



**Project  
Name**

**Flexible Cataloguing (RLS Project 8)**

**Document  
Name**

**Project Brief**

**Approvals**

This document requires the following approvals.

Signed approval forms are filed in the Quality directory.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Date of Issue</b>	<b>Version</b>
Jan Fullerton		Project Sponsor		1.0

<b>Document Identifier</b>	T1 – Project Brief
<b>Document author</b>	Pam Gatenby
<b>Version No.</b>	v. 3.0
<b>Version Date:</b>	1 June 2009   2009 – Endorsed by NSLA
<b>Document Name and file location</b>	h/RLS Project 8 Project Brief

---

## Purpose

To improve access to the collections of the NSLA libraries, in particular their unique documentary heritage collections, by using more cost-effective and streamlined ways to process collection material and to catalogue it online.

## Contents

<b>Purpose .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Contents .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1. Background.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Project Definition.....</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1. Project Objectives .....	4
2.2. Project Scope .....	5
2.3. Exclusions.....	5
2.4. Outline project deliverables .....	5
2.5. Constraints and assumptions .....	6
2.6. Benefits and cost of doing nothing.....	6
2.7. Stakeholders .....	7
2.8. Estimated costs .....	7
2.9. Estimated schedule .....	8
2.10 Major risks and controls.....	8
2.11 Related projects.....	9

### Revision History

<b>Version Number</b>	<b>Revision date</b>	<b>Summary of Changes</b>
1.0		Original document
3.0	1 June 2009	Editing; changes background, to 2.1, and to 2.8

## 1. Background

Knowledge of what libraries hold in their collections can be very difficult to establish if the collections are not catalogued online. The public now expect to be able to find information about library holdings through commonly used search engines. However, processing and cataloguing library collections can be a resource intensive and costly undertaking. Access to collections of unique heritage materials held by the NSLA libraries is especially limited because a significant amount of these have not been processed to the point where they can be catalogued, and even if catalogued are poorly represented in *Libraries Australia*\*. To facilitate knowledge and use of the collections of NSLA libraries it is necessary to overcome existing barriers to access and to identify and agree on more streamlined and cost-efficient ways of proceeding that will accelerate control of the collections.

The agreed principles that underpin the objectives of the Flexible Cataloguing Project are:

- Records for new acquisitions should be created in a timely manner to facilitate resource discovery
- All resources should have an online record that is contributed to Libraries Australia
- Each NSLA library will accept primary responsibility for their state related heritage collections (or national collections in the case of the 2 national libraries) including responsibility for maintaining authority control
- Different levels of cataloguing are appropriate but should conform to agreed standards for that level
- A brief record is better than no record
- Catalogue once and repurpose catalogue data wherever possible

\* **Note:** Reference to *Libraries Australia* in the context of the Flexible Cataloguing Project should be taken to include *Picture Australia* where member libraries contribute records to that service but not to *Libraries Australia*.

### 1.1 Drivers (Opportunities and Issues)

The project will provide opportunities to:

- Demonstrate NSLA commitment to the agreed principles that underpin the Flexible Cataloguing Project
- Strengthen coverage of documentary heritage collections on *Libraries Australia* and attaining the national resource discovery goals that underpin the service

- Enhance our visibility and relevance by making our collections available to new audiences by means of new technologies
- Analyse existing barriers to bibliographic access to our collections
- Identify and implement faster, cheaper and better approaches to processing and cataloguing collections
- Reveal the strength of our collections and assist users make decisions about the usefulness of collections
- Review the levels of bibliographic standards that are appropriate to different formats of material
- Significantly improve levels of productivity associated with collection control
- Support other NSLA RLS projects that are dependent on the availability of bibliographic metadata to meet their objectives
- Pursue individual organisation access objectives such as digitisation which are dependent on collection materials having been catalogued.

The main issues are:

- The scale of the undertaking is large and the size of individual libraries' collections and the extent to which they have been processed and catalogued varies considerably
- Knowledge of the state of control of collections within institutions can be difficult to establish
- The extent to which new automated solutions can be found is limited: - collections management will continue to depend to a large degree on human resources
- Entrenched practices and beliefs can be very difficult to change
- Senior management leadership and commitment to the objectives of the project will be essential to achieve results
- An allocation of staff time to exploring and trialling new approaches will be required.

## **2. Project Definition**

### **2.1 Project Objectives**

To improve access via *Libraries Australia* to documentary heritage materials especially unique materials, by using more productive and streamlined ways of processing and cataloguing that are appropriate to the category of material.

This will involve developing workflow models for integrating control of unique materials and by identifying cost-effective approaches, tools and standards.

---

## 2.2 Project Scope

The Project will concentrate on documentary heritage materials, in particular those original materials that are poorly represented in online catalogues, especially *Libraries Australia*. To be manageable, the project will focus on processing Australian (and New Zealand for the NLNZ) manuscript collections and on cataloguing collections of pictures and newspapers, both new acquisitions and collections already held by member libraries that are not accessible through *Libraries Australia*. These formats will be used to pilot an approach that can then be used as a model for other formats as appropriate.

The scope of activities to be undertaken includes

- (i) an audit of the current state of control of the chosen formats and of current control practices;
- (ii) identification of current barriers to access to be overcome;
- (iii) identification- through information sharing and research – of models for integrating the processing and control of original materials with other formats;
- (iv) identification of approaches to fast-tracking the processing of manuscript collections and
- (v) the design of more streamlined standardised approaches to cataloguing that are based on sharing tools such as the Subject Suggester Tool and training documentation.

## 2.3 Exclusions

Overseas (non Australian and New Zealand) materials and born digital collections are out of scope for the project but new approaches identified could be applicable to these categories. Tool development is also out-of-scope but the need for a particular solution that involves development work could be an outcome of the project.

Focus of the project predominantly involves *Libraries Australia*, as the bibliographic data in *Libraries Australia* is an existing collaborative effort, including all the NSLA Libraries. The Te Puna national bibliographic database is not a direct focus of this project, but will benefit from the outcomes of the project.

## 2.4 Project deliverables

The overarching deliverable will be the framework referred to at Project Objective. It will consist of:

- An agreed set of NSLA objectives and principles governing bibliographic control of our documentary heritage collections
- Documented models for integrating the processing and cataloguing of original heritage materials with other categories of material
- Reliable information on the current state of control of the manuscript, pictures and newspapers collections in each NSLA library

- Tested approaches for providing faster, cheaper and better bibliographic access to some categories of material
- Models for providing more efficient processing of manuscript collections
- Agreed bibliographic standards for use with new approaches to processing and cataloguing
- Shareable tools such as the Subject Suggester Tool and training documentation.

## 2.5 Constraints and assumptions

### The main possible constraints are:

- The availability of staff in each institution with the right levels of knowledge and authority to contribute to the project
- Provision of budget support by each institution to enable staff to attend the planned workshop, to have the occasional face to face meeting, and to participate in research and trials
- Different practices in each institution mean that it could be difficult to reach agreement on a common approach to processing and cataloguing that can be used as a trial

### Assumptions:

- All NSLA libraries are committed to the Project and will make the necessary resources available to implement the project's work plan.
- All NSLA libraries support the goals and principles outlined in the project statement of scope. (see Background.)
- It will be possible to introduce improvements to the way collection processing and cataloguing is currently conducted in each institution but different practices will continue to exist due to historical and local circumstances.
- The scale of the task involved means that milestones for achieving access objectives must be long term but some significant gains can be achieved in the short-term.

## 2.6 Benefits vs Cost of doing nothing

### Benefits of the project

Many of the benefits are outlined at Opportunities above. Others include:

- The public will be able to establish what we hold in our collections and obtain access
- We will be more accountable to our stakeholders if we provide access to our collections.
- The project will establish a stronger culture of collaboration in working towards the goal of national access to our collections
- Some possible approaches to improving access to documentary heritage materials could involve working with volunteers which

would build support for libraries among the public and also enable significant improvement in access to collections to be had at no additional staff cost

- Exploring new approaches to collection control could have a liberating effect on more traditional mind sets once the benefits to be gained become apparent
- The availability of metadata for use in online catalogues using new functionalities enables us to provide enhanced searching and delivery options to greatly improve the discoverability of our collections
- Processing and cataloguing of collections are a necessary prerequisite to digitisation and preservation of the collections.
- With Libraries committed to trialling new methods and tools, there will be demonstrable change within traditional libraries' practices.

#### **Cost of doing nothing:**

- Our collections will be under used because it will be difficult to establish they exist and then to gain access to them
- NSLA libraries will become less relevant to information seekers who will use resources easily available through the Internet
- The extent to which we can develop and deliver new services that rely on the use of metadata will be limited

## **2.7 Stakeholders**

#### **Key stakeholder groups are:**

- *Funding bodies – state and Commonwealth governments:* who have a requirement that the libraries they fund deliver against agreed output and outcome expectations and deliver value for money to the public
- *The public* – which has the requirement for easy access to the tax payer funded collections held in their libraries
- *NSLA Executive* – which is accountable to funding bodies and the public for delivery of efficient and effective library services and needs to ensure the potential for doing this is maximised within available resources. An input requirement from this group is the staff and other budget resources to achieve the goals and strategies of the program
- *Australian libraries* – within the contexts of resource sharing and collaborative collection development

*Other cultural agencies* – Australian library collections form a key part of Australia's documentary heritage and the value of these collections is enhanced by the ability to relate the collections and to search across them. Also, other libraries and cultural agencies would have an interest in assessing the relevance of the RLS project to their own operations.

## **2.8 Estimated costs (budget and labour)**

Internal Labour Costs for investigation stage only. Actual costs will be monitored.

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Duration (12 months)</b>	<b>Rate*</b>	<b>Cost*</b>
<u>NLA</u>	Project Manager	0.2 EFT	SES	

	2 x participants	2 x 0.1	2 x EL1	
Per NSLA Partner Library	Project Group participation & internal liaison	Equivalent 0.1	Equivalent EL2	
Per NSLA Partner Library	Trial of tool / methods	As above		

External Labour – NIL

External Non-Labour – NIL

Internal Non-Labour ???

Ongoing Costs: to be determined

## 2.9 Estimated schedule

Activity	Date/Timeline
Inaugural meeting at NLA	15 October 2008
1 <sup>st</sup> telephone meeting	16 January 2009
Audit of record creation for newspapers and pictures with results posted to wiki	28 February 2009
Prepare Project Plan for NSLA signoff	Draft to project group 31 March 2009; to Project Sponsor 31 May 2009
2 <sup>nd</sup> telephone meeting	1 May 2009
3 <sup>rd</sup> teleconference to plan workshop	Late June (tbc)
Hold workshop at SLV	27, 28 July (tbc)
Trial approaches presented and discussed at workshop	August – November (4 months)
Develop minimum cataloguing standards for pictures and newspapers	Unscheduled
Develop models for mainstreaming and integrating processing of original materials	Unscheduled

## 2.10 Major Risks and controls

Major Risk	Controls
Due to resource limits, partner libraries might not be able to support the full work program of the Project	NSLA CEOs to ensure the intended work program is manageable before they sign off on project Plan OR determine the level of participation they wish their library to have.

Partner library representatives might not commit to participating in the work program of the Project to the extent agreed to by their CEO	NSLA CEOs to keep in regular contact with representatives on progress against work plan actions  Project Leader to provide regular reports to RLS Program manager on any issues associated with participation
Resistance to change in partner libraries especially to mainstreaming the processing and cataloguing of original material formats	NSLA CEOs and library managers to provide leadership and support to staff as required
To realise significant benefits against the objectives of the project will take some time as the scale of the task is large	Break the task down into achievable steps and measure achievement by agreement on approaches, models and standards that will reap benefits over time
Practices in partner libraries are too different or dependent on local circumstances to enable common approaches or models to be implemented	Accept that approaches will vary but that all partner libraries will work towards approaches that are consistent with the goals of the project and the agreed principles that underpin it.

## 2.11 Related Projects

The following projects have a dependency on Project 8 Flexible Cataloguing:

Project 1 – Do it Now!

Project 2 – Open Borders

Projects 4 – Delivery

Project 5 – Community Created Content

Project 6 – Changing Capability and Culture

Project 7 – Collaborative Collecting

Project 9 – Scaling up Digitisation

Project 10 – Connecting and Discovery Content