

Role Description FNCAA Archivist



Role Description Fields	Details
Department/Agency	Australian Museum
Division/Branch/Unit	First Nations / CCE
Role number	TBD
Classification/Grade/Band	Clerk Grade 7/8
Senior executive work level standards	Not Applicable
OSCA Code	391131
PCAT Code	1337251
Date of Approval	July 2026
Agency Website	https://australian.museum

Agency overview

The Australian Museum acknowledges that we operate on the lands, waters and skies of many First Nations Peoples. As Australia's first museum, we share the responsibility of advocating for Country and honouring First Nations Peoples and knowledges.

The Australian Museum (AM) operating within the NSW Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport cluster, is the first museum in Australia and was founded in 1827. The AM provides access, engagement and scientific research to increase our understanding of natural history and culture, particularly of the Australasian region. The AM holds more than 22 million objects of biological, geological and cultural collections and develops programs, exhibitions and school and community education initiatives onsite, online and offsite.

The AM mission is: To ignite wonder, inspire debate and drive change.

The AM vision is: To be a leading voice for the richness of life, the Earth and culture in Australia and the Pacific. We commit to transform the conversation around climate change, the environment and wildlife conservation; be a strong advocate for First Nations' culture; and continue to develop world-leading science, collections, exhibitions and education programs.

For more information, visit the [website](#).

The AM supports a diverse workforce and promotes applications from all ages and genders, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, culturally and linguistically diverse groups, the LGBTQIA+ community, veterans, refugees and people with disabilities.

About First Nations Community Access to Archives (FNCAA)

FNCAA project purpose is to search the Australian Museum archives and digitise Aboriginal cultural and language materials to share with NSW Aboriginal communities for the purpose of language and cultural revitalisation. The project will run for three years starting July 2026 through June 2029. FNCAA will be First Nations led; majority First Nations staffed and aims to enhance First Nations peoples' access to important archival material about culture, kinship, stories, and languages held within the AM Archives and Collections.

Primary purpose of the role

The FNCAA Archivist contributes to the delivery of the First Nations Community Access to Archives project by identifying, researching, and supporting the surfacing of AM Archives for records relating to First Nations Peoples, Language and histories, making them accessible to the project team, stakeholders, and community as well as discoverable through digitisation. The role provides expert and specialist advice on archival practice, records management, legal frameworks, collection management systems, and digital asset management, ensuring ICIP protocols and museum and Archives collection management standards are upheld throughout.

Working closely with the Senior Project Coordinator, the FNCAA Archivist is the project's AM Archives collection content specialist; enabling research, page turns, digitisation, transcription and engagement programs; while ensuring compliance with relevant legislation, standards and holding space for culturally appropriate practice. The role has a particular focus on maintaining the integrity, accessibility and sustainability of archives containing, or potentially containing, First Nations language and cultural content.

Key accountabilities

- Provide specialist archival advice and expertise to support the First Nations Community Access to Archives (FNCAA) project, including identifying and assessing archival and collection material of potential cultural significance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, histories, languages and cultural knowledge.
- Undertake complex archival and collection research, applying professional judgement and culturally informed approaches to identify, interpret and contextualise relevant material and inform priorities for digitisation, community access and engagement.
- Provide specialist training, mentoring and guidance to project team members on Australian archival practice, relevant legal and policy frameworks, professional standards and AM Archives collection management processes to build capability and support consistent, high-quality project outcomes.
- Develop and contribute to archival access frameworks, procedures and protocols for the physical and digital access of collection material, ensuring approaches support culturally appropriate First Nations community access and align with relevant legislation, policies, professional standards and AM requirements.
- Provide authoritative advice, briefings and regular reporting to the Head of Digitisation, First Nations, Senior Project Coordinator, FNCAA and relevant governance stakeholders on project progress, archival access matters, emerging issues and risks, and recommend practical solutions to support delivery against project objectives and commitments.
- Lead and undertake quality assurance of archival collection records, metadata and digital assets, identifying and resolving data quality issues and enhancing documentation within the Museum's Collection Management System (EMu) and Digital Asset Management System (Fotoware), including the transcription and addition of appropriate cultural context to improve discoverability and community accessibility.
- Coordinate the preparation of archival and collection material for digitisation, including retrieval, handling, condition checking, cataloguing and workflow documentation, ensuring appropriate standards of collection care, security, cultural protocols and location control are maintained throughout project activities.
- Work collaboratively with the Senior Project Coordinator, FNCAA and relevant subject matter experts to assess and prioritise material for digitisation and access, balancing cultural significance, community priorities, collection requirements, project objectives and available resources.
- Support engagement with First Nations communities, knowledge holders and stakeholders to facilitate culturally appropriate access to archival material, contribute archival expertise to consultation activities and ensure relevant community knowledge and perspectives inform project practices and collection documentation.
- Contribute to the effective planning, coordination and continuous improvement of FNCAA project activities by maintaining appropriate project documentation, monitoring archival workstreams and deliverables, identifying issues and dependencies, and providing accurate and timely information to support project decision-making.

Key challenges

- Understand the strategic priorities for FNCAA and manage work to respond to multiple requests effectively.
- Working collaboratively with First Nations team, communities, knowledge holders, AM archives team and internal stakeholders to enhance collection records and improve access while ensuring Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) protocols, cultural sensitivities and museum standards are respected, and embedded in internal workflows and systems.
- Ensuring cultural safety, ethical and best practice are maintained, and cultural protocols are followed when working with First Nations material, staff and communities. This also includes ensuring appropriate Workplace Health & Safety (WHS) and collection security standards are maintained during visits to the AM by community members, stakeholders, project contractors/casuals. Handling a diverse range of fragile and culturally significant items in accordance with cultural, archives collection management standards, and conservation guidelines while maintaining throughput and quality requirements.

Key relationships

Internal

Who	Why
Head of Digitisation, First Nations	• Receives overall direction, discusses work priorities, reports on progress, escalates issues and contributes to project planning and reporting.
Senior Project Coordinator, FNCAA	• Receives project direction, discusses work priorities, reports on progress, and contributes to project planning and delivery.
FNCAA Project team	• Collaborates on project activities, archives access, archival research, documentation enhancement, digitisation, community engagement activities and the delivery of project outcomes.
First Nations Collection and Engagement team	• Collaborates on project activities, archival access, archival research and the application of archival standards and ICIP.
Archives leadership and team	• Schedule and share resources, advocate for project team, coordinate workflows, and standardise methodologies. • To share information, promote teamwork, resolve issues, agree on priorities. • Work with team to embed FN protocols across collection management and access

External

Who	Why
First Nations Communities, Knowledge Holders and Cultural Advisors	• Provides archives access respectfully to facilitate culturally appropriate access to collections, incorporate community knowledge into collection documentation and ensure Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) protocols are observed.
Project Partners and Cultural Organisations	• Support project delivery, community engagement and collaborative initiatives relevant to the FNCAA project.

Role dimensions

Decision making

This role has autonomy and makes decisions that are under their direct control. It refers to a Manager decision that requires significant change to program outcomes or timeframes or are likely to escalate or require submission to a higher level of management. This role is fully accountable for the delivery of work assignments on time and to expectations in terms of quality, deliverables, and outcomes.

Reporting line

This role reports to the Head of Digitisation, First Nations

Direct reports

Nil

Budget/Expenditure

Nil

Key knowledge and experience

- Demonstrated experience working with government and/or collected archives including description, access, preservation, handling, digital archiving and digitisation. Knowledge of NSW legislative and regulatory frameworks relevant to museum archive collections.
- Understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, and Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) protocols as applied to archival collections.
- Demonstrated understanding and experience working with First Nations data governance frameworks, data sovereignty principles, and Indigenous knowledge protocols.
- Experience in developing policies, procedures, and documentation to support ICIP management and cultural access in archival collection.
- Demonstrated research and information management skills, with attention to detail and accuracy.
- Demonstrated ability to organise work, manage multiple tasks and meet project deadlines.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to collaborate across museum teams and engage respectfully with First Nations communities and stakeholders.
- Experience using databases, archival record management system, and/or collection management systems (such as EMu) or the ability to quickly learn new systems.

Essential requirements

- Relevant tertiary qualifications and/or professional experience in archives, museum or cultural collections, with a demonstrated understanding of culturally appropriate practices when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collections and communities.
- This is not an Identified role. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are strongly encouraged to apply.

Capabilities for the role

The [NSW public sector capability framework](#) describes the capabilities (knowledge, skills and abilities) needed to perform a role. There are four main groups of capabilities: personal attributes, relationships, results and business enablers, with a fifth people management group of capabilities for roles with managerial responsibilities. These groups, combined with capabilities drawn from occupation-specific capability sets where relevant, work together to provide an understanding of the capabilities needed for the role.

The capabilities are separated into **focus capabilities** and **complementary capabilities**.

Focus capabilities

Focus capabilities are the capabilities considered the most important for effective performance of the role. These capabilities will be assessed at recruitment.

The focus capabilities for this role are shown below with a brief explanation of what each capability covers and the indicators describing the types of behaviours expected at each level.

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
 Personal Attributes	Manage Self	Be persistent, self-reflect and commit to learning	Intermediate
 Personal Attributes	Display Resilience and Courage Be open and honest, prepared to express your views, and willing to accept and commit to change	- Be open to new ideas and approaches and adapt to new situations - Offer your opinion, ask questions and make suggestions - Do not give up easily when challenges arise - Be respectful and considerate in challenging situations - Ask for help when you don't know something	Foundational
 Relationships	Commit to Customer Service Provide customer-focused services in line with public sector and organisational objectives	- Recognise the importance of customer service and understanding customer needs - Help customers understand the services that are available - Take responsibility for delivering services that meet different customer needs - Keep customers informed of progress and seek feedback to ensure their needs are met - Be respectful, courteous, empathetic and fair when interacting with customers - Recognise that customer service involves both external and internal customers	Intermediate
 Relationships	Work Collaboratively Collaborate with others and value their contribution	- Build a supportive and collaborative team environment - Share information and learning across teams - Acknowledge outcomes that were achieved by working together effectively - Share information with others to solve problems together - Support others in difficult situations - Use collaboration tools, including digital technology, to work effectively with others	Adept

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
 Results	Deliver Results Achieve results by using resources efficiently and committing to quality outcomes	• Seek and apply specialist advice when needed • Complete work tasks within set budgets, timeframes and standards • Take the initiative to progress and deliver your own work and that of the team or business unit • Contribute to assigning responsibilities and resources to ensure the team or business unit achieves goals • Identify any barriers to achieving results and resolve these where possible • Proactively change or adjust plans when needed	Adept
 Business Enablers	Technology Understand and use available technology to maximise efficiencies and effectiveness	• Demonstrate a sound understanding of technology relevant to the work unit, and identify and select the most appropriate technology for assigned tasks • Use available technology to improve individual performance and effectiveness • Use records, information and knowledge management systems effectively • Support system improvement initiatives and new technology when it is deployed • Identify where technology or automation supports tasks, and raise issues when applications may be inappropriate or inaccurate	Adept

Complementary capabilities

Complementary capabilities are also identified from the Capability Framework and relevant occupation-specific capability sets. They are important to identify performance required for the role and development opportunities.

Note: capabilities listed as 'not essential' for this role are not relevant for recruitment purposes, however, may be relevant for future career development.

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
 Personal Attributes	Act with Integrity	Be ethical and professional, and uphold and promote the public sector values	Intermediate
 Personal Attributes	Value Diversity and Inclusion	Be inclusive and respect diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives	Intermediate

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
 Relationships	Communicate Effectively	Communicate clearly, pay attention to others and respond with understanding and respect	Intermediate
 Relationships	Influence and Negotiate	Gain consensus and commitment from others, and resolve issues and conflicts	Intermediate
 Results	Plan and Prioritise	Plan to achieve priority outcomes and respond flexibly to changing circumstances	Adept
 Results	Think and Solve Problems	Think, analyse and consider the broader context to develop practical solutions	Intermediate
 Results	Demonstrate Accountability	Be proactive and responsible for your actions, and follow legislation, policy and guidelines	Intermediate
 Business Enablers	Finance	Understand and apply financial processes to achieve value for money and minimise financial risk	Foundational
 Business Enablers	Procurement and Contract Management	Understand and use procurement processes to ensure effective purchasing and contract performance	Foundational

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
 Business Enablers	Project Management	Understand and use effective ways to plan, coordinate and control projects	Intermediate