

ALBERT KERSTEN MINING AND MINERALS MUSEUM (GEOCENTRE) COLLECTION MANAGEMENT POLICY

| QUALITY CONTROL | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|---|
| EDRMS REFERENCES | 12/14 - D23/58545 | | |
| RESPONSIBLE POSITION | Gallery and Museum Manager | | |
| APPROVED BY | Council | | |
| REVIEW DATE | December 2026 | REVISION NUMBER | 1 |
| EFFECTIVE DATE | ACTION | MINUTE NUMBER | |
| 29 November 2023 | Public Exhibition | 47383 | |
| 31 January 2024 | Adoption | 47449 | |

1. INTRODUCTION

This document is a statement of policy for the development and management of the Albert Kersten Mining & Minerals Museum (GeoCentre) Collection and supports the GeoCentre:

- To collect, conserve, interpret, and exhibit the unique geology, mineralogy and metallurgy of the Broken Hill region, as well as the region's mining-related social history and cultural heritage, according to the museum sector's collection management best practice.
- Ensure the GeoCentre's collection (including objects and associated information / documentation) is made available to the widest possible audience through curated exhibitions, other displays, online platforms and educational activities or programs, in order to foster an understanding, accessibility, enjoyment, and appreciation of the GeoCentre.
- To develop and maintain a mining minerals collection of local, state and national significance and repute that reflects the mission of the GeoCentre and its expressed objectives, goals and policies.

The GeoCentre has a role in promoting the origin of the unique Broken Hill ore body as one of great historical significance to geologists and other researchers, an iconic ore body and one of the most studied in the world. It can also play a significant role in fostering research on the social history of the city's mining personalities, families, communities and associated organisations – which also is of local, state and national importance.

2. POLICY OBJECTIVE

This GeoCentre Collection Management Policy is a reference document that should be used in conjunction with appropriate available professional expertise and resources.

The GeoCentre Collection Management Policy demonstrates Council's commitment to rigorous, accountable, and transparent standards in the assessment, acquisition, care and display of its collection and aims to provide an appropriate, sector-standards collection management framework to ensure that the GeoCentre is managed in an ethical, responsible, sustainable and accountable manner.

3. POLICY SCOPE

The GeoCentre is not solely a collecting institution and therefore this policy must be applied in the context of the broader mission of the GeoCentre educational and research facility and a community space. Its collection is also part of a network of other mining collections / objects held in other important local collections, cared for by volunteer organisations.

The GeoCentre Collection is the official mining and minerals collection of Broken Hill City Council and falls under the direct care and control of Council.

The GeoCentre Collection Policy is applicable to the GeoCentre only. It does not apply to other Council collections including the Outback Archive or the Art Gallery.

This policy is also separate to Council's Acquisition and Loan of Cultural Heritage Objects Policy (1992).

The term 'object' is used throughout to describe items collected by the GeoCentre.

4. ACQUISITION APPROVALS PROCESS

The following three step authorisation process will be used in the approval of acquisitions to the GeoCentre's collection:

- 4.1** A Donation Application form must be completed by prospective donors.
- 4.2** An Acquisition Assessment will be made on proposed donation, assessing objects on their merit against the Acquisition Criteria provided in this Policy. This will be undertaken by The Gallery and Museum Manager with input from GeoCentre staff and/or external professionals. The Acquisition Assessment will have a recommendation to accept or decline the proposed donation.
- 4.3** Approval - the Gallery and Museum Manager has delegated authority to approve Acquisitions within established delegation limits. All proposed Acquisitions with a purchase price over the Gallery and Museum Manager's delegation must be approved by the General Manager and endorsed by Council. Should an acquisition be approved a Deed of Gift shall be completed to transfer legal ownership to Council.

5. GUIDELINES FOR ACQUISITION

- 5.1** The GeoCentre shall acquire objects through;
 - Donation (including Commonwealth Government Cultural Gifts programme donations)
 - Bequest
 - Purchase
 - Transfer from another collection institution.

- 5.2** The GeoCentre shall not normally accept long-term loans.
- 5.3** The GeoCentre reserves the right not to accept objects that do not meet the Acquisition Criteria in this policy, or which carry onerous restrictions or conditions imposed by the donor (for example, that the object must be on display at all times).

6. WHAT THE GEOCENTRE WILL COLLECT

6.1 Geographic Area

The GeoCentre collection shall primarily collect objects from the Broken Hill and Far West geographical region, however it may acquire objects from outside this region if they have a high level of interpretive, research or educational potential that would complement the existing collection or GeoCentre activities. Social history related objects collected will also be confined to this region and criteria.

The Broken Hill region can include the greater Curnamona Geological Province, and samples from other mines or localities within this region, holding geological significance can be included into the GeoCentre collection.

6.2 Historical Time Period

Both historical and contemporary objects may be collected.

6.3 Type of Item

The GeoCentre shall collect objects of direct relevance to the geological, mineralogical, metallurgical, and mining history of Broken Hill and the Broken Hill region, including:

- mineral specimens, meteorites, rocks and fossils
- objects such as tools, equipment, machinery and paraphernalia that are significant to mining-related social history, including the development of the mining industry, working operations of specific mines, the daily life and work of miners and their families, the development of the union movement, friendly societies and miners' strikes etc.

Exclusions:

- Indigenous cultural material, human fossils, human skeletal material, culturally sensitive artefacts or rocks and minerals worked into tools by indigenous peoples are specifically excluded from the GeoCentre collection.
- The GeoCentre shall not collect objects which would better fit within other Council collections i.e. the Broken Hill Outback Archive or Broken Hill City Art Gallery.

7. ACQUISITION CRITERIA

7.1 Significance

Priority will be given to objects that meet one or more of the following significance criteria:

- historic significance
- aesthetic significance
- scientific or research significance
- social or spiritual significance

7.2 Provenance

Priority will be given to objects where the provenance is known, and associated documentation and support material can be provided. This may include scientific field collection data and evidence of ownership history.

7.3 Condition, Size and Ongoing Care

The GeoCentre will not generally collect items that require extensive conservation work prior to display or ongoing conservation maintenance or are of a physical size that would place a strain on storage facilities. Generally, radioactive objects or other objects posing risks to workplace health and safety will not be acquired.

7.4 Interpretive Potential

Objects that offer opportunities to interpret a variety of themes and contribute to a range of exhibitions and public programmes at the GeoCentre will be prioritised.

7.5 Rarity or Representativeness

Objects that are rare examples or excellent representative examples of a particular kind of item will be prioritised.

Objects that will add to an under-represented area of the collection will be prioritised.

7.6 Duplications

Items that duplicate ones already in the collection shall not generally be accepted unless they are of superior condition or significance, or where duplicates may assist with interpretation or educational outreach purposes.

7.7 Legal Title

As a general principle, the GeoCentre shall not acquire objects through any means or methods, unless it can acquire clear and valid transfer of ownership documentation.

8. DOCUMENTATION

An effective documentation system shall be maintained for the GeoCentre collection including:

- Donation Application forms
- Acquisition Assessment forms
- Deed of Gift forms
- Acquisition Register

Signed documents shall be uploaded to the EMU collection database and the Council Content Manager database and hard copies retained. In addition, every effort shall be made to acquire additional reference material relating to objects to support research into the collection and potential future exhibitions.

9. COLLECTION CONSERVATION, DISPLAY AND STORAGE

- 9.1** The GeoCentre collection shall be conserved, stored, displayed and managed in accordance with accepted contemporary national practices and standards and advice shall be sought from appropriate collecting institutions when required.

- 9.2** All preventative conservation measures shall be taken by staff handling objects and appropriate training provided to staff on preventative conservation protocols. Untrained staff shall not be permitted to handle collection objects.
- 9.3** Environmental conditions in object storage and display areas shall be monitored and managed according to industry standards, including temperature, humidity, light levels, cleanliness and pest control.
- 9.4** Collection items shall not be displayed in environments, or for time periods, that will damage them through light level, temperature, humidity, or risk of theft or vandalism.
- 9.5** Conservation works and treatments will only be performed by a qualified professional Conservator.
- 9.6** Industry standard archival storage cabinets and materials shall be used, and objects or storage containers are not to be stored on the floor.
- 9.7** Access to storage areas is to be controlled and limited to the Gallery and Museum Manager and the Museum Collections Officer. Individuals seeking access may be granted authorisation under the discretion and direct supervision of either the Gallery and Museum Manager or the Museum Collections Officer.
- 9.8** Storage rooms shall remain locked at all times unless occupied by either the Gallery and Museum Manager or the Museum Collections Officer.
- 9.9** Access to locked mineral cabinets for maintenance purposes shall be under direct supervision by either the Gallery and Museum Manager or the Museum Collections Officer.
- 9.10** A collection audit shall be conducted every 2 (two) years and also performed when changes to appointment Museum Collection Officer occur.

10. DEACCESSIONING AND DISPOSAL

To maintain and safeguard standards and to refine and improve the collection, the GeoCentre is committed to periodic reviews to assess items that could potentially be deaccessioned. Deaccessioning is the administrative process of de-registering an item from a collection for clearly stated reasons and disposing of it in accordance with approved policies and procedures.

10.1 Criteria for Deaccessioning

- 10.1.1** A Collection Policy has been developed or revised since the object was acquired and the significance and merit of the object falls substantially below the acquisition criteria outlined in the Policy.
- 10.1.2** An object is damaged beyond repair or the conservation and storage costs for it are beyond the means of the GeoCentre budget.
- 10.1.3** An object is a lesser quality duplicate of a new donation to the GeoCentre collection.
- 10.1.4** An object lacks any supporting information to enable proper identification or to establish its relevance to the GeoCentre collection.
- 10.1.5** A substantiated legal request for the return of the object to its original donor or the donor's estate is received (for example, a substantiated claim that the object was in fact loaned to the GeoCentre and had never been donated).
- 10.1.6** An object has been lost or stolen.

10.1.7 An object can no longer be suitably stored due to its size or special climate requirements.

10.1.8 An object poses risks to health and safety of staff or visitors.

10.2 Deaccessioning Procedure

10.2.1 The Gallery and Museum Manager (in consultation with GeoCentre staff and/or independent collection specialists) will prepare a deaccession recommendation taking into account the criteria for deaccessioning outlined below.

10.2.2 The deaccession recommendation will be presented to Council for final decision.

10.2.3 An object identified for deaccession must be held for a twelve-month "cooling off" period before it is disposed of.

10.2.4 GeoCentre staff and volunteers and their families are prohibited from purchasing, or otherwise obtaining, a deaccessioned object.

10.2.5 Any funds acquired from the sale of the deaccessioned object shall be used for acquisitions or ongoing care of the GeoCentre collection.

10.2.6 All records of a deaccessioned object and the circumstances of its deaccessioning and disposal shall be recorded in EMU and kept on file for future reference. The accession number of a deaccessioned object shall not be re-used.

10.3 Disposal Procedure

Objects identified for disposal will be valued by a recognised valuer and disposed of in the following priority order:

- Objects that were donated, and where the original donor is still contactable, may be returned to the donor, unless obtained through the Donor Gift Recipient programme where the recipient has received the monetary value of the donation through the Cultural Gift program. Transferred to another appropriate collecting institution by means of gift, sale or exchange.
- Sold by public auction where the object has no significant cultural value but does have a market value.
- Destroyed or recycled if all other avenues for disposal have been exhausted.

11. PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE COLLECTION

The GeoCentre collection shall be made accessible to the public through GeoCentre displays. Objects not on display may be accessible for research purposes by appointment and in accordance with any conservation restrictions applying to the item and at the discretion of GeoCentre management.

Images and information on selected collection object may become accessible to the public via online applications as these are developed.

12. OUTWARD AND INWARD LOANS

12.1 The GeoCentre may from time to time enter into Inward or Outward Loan Agreements with external organisations or individuals. These will be for fixed periods only, which will be agreed between all parties and may be extended by mutual agreement.

12.2 The Gallery and Museum Manager will approve all inward and outward loans.

- 12.3** No object will be loaned by the GeoCentre unless the safety of the object is assured and adequate security, environmental conditions and standards of care are evident.
- 12.4** For both inward and outward loans, it is expected that the borrower will exercise the same standard of care for borrowed objects as it does for its own collection in accordance with established procedures and professional museum standards.
- 12.5** Outward loans are subject to the borrower agreeing to the conditions specified in the GeoCentre Outward Loan Agreement.
- 12.6** Inward loans are subject to the lender having legal title to the object/s.
- 12.7** All costs associated with outward loans will be the responsibility of the borrower, including transport and insurance.
- 12.8** Generally, objects in the private collections of GeoCentre staff will not be accepted for an inward loan.
- 12.9** Condition reports shall be completed by the Museum Collections Officer for all outward and inward loans, at the time of receipt and prior to specimens leaving the facility.

13. IMPLEMENTATION

The Gallery and Museum Manager is primarily responsible for the implementation and the adherence to this policy. Council employees shall refrain from personal activities that would conflict with proper execution and management of Council's Albert Kersten Mining and Minerals Museum (GeoCentre) Collection Management Policy.

13.1 Conflict of Interest

Council employees shall refrain from personal activities that would conflict with proper execution and management of Council's Albert Kersten Mining and Minerals Museum (GeoCentre) Collection Management Policy. Museum staff must not undertake activities with collection objects that could be perceived as corrupt or illegal activity, such as:

- carry out appraisals or identifications of objects for outside persons or agencies under circumstances that might aid or encourage illegal or unethical dealing with those objects;
- move or handle collection objects without the knowledge and consent of the Gallery and Museum Manager and/or the Museum Collections Officer.
- remove collection objects without appropriate authorisation from the Gallery and Museum Manager and adherence to this Policy;
- house collection objects anywhere other than a collection area or an exhibition area without the knowledge and consent from the Gallery and Museum Manager;
- maintain a personal collection without having declared that collection as a potential conflict of interest; and
- provide a photographed catalogue of any personal collection on the commencement of employment.

14. COMMUNICATION

This Policy will be communicated to the community and staff in accordance with Council's Policy, Procedure and Process Framework and Council's Business Paper process. Following adoption by Council the Policy will be made available on Council's website.

15. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- Australian Institute for Conservation of Cultural Materials (AICCM) Environmental Guidelines: <https://aiccm.org.au/about/who-we-are/advocacy/environmental-guidelines-australian-cultural-heritage-collections>
- National Standards for Australian Museums & Galleries (V1.5, 2016): http://www.magsq.com.au/dbase/upl/NSFAMG_v1.5_2016.pdf
- NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption document, Identifying and Managing Conflicts of Interest in the Public Sector (2012) <https://www.icac.nsw.gov.au/prevention/basic-standards/conflicts-of-interest>

16. REVIEW

Review of this policy will incorporate relevant legislation, documentation released from relevant state agencies and best practice guidelines. The standard review period will be within each term of Council following the Local Government Elections, or as required to ensure that it meets legislation requirements and the needs of the community and Council. The responsible Council officer will be notified of the review requirements three months prior to the expiry of this policy. The Gallery and Museum Manager is responsible for the review of this policy.

17. LEGISLATIVE AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following:

All relevant other legislation, including but not limited to the *Local Government Act 1993* and related legislation, planning controls, codes of practice, and relevant internal procedures.

18. DEFINITIONS

- Accession: the process of assigning a unique number to an object and recording all relevant details in an Accession Register and catalogue.
- Acquisition: the act of gaining physical possession of an object and of transferring title or ownership from the providing source to the GeoCentre.
- Bequest: the bestowal by will of privately-owned cultural items to the GeoCentre.
- Cataloguing: assigning an object to an established classification system and initiating a record of the nomenclature, provenance, number, and location of that object in the collection storage area.
- Clear title: legal ownership without restrictions or conditions.
- Collection: Object for which the GeoCentre is the custodian.
- Conservation: the processes for preserving and protecting objects from loss, decay, damage, or other forms of deterioration and of repairing objects.
- Curnamona Geological Province: A cratonic region straddling the NSW / South Australian border that contains igneous and highgrade metamorphic rocks, aging from 1800 mya to 1000 mya and includes the Broken Hill, Olary, Mount Painter and Benagerie Ridge areas.
- Deaccession/disposal: the process of removing objects from a Museum's collection/s.
- Deed of gift: a document with the signature of the donor transferring ownership of an object to a collecting institution.

- Loans: collection objects which have been or are intended to be transferred temporarily to a stated destination outside the Museum (outward loans), or, alternatively, objects which have been or are intended to be transferred to the Museum from elsewhere (inward loans). The transfers are undertaken for a stated purpose (for example, a temporary exhibition) and for a stated period of time and do not involve a change of ownership.
- Preventive conservation: collection care to minimise conditions which may cause damage.
- Provenance: derivation or origin of an object and its history.