

A collective voice for the collections industry

Australia's collections industry now has a new national peak body to represent the shared interests of archives, galleries, libraries and museums.

The Collections Council of Australia (CCA) will be a high-level, independent forum able to strategically address issues across the sector. It aims to build new collaborative relationships within the sector, with government, and between the sector and other areas.

The Cultural Ministers Council announced the establishment of the CCA in February 2004 following the recommendations of the National Collections Advisory Forum which considered the feasibility of an industry body to represent the interests of the entire sector. The Cultural Ministers Council has agreed to fund the first three years of the CCA operations.

The CCA will have three main roles, encompassing industry development, support and projects.

It will play a vital role in:

- developing long-term strategies to address issues facing collections;
- undertaking industry support, particularly through development of a profile for the sector at a national and international level; and
- implementing initiatives to address cross-sectoral issues.

The CCA will be governed by a twelve-member board with Dr Edward Tweddell as the inaugural chair.

It is integral the CCA has high-level representation from, and close connections with, all areas of the collections sector. To provide this link back to the industry, four board members are the chairs of other industry councils. They are:

- Mr Ross Gibbs from the Council of Australasian Archives and Records Authorities;
- Major General Steve Gower from the Council of Australian Museum Directors;
- Ms Anne-Marie Schwirtlich from the Council of Australian State Libraries; and
- Dr Gerard Vaughan from the Council of Australian Art Museum Directors.

The remaining board members have been chosen for their specialist knowledge of the sector or for skills they will bring to enhance the work of the CCA. They are: Mr Paul Ah Chee Ngala; Professor Larissa Behrendt; Ms Sue Natrass; Dr Barbera Piscitelli; Mr Robert Sharman; Ms Kathy Williams; and Ms Kylie Winkworth. The board will draw on networks and expertise to ensure a broad, cross-disciplinary view in addressing key issues for the sector.

The board will be supported by a secretariat, to be located in South Australia, which will administer the CCA's day-to-day operations. In addition, the secretariat will undertake practical projects to address particular issues across the sector, such as the need for national standards and benchmarks.

Terms of reference

The terms of reference for the Collections Council of Australia are to:

- advance the stability and sustainability of the collections sector, through communication, consultation and resolution of common issues.
- promote understanding among the community, government, other funding bodies, and the media, of the nature of the sector and the issues it faces, as well as the contribution made by the sector to the areas of economic and social development.
- sponsor such programs deemed necessary and desirable to further industry development.
- promote high standards of performance and efficiency throughout the sector, through education, training and development.
- promote benchmarks and standards for the care and management of collections.
- promote access to and participation in Australian cultural heritage collections.
- act as a source of consolidated advice for governments on issues facing the collections sector.
- investigate sources of independent funding for the sector, and encourage private-sector support. ■

CAVAL to open up membership to institutions

The CAVAL Board of Directors has agreed to open up membership of CAVAL to institutions across Australia and New Zealand. From 2005, CAVAL will be inviting institutions to join with the foundation members (the nine Victorian universities and the State Library of Victoria) in participating and contributing to the growth of the company and in its broad range of pursuits aimed at aiding the library community to reduce their costs while increasing their service provision.

Under CAVAL's expanded membership structure, the libraries of academic institutions, established consortia and public library networks will be invited to join as Full or Associate members. Each membership category will provide a unique set of benefits, including partici-

pation in and co-ownership of research collections of growing importance; business involvement in service delivery to each member; and shaping the direction of consortial service delivery and community benefit.

Chair of CAVAL's Board, David James, expounded the benefits of the expanded membership to the wider library communities by saying 'Libraries of all sizes need to work together to achieve the benefits for their users which their existing and future funding will not allow. I see CAVAL as the lubricant removing the friction between service need and realisation'.

Details of membership options will be available in October 2004. Anyone wishing to register their interest in receiving details of the new membership options

should contact David Noble, administration and membership manager by e-mail at davidn@caval.edu.au.

CAVAL Collaborative Solutions recently celebrated 25 years as a library consortium. Originally established as a Victorian organisation, CAVAL's services are currently offered across Australia, Asia, Europe and the United States through its various programs and partnerships. Predominantly these services have been training (offered by CAVAL Training) and cataloguing/processing services (offered by CAVAL Cataloguing Services). The role and use of the CARM low-use repository (CARM Store) has been developing in allied sectors. See <http://www.caval.edu.au> for the complete range of CAVAL current and recent projects and services. ■