



FIRST NATIONS MEDIA ARCHIVES

Developing a Cultural Custodianship Plan

THE BASIC PRINCIPLES

In the management of First Nations media archives Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and Law are the guiding principles.

Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are essential cultural authorities at the centre of all decision making associated with management of the archives.

SECTION 1 CULTURAL CUSTODIANSHIP: GET CULTURAL PERMISSION AND BUILD CULTURAL TRUST

Principle: The Archive needs to be developed and operated according to Law.

In this section

Reading:

Planning for Cultural Custodianship

Action:

Develop and Implement a Cultural Custodianship Action Plan

1.1 Planning for Cultural Custodianship

Cultural custodianship lies at the heart of the Archive at all stages of its development of operation. The media objects in the Archive represent First Nations cultural laws and protocols as they apply within the Nation and Nations represented in the media. Production, viewing and listening to the Archive's media objects is bound by those laws and protocols.

Before any work on the archive commences, the cultural custodians relevant to the Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property represented in the archive need to be brought together to work through the why's and wherefores' of the Archive.

Importantly this work flows through to the basic information needed for a Collection Management Plan. The shape and content of the discussion will be guided by local cultural approaches. However some points to think about for the discussion could include:

- Who is the Archive for?
- Who needs to be in charge of the Archive? For example, would it be useful to have an Archive coordinator with archiving skills working with an Archive Cultural Coordinator who oversees the cultural work of the Archive.

- Who needs to be in a cultural consultation group to give cultural help and advice when needed?
- Is the Archive in a culturally appropriate location, building or part of a building?
- What are the Laws that apply to the content. For example Sorry, Men's Only, Women's Only, Senior Law Men Only, Senior Women Only, Culturally Sensitive, Open for First Nations, Open for non-First Nations. Each local Nation will have its own way of looking at this.
- Who can work in the Archive and can they work with all or some of the media?
- Can "outsiders" access any or all of it? What about non-First Nations people – some of it, none of it?
- Physical layout – men's and women's separate spaces needed? Sorry viewing space needed?
- What are the "big" content groups that could help arrange content and making the Archive suitable for First Nations' ways of knowing. For example, Family, Law, Country, Men's, Women's.
- Can some media go online? If so, what media content is suitable for being online.
- Who can sort out any cultural disputes about use of the Archive.

Your Notes:

Action 1 Planning Template: Develop and Implement a Cultural Custodianship Action Plan

Action	Your Plan/Approach/Thoughts
Work out some initial questions relevant to your Archive (as a starting point only)	
Bring cultural custodians together and refine and adapt questions	
Record decisions/thoughts/ principles	