



NATIONAL CENTRE for  
**AUSTRALIAN  
CHILDREN'S  
LITERATURE<sup>Inc</sup>**

# **Collection Policy**

**Created by the  
National Centre for Australian Children's Literature Inc  
and approved by the Board  
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## **Vision**

Our literary past, present and future are preserved in the Centre, through the stories that touched our hearts and stirred our imaginations as children. It documents and shares the creative process, and inspires the next generation of readers with research collections, exhibitions and outreach activities.

## **Objectives**

The Centre's objectives are:

- (a) to collect, preserve and document developments in Australian children's literature.
- (b) to make the collection available to the people of Australia, including all ages and all communities, in recognition of our cultural heritage in children's literature.
- (c) to make the collection available to students, researchers and others interested and to assist them in their study and research.
- (d) to extend the availability of the collection by using digital technologies as appropriate.
- (e) to provide encouragement and inspiration for current and future authors and illustrators of children's literature.
- (f) to assist in the recognition and contribution of Australian children's authors and illustrators to children's literature around the world.
- (g) in connection with these objectives to:
  - (i) preserve the creators' works
  - (ii) nurture the children's literature industry
  - (iii) support future professionals in the children's literature industry
  - (iv) support the research community in Australia and particularly those engaged in researching children's literature
  - (v) encourage reading in children, and
  - (vi) celebrate children's literature.

(excerpt from the *National Centre for Australian Children's Literature Association Rules*, 2015)

## **1 Policy background and development**

The first published statement of the Centre (formerly the Lu Rees Archives) Policy appeared in the Management Committee Subcommittee Report produced in 1987. The need for a clearly defined policy for acquisition of materials was identified.

A Policy Subcommittee was formed and included University of Canberra staff Belle Alderman, Senior Lecturer in Librarianship, Peter Clayton, then Associate Librarian and Patricia Milne, a researcher for the Lu Rees database project.

The Policy Subcommittee presented their report to the Lu Rees Management Subcommittee on 3 July 1989 where it was discussed and approved.

Over the years, this Policy has been regularly reviewed and revised with the previous edition dated 2017. Changes in the collection itself and how materials come to the Centre are under continuous review and have resulted in this latest Collection Policy.

## **2 Purpose of the Collection Policy**

The purpose of the Collection Policy is to specify:

- authority for acquiring material
- scope of the collection
- guidelines for acquiring material
- policies for special collections
- loans policy
- arrangements with other collection institutions
- policies on the discard and retention of materials, and
- mechanism for review.

### **3 Authority for acquiring material**

Authority to acquire material is vested in the Centre Director as a Board delegated responsibility, with advice, as needed, from relevant individuals and organisations. The Centre Board approves broad policy matters related to the acquisition of material.

### **4 Definitions**

The Centre collects books and related materials which appear on publishers' lists as material created and marketed for children and/or young adults. The term, 'young adults', includes books aimed at a potential audience of young people up to approximately 25 years of age, which is a potential readership. There is no rule, definition or set of defining characteristics that determine an exact age audience for books for young people. Rather, 25 years of age represents a potential older readership that publishers may use to market, promote and sell their books. These books are an important part of the Centre's collection and are actively sought.

This Policy defines the term 'Australian children's literature' as materials:

- usually published in Australia
- by creators (authors, illustrators, compilers and editors) who have lived in Australia for two years or more
- where a major portion of the material is set in or concerns Australia.

Translations of Australian children's literature, published in Australia or overseas, are actively sought.

### **5 Scope of the Collection – published material**

The Centre offers aspects of its collection in digital form. At times both physical and digital formats are considered appropriate. The Centre will select the most appropriate means to maximise access for a diversity of clients across Australia and beyond. The Centre considers, in accepting materials, whether it has the capacity to manage and store the material appropriately. The Centre may recommend other appropriate collections.

To fulfil the Centre's objectives, the scope of the collection includes the following material.

#### **5.1 Books in English**

Books by Australian children's creators including complete collections of their works, including various editions and reprints insofar as possible, and a sample of publications by Australian educational publishers.

#### **5.2 Educational publications produced for reading programs**

Literary works that are part of reading schemes are generally not collected. The exception is when a creator also has a body of work published by mainstream publishers as well as educational publishers. In this case, the educational publisher(s) may be approached for donations to complete a creator's collection.

By special arrangement with Era Publications, an educational publisher in South Australia, the Centre accepts this publisher's output as an example of educational publishing.

#### **5.3 Books in translation**

The Centre collects translations in order to provide, for example:

- creators' complete works
- translations for comparison
- production techniques

- material for non-English speakers
- material for teachers of English as a second language
- examples of textual and design features made for cultural reasons.

#### 5.4 School magazines

The Centre annually receives by donation the *School Magazine* (New South Wales) as an example of:

- creators' development
- full range of the creator's work
- varied literary forms
- a resource for studying the history of educational thought.

No other school magazines are actively sought.

#### 5.5 Radio, television, theatre and related scripts

Where possible, the Centre collects these as part of the creators' body of work and to indicate the special features of these forms of writing.

#### 5.6 Reference material

The Centre comprehensively collects background research material. This includes unpublished theses, published reference works, research documents and journals in order to trace development in the field. Where there is substantial material about Australian creators included in such material that is published overseas, these will be actively sought.

### 6 Unpublished material

#### 6.1 Research files

The Centre has a unique collection of over 540 research files including material continuously collected since the 1950s. Published and unpublished material in multiple formats by and about Australian creators, publishers and literary critics are included. Experts across Australia locate and forward material for processing at the Centre.

#### 6.2 Editing and publishing material

The Centre collects resources on editing and publishing in order to understand the production process. The Centre endeavours to collect a sample of Australian children's publishers' archives and records.

#### 6.3 Organisations' records

The Centre may collect an organisation's records where these offer a comprehensive overview of Australian children's literature.

#### 6.4 Ephemera and realia

The Centre actively collects such materials as posters, bookmarks, soft toys, games, puzzles, cards and other material where these are related to Australian children's books and stories.

### 7 Archive of the Centre

The Centre holds a complete history of its development including unpublished Minutes of its Management Committee meetings (now defunct) from 1981, ephemera relating to activities, events

and festivals and published paper records including its Annual Reports (1990-2013 paper, now online), journals (1981-2013 paper, now online).

## **8 Centre website**

The Centre's website exists to promote its activities, provide access to its collections and promote its events. The original website was developed and hosted by the University of Canberra from 1995-September 2018. Content was created and managed by the Centre. Pages from the website and digital references to it were periodically archived by the National Library of Australia's PANDORA Web Archive dating back over two decades. In October 2018, the Centre launched a standalone website managed by the Centre. The Centre's website provides access to wide ranging material including the following:

- catalogue of books
- finding aids to authors' papers and manuscripts
- guides to illustrators' artworks and related material
- e-newsletter, journal and annual reports produced by the Centre
- articles by and about the Centre
- bibliographies, databases and other material produced by the Centre
- picture galleries, and
- notices of events.

## **9 Acquisition of materials**

The Centre acquires materials primarily through donations, purchases from Centre funds and through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program.

### **9.1 Donations of published works from publishers and creators**

Since 1981 many Australian publishing houses have donated a major part of their annual publications to the Centre. Several of these also donate translations of their books. Responsibility for prompting and acknowledging these donations rests with the Director.

### **9.2 Donations of unpublished material**

The Centre holds creators' papers, manuscripts, artwork and other unpublished material. Responsibility for acquiring these is vested in the Director. These materials may be offered to the Centre or the Director may seek a donation.

Where a substantial donation is under consideration, a subcommittee of the Board, including the Director, will convene to consider the collection with the final decision to rest with the Board.

### **9.3 Gaps in the collection**

The Centre actively pursues material to fill collection gaps, using some of the following strategies:

- publishing wish lists on the Centre website
- consulting with families whose relatives' works are held in the Centre
- seeking donations through the Centre's social media
- using the services of a Canberra Lifeline Bookfair volunteer, and
- any other strategy that serves this purpose.

### **9.4 Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program**

The Centre has been registered to receive donations under this program since 1988, and received its first donation in 1992. The [Centre's website](#) provides advice for potential donors who are considering whether to make a donation. Full details of the [Australian Government Cultural Gifts Program](#) is available from their website.

## **10 Cooperation with related collections**

Informal relationships exist with a number of institutions with collections of Australian children's books and other material. The Centre considers such relationships essential to ensure research collections complement, rather than compete, and that organisations work together to ensure Australia's collections in this area remains strong. Contact is maintained with a select number of overseas research collections in order to promote and facilitate exchange of information and to provide research support where required.

## **11 Collection management and use**

### **11.1 Preservation**

The Centre collects and preserves material relevant to its collection for posterity. Because of the research value exemplified in differences between editions and other variant forms in which material appears, it is not appropriate for material other than duplicate copies in inferior condition to be weeded. Material in poor physical condition should receive conservation treatment appropriate to its long-term retention.

The collection as a whole requires housing under appropriate environmental conditions in order to realise this long-term objective.

### **11.2 Rare books and other unique items – housing and use**

The Centre houses rare books and other unique items separately to the main collection. These items meet particular conditions such as scarcity, monetary value, delicate condition and other considerations relevant to the individual item.

Rare material may be accessed only while under Centre supervision. Rare material may not be removed from the Centre and particular care provisions and use of these items is determined by the Centre and conveyed to the user.

### **11.3 Loans**

Books (other than rare books) may be borrowed on interlibrary loan through the University of Canberra Library. The remainder of the collection is not available for loan. Users are encouraged to use the Centre's website and online catalogue to determine relevant resources and to seek reference assistance from the Centre.

## **12 Discard and retention of material**

The Centre collects and preserves material relevant to the collection for posterity. Because of the research value exemplified in differences between editions and variant forms in which material appears, it is not appropriate for material other than duplicate copies to be weeded. Material in poor physical condition should receive conservation treatment, where possible, which is appropriate for its long-term retention.

The collection as a whole needs to be stored under appropriate environmental conditions in order to realise this long-term objective.

### **12.1 Responsibility**

The Centre will conduct the discard and retention of Centre's material and may consult with appropriate individuals during the process. The Centre is responsible for the final decision regarding the item(s).

## 12.2 Criteria for discard and retention of material

The Centre will consider the following points when determining items for possible discard or retention. The material is:

- outside the scope of the Centre's Collection Policy, for instance, it falls outside the genre of children's literature, as defined in section 4 Definitions
- created by a non-Australian creator, though where there are multiple creators, should one of the creators be Australian, the item would be retained
- an identical copy of an item is already held in the collection
- in a state of advanced deterioration or irreversible repair to the point where the content cannot be recovered or accorded the necessary conservation treatment
- judged as having minimal or no informational or research value
- a collection of material obtained from a donor or vendor, and parts of that collection, are not within the Centre's Collection Policy
- an unbound issue of a serial, which is now duplicated by a consolidated, bound volume.

## 12.3 Procedures for discard and retention of material

The Centre will consider the following points when examining items for possible discard or retention:

- in cases where an identifiable donor is involved, the Centre will make reasonable attempts to contact and consult with the donor
- where an agreement was signed with the donor, the Centre will consult with the donor
- other collections, which may have a use for the item, may be contacted
- if the item is sold, the funds obtained thereby shall be used to finance the Centre
- the item shall be disposed of responsibly and only once these conditions have been met in so far as possible.

## 13 Collection care and preservation

The Centre uses standard archival best practices to care for the collection. Archival materials are used to protect and safeguard the collection in so far as possible. Users are advised when handling and caring for material. Advice is sought from knowledgeable experts where needed. The Centre aims to ensure that the collection is housed under the appropriate environmental conditions. To maintain the collection in good condition, the Centre maintains a record of the collection's use in order to:

- determine any issues which may arise with use
- identify materials being used, and
- aid in determining the most suitable storage and retrieval of items.

## 14 Mechanism for review

This Collection Policy will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Centre to ensure that it meets present and future needs and reflects best practice. Once reviewed, this Policy will be submitted to the Board for approval.