

As flagged in the Productivity Commission's discussion paper, and briefly discussed earlier in our submission, the CCA believes that the ageing of the Australian population will present challenges and opportunities for collections. A large number of highly skilled volunteers will become available through the retirement of 'Baby Boomers', but changing expectations of retirement may impact on their volunteering preferences.

Increasing digital literacy among the volunteer community will also have significant impact on the field of collections. Collecting organisations are still exploring the potential of digital technologies in the management, care and interpretation of collections. The input of skilled volunteers and increased investment in digital resources for collections will lead to great outcomes for the accessibility of collections and their use in research.

National Broadband Network

The Federal Government's investment in the National Broadband Network over the coming decade will lead to excellent opportunities for the entire Not for Profit sector, especially collections. As demonstrated in this submission, Australia's Distributed National Collection is housed in diverse locations and environments, meaning that improved communication services will have significant impact.

The CCA anticipates benefits arising from improved broadband services that will include:

- Improved documentation of the Distributed National Collection;
- Increased opportunity for collaboration;
- Accessibility to all collections for use by researchers, educators and visitors, regardless of location;
- New linkages between existing professional networks and all kinds of collections.

In order to capitalise on improved broadband services, however, the CCA asserts that funding and grant programs must consider the investment needed for adequate digital resources and digitisation programs.

Conclusion

The CCA works to encourage care and use of those collections so that they will always inspire, amaze, inform and delight Australians and the world.

Australia's collections are held in a broad diversity of not for profit organisations around the nation. Those who work with collections, both paid and unpaid, contribute enormously to the Australian economy.

Capturing the contribution of approximately 5,000 Australian collections will be challenging, and the CCA would be pleased to participate in further discussion about the task.

The CCA looks forward to the outcomes of the Productivity Commission's study, including the development of a well-considered, useful framework for ongoing measurement of the contribution of the not for profit sector.

Appendix 1

The uses of collections²⁵

Australia's collections hold the evidence from which communities build their understanding of Australian values and identity. Collections are actively used to:

- communicate links between past, present and the future;
- help Australians shape their place in an ever-changing world;
- preserve memories and beliefs that underlie social systems and cohesion;
- understand the complex inter-relationships of human activity, biodiversity and the environment;
- provide contexts for decision-making;
- support research projects and teams working on basic, applied and e-research;
- assist research on issues of global importance, and disseminate the findings;
- contribute to the understanding of environmental changes such as global warming and biological changes such as the extinction of species;
- enable the discovery of new information that contributes to problem-solving and innovation;
- delight, amaze and inspire audiences of all ages;
- engage the imaginations of students, tourists and the global community, empowering them with information and knowledge;
- advance the sustainability (economic, environmental, social and cultural) of communities;
- enrich the cultural vitality of the places where collections are held;
- bridge gaps between generations;
- contribute to the strengthening of communities - present and future.

Assisted by their skilled and professional workers, collecting organisations are finding new ways of adding value to their communities – as places that help combat social and cultural exclusion, as mustering points in times of disaster; as decentralised trusted repositories for research materials; as venues for training, particularly in new information technologies; and as educational and business resource centres. Future collaboration between organisations in the collections sector is predicted to lead to unexpected benefits for the sector as a whole.

¹ Submission available here

<http://www.collectionscouncil.com.au/collections+and+the+efficiency+dividend.aspx>.

² Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit *The Efficiency Dividend and Small Agencies: Size Does Matter* 2008, pp xx-xxi

³ Recommendation 3: The Department of Finance and Deregulation, the Australian Public Service Commissioner and each cultural agency jointly develop a new funding model for cultural agencies. This model should recognise the importance of funding the mandate for growth and development of collections and the proportion of their expenses apportioned to depreciation. The Committee notes that recommendation 8 will also apply to these agencies.

Recommendation 8: The Government either:

- exempt the first \$50 million of all agencies' appropriations from the efficiency dividend, excluding departments of state (the preferred option); or
- exempt the first \$50 million of the appropriations of all agencies that have departmental expenses of less than \$150 million, excluding departments of state.

These benchmarks to be indexed over time.

⁴ *Arts and Culture in Australia: An Overview* ABS Catalogue No. 4172.0

⁵ National Museum of Australia *Annual Report 2007-08*

⁶ Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts *Portfolio Budget Papers, Budget Related Paper No 1.6*, 2008-09

⁷ Personal communication from Ms Robyn Horner, Vice President of Eastern Goldfields Historical Society, April 2009

⁸ Winkworth K and Russell, R, *Significance 2.0: A Guide to Assessing the Significance of Collections* 2009, p 62.

⁹ An example of this diverse funding is described on the Local Government SA Libraries website <http://www.lga.sa.gov.au/site/page.cfm?u=278>.

¹⁰ ABS 1378.0, *Information Paper – Measuring Social Capital – An Australian Framework and Indicators*, 2004, p. 14.

¹¹ Volunteering Australia, 2008, *National Survey Report 2008*.

¹² Reynolds, Amanda Jane *Wrapped in a Possum Skin Cloak*, National Museum of Australia 2005

¹³ Dictionary of Australian Artists Online *Lee Darroch*, available at

<http://www.daao.org.au/main/read/7280>

¹⁴ ABS 1378.0, *Information Paper – Measuring Social Capital – An Australian Framework and Indicators*, 2004.

¹⁵ Personal communication from Mr Bill Bleathman, Director of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, May 2009.

¹⁶ Howarth, Frank, 'A Dignified Decline Into Irrelevance?' in *InSite Magazine*, Museums Australia (Victoria), May-June 2009, p.3.

¹⁷ Personal communication from Mr Bill Bleathman, Director of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, May 2009.

¹⁸ The Allen Consulting Group 2005, *Valuing the Priceless: The Value of Heritage Protection in Australia*, Research Report 2, Heritage Chairs and Officials of Australia and New Zealand, Sydney.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* pg 27.

²⁰ Jowell, Tessa 'Government and the Value of Culture' Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 2004. Available at http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/publications/4581.aspx/

²¹ Cultural Ministers Council Statistics Working Group *Social Impacts of Participation in the Arts and Cultural Activities*. Stage Two Report, 2004, p. 60.

²² National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries available here

http://www.collectionsaustralia.net/sector_info_item/107

²³ Background to the project explained in the CCA Collaborative Projects Showcase

<http://www.collectionscouncil.com.au/showcase+of+collaborative+projects.aspx?agentType=Vie w&PropertyID=11>

²⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics *Towards Comparable Statistics for Cultural Heritage Organisations* 2008 ABS Catalogue No. 4916.0

²⁵ Developed by the Collections Council of Australia, 2008- 2009.