
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

Telling Australia's Story —and why it's important

Report on the inquiry into Canberra's national institutions

Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories

April 2019
Canberra

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Contents

Foreword	vii
Membership of the Committee	xi
Terms of reference	xiii
List of abbreviations	xiv
List of recommendations	xvi
National institutions examined by the Committee	xxi
1 Introduction	1
Past reports	2
Conduct of the inquiry	2
Structure of the report	3
Scope of the inquiry	4
2 The shared value of national institutions	7
Preserving and presenting our history and culture	7
Expressing and exploring our national identity	10
Economic value	13
Tourism	14
Other economic benefits	14
Enhancing Australia's international relations	15
Education and research	17
School visits and programs	17
Higher education and research	18
Committee comment	20

3	Public engagement.....	23
	Marketing Canberra’s national institutions.....	24
	Visitor data	26
	Collective branding and marketing	28
	Digital technologies	30
	Digital interactive exhibitions	30
	Online presence	32
	Engaging under-represented visitors	36
	Young adults	37
	Indigenous Australians	38
	Migrant and multicultural communities	39
	Special access programs	40
	Education.....	42
	School excursions to Canberra	42
	The PACER program	45
	Digital classrooms	48
	Public outreach beyond Canberra.....	49
	Committee comment.....	52
	Marketing Canberra’s national institutions	53
	Digital technologies	54
	Under-represented visitors	55
	Schools	56
	Civics and democracy	58
	Public outreach beyond Canberra.....	62
4	Governance.....	63
	Oversight and administration	63
	Legislation	64
	Commonwealth Parliament	67
	Australian National Audit Office.....	68
	Australian Government oversight and administration	69
	Boards of national institutions	71
	Consolidating oversight and governance	73

Developing new institutions	75
Establishment process	75
Proposals for new institutions.....	77
Committee comment	83
Oversight and administration.....	83
Developing new national institutions	86
5 Resourcing Canberra’s national institutions	89
Resource challenges	89
Budgets and the efficiency dividend.....	90
Staffing.....	94
Facilities	98
Collaboration between national institutions	110
Cultural and Corporate Shared Services Centre	112
Private sector sponsorship, donations and philanthropic support	112
Developing other sources of revenue	116
Committee comment	119
Budgets and the efficiency dividend.....	119
Staffing national institutions	120
Facilities	121
Collaboration between national institutions	126
Developing non-government sources of income	127
Appendix A - Submissions	129
Appendix B – Public hearings	133
Appendix C - Exhibits	137

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1	PACER rebate amounts	46
Table 3.2	PACER schools per state/territory participation figures	47



Foreword

I am pleased to present the Committee's report on its inquiry into Canberra's national institutions.

This report is tabled without dissent or additional comment and in doing so demonstrates the support across the political spectrum for its conclusions and recommendations. A strong and vibrant collection of national institutions is critically important for the continued success of our democracy and nation.

Canberra is the heart of the nation, and home to some of its most iconic national institutions. These institutions tell our Australian story. It is essential that we understand that story, learn from it and use it to build confidence and pride for the present and future.

The primary role of the institutions is to preserve and promote Australia's history, culture, arts, science and democracy. The Committee's inquiry examined a range of institutions, from those that are internationally recognised such as the Australian War Memorial, National Gallery of Australia and National Portrait Gallery, to those with a lower profile such as the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS), National Archives of Australia and National Electoral Education Centre (NEEC).

This report considers the shared value of Canberra's national institutions in conserving, interpreting and facilitating engagement with Australia's history, culture and national identity. To unlock this value, institutions must provide Australians with the opportunity to identify with their national story, as collected and told by these institutions. Many national institutions are also economic and tourism drawcards, and are key assets in Australia's international engagement. The Committee has recommended that national institutions develop and articulate a shared narrative that directly connects them with Australia's story and that underpins their individual and collaborative work.

The inquiry considered institutions' engagement with the public. Evolving societal expectations and significant technological advances mean that people want a more

engaging, flexible and interactive experience of institutions' offerings. Many institutions have obliged, using digital technologies, social media and an enhanced online presence. However, the Committee was concerned that our institutions are not working together to communicate the shared importance of their telling of our national story, and why that is important to our society and our future. As such, the Committee considered that there was potential for a stronger concerted effort to be made on collective branding and marketing by national institutions. Scope also exists for national institutions to better engage with under-represented visitors, particularly to encourage new migrants to visit national institutions.

More than 165 000 school students visit Canberra's national institutions each year, and more than half of these do so with the help of funding provided by the Government's Parliament and Civics Education Rebate (PACER) program. However, the Committee heard that some school programs had waiting lists of up to two years, and that the PACER program was disproportionately used by schools from Australia's east coast. The Committee has recommended a comprehensive review of PACER to consider how to address increasing demand, the adequacy of PACER subsidies, the criteria for prioritising applications and funding, and the program's governance. The Committee has also recommended the development of a program encouraging school visits to the national institutions that provide excellent education programs in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

The Committee heard that Australians are genuinely interested in being informed about their democracy. Understanding and being inspired about the role that individuals can play in our democracy is essential. The NEEC, run by the Australian Electoral Commission for school students, is one great example of success in educating, inspiring and empowering our next generation of voters. Likewise the Parliamentary Education Office provides successful programs for students to learn about the operation of our Parliament. The Committee would like to see these programs made more accessible to the general public.

The Committee is concerned that relevant institutions may not be presenting a shared and consistent vision about Australian democracy, nor is there a clear delineation of the programs and activities conducted. Some roles and functions are duplicated and some important aspects of the story of Australian democracy are missed. This report recommends a review of the objectives, roles and functions of those institutions that facilitate engagement with civics and democracy, giving consideration to their closer administrative and operational alignment. This may provide an opportunity to return parts of Old Parliament House to being a working extension of Parliament House.

2019 marks ten years since the Museum of Australian Democracy (MoAD) was established and therefore it is timely to assess its focus and effectiveness in achieving its core role and responsibilities. The Committee has concerns about the disconnect between MoAD's fundamental strategic role, and the direction of some of its engagement with the public. MoAD's scope has crept from its core focus and role. Its current and emerging focus on critical debates and discourse about democracy is best left to academic, think tank or media analysis. In addition to conserving and presenting Old Parliament House and telling the story of Australia's remarkable democratic heritage, MoAD should improve its focus on developing visitors' understanding of our nation's democratic history, inspiring faith in our democracy, and leaving visitors educated and excited about their agency in Australia's political system and how they can play a more active part in it.

Our political parties have played an essential role in the strength and stability of our democracy yet their story is not being told: there is a need for enhanced understanding and engagement with Australia's political party system. The Committee has recommended the creation of centres for each political party, to add their important role in Australia's democratic history to the story told by our national institutions.

National institutions are accountable to the Australian Government and Parliament for their strategic direction, governance and use of public resources. Audits conducted by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) in 2005 and 2018 found issues with institutions' governance, risk management and records management relating to the national collection. The Committee has recommended that the ANAO conduct a follow-up audit on institutions' implementation of relevant recommendations from both audits. The Committee has also supported the establishment of a formal consultative structure for national institutions, to improve collaboration in such areas as planning, policy, marketing and operations.

The Committee received many proposals for new national institutions in Canberra. Out of these, we have recommended that a business case be developed for a new national history museum.

Sadly, the present representation of Indigenous Australia within the precinct of the Parliamentary Zone is chiefly one of protest and does not provide for a broader acknowledgement and demonstration of Australia's rich Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, language, heritage and culture. The Committee has recommended that AIATSIS be expanded with a new home in the Parliamentary Zone and a broader role in presenting the story of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The new facility should include a national resting place for repatriated ancestral remains that cannot immediately return to country.

Successive governments have sought to curtail government spending as part of exercising responsible fiscal management over a number of years. This has been legitimate and necessary to ensure a strong economy, a balanced budget and an accountable public sector. As a result, many institutions have struggled to deliver key programs and services. The Committee has recommended that the Australian Government consider adopting measures to offset the impact of budgetary pressures on small agencies including Canberra's national institutions.

National institutions' facilities are vital to their operations and as such, the Committee has made recommendations to provide a more strategic and coordinated approach to the management and maintenance of facilities; the development of a permanent shared collection storage facility; and a shared exhibition space to be developed on suitable national land in Canberra.

I would like to sincerely thank the many contributors to the Committee's inquiry, which was a large and complex one. The Committee carefully considered all of the evidence it received, along with its own observations following visits to some institutions' facilities, in reaching its findings and recommendations. Canberra's national institutions are excellent, invaluable, and worthy of our support and patronage. I hope that this report will contribute to making them even more effective, vibrant and cohesive as the keepers, authors and champions of Australia's national story.

Mr Ben Morton MP
Chair



Membership of the Committee

Chair Mr Ben Morton MP

Deputy Chair Ms Gai Brodtmann MP

Members

Senator Jonathon Duniam	Senator Malarndirri McCarthy
Senator Mehreen Faruqi (from 13/9/2018)	Hon Dr John McVeigh MP (from 10/9/2018)
Senator Katy Gallagher (to 9/5/2018)	Senator James Paterson
Mr Kevin Hogan MP (from 26/3/2018)	Senator Lee Rhiannon (to 15/8/2018)
Mr Julian Leeser MP*	Senator David Smith (from 28/6/2018)
Hon Sussan Ley MP (to 28/8/2018)	Hon Warren Snowdon MP
Senator Sue Lines	

* Mr Leeser did not participate in this inquiry.

Committee Secretariat

Secretary	Ms Peggy Danaee Ms Shennia Spillane
Inquiry Secretary	Mr Muzammil Ali
Research Officer	Ms Stephanie Lee
Administrative Officer	Ms Kathleen Blunden



Terms of reference

The Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories will inquire into and report on the range of innovative strategies that Canberra's national institutions are using to maintain viability and relevance to sustainably grow their profile, visitor numbers, and revenue, including:

- Creating a strong brand and online presence;
- Experimenting with new forms of public engagement and audience participation;
- Conducting outreach outside of Canberra;
- Cultivating private sector support;
- Developing other income streams; and
- Ensuring the appropriateness of governance structures; and

Any other relevant matter the Committee wishes to examine, including the process for establishing new institutions.



List of abbreviations

ACT	Australian Capital Territory
AIATSIS	Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
AIS	Australian Institute of Sport
ANAO	Australian National Audit Office
ANBG	Australian National Botanic Gardens
APS	Australian Public Service
ARC	Australian Research Council
AWM	Australian War Memorial
CCSSC	Cultural and Corporate Shared Services Centre
Copyright Act	Copyright Act 1968 (Cth)
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DCA	Department of Communications and the Arts
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DIIS	Department of Industry, Innovation and Science
DoF	Department of Finance
DPS	Department of Parliamentary Services

DSS	Department of Social Services
MoAD	Museum of Australian Democracy
NAA	National Archives of Australia
NCAA	National Capital Attractions Association
NCETP	National Capital Educational Tourism Project
NCITO	National Collecting Institutions Touring and Outreach
NEEC	National Electoral Education Centre
NFSA	National Film and Sound Archive
NGA	National Gallery of Australia
NLA	National Library of Australia
NMA	National Museum of Australia
NPG	National Portrait Gallery
PACER	Parliament and Civics Education Rebate
PEO	Parliamentary Education Office
PBS	Portfolio Budget Statements
PGPA Act	Public Governance Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (Cth)
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics



List of recommendations

2 The shared value of national institutions

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that Canberra's national institutions develop and articulate a shared narrative that directly connects them with Australia's story. That expression of shared value should underpin the work of all of the national institutions, individually and in collaboration.

3 Public engagement

Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that Canberra's national institutions make a stronger concerted effort to undertake collective branding and marketing, including the use of joint campaigns capitalising on major events and exhibitions occurring during the same season. These initiatives should be organised through structured collaboration, and based on the best available visitor data.

Recommendation 3

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government, through the Department of Social Services and in conjunction with Canberra's national institutions, develop a program that encourages new migrants to Australia to visit Canberra's national institutions.

Recommendation 4

The Committee recommends that the Department of Education and Training undertake a comprehensive review of the PACER program, to include consideration of:

- ways to increase capacity to enable participation by all interested schools and students;
- criteria for prioritising applications and funding support;
- the funding level provided to the program overall and for each student; and
- governance of the program including membership of its education advisory committee.

Recommendation 5

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government, in conjunction with Canberra's science-focussed national institutions, develop a program to encourage and promote engagement in science education by school students visiting Canberra.

Recommendation 6

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government review the objectives, roles and functions of the Museum of Australian Democracy, the National Electoral Education Centre and the visitor and education services at Parliament House; and consider the merits of their closer administrative and operational alignment.

Recommendation 7

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government consider expanding the facilities and resourcing of the Parliamentary Education Office and the National Electoral Education Centre, to allow them to offer regular programs to public visitors as well as school groups, and the NEEC to also offer a walk-up experience for impromptu visitors.

Recommendation 8

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government examine the present objectives and activities of the Museum of Australian Democracy, with a view to ensuring that the Museum is appropriately focused on its core responsibilities: to tell the story of Australia's remarkable democratic heritage, and inspire citizens' engagement in democracy.

Recommendation 9

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government work with political parties to create centres for each political party, located at MoAD, to collect, preserve, research and make available publications and exhibitions on the parties' history, campaigns, policies and achievements.

4 Governance

Recommendation 10

The Committee recommends that during the 2019-2020 financial year the Australian National Audit Office conduct a follow-up audit of Canberra's National Collecting Institutions, with a particular focus on monitoring their implementation of relevant recommendations made in the ANAO's 2005 and 2018 reports relating to the national collections.

Recommendation 11

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government, in consultation with Canberra's national institutions, the National Capital Authority and the ACT Government, develop a formal consultative structure for national institutions, to pursue the alignment of their strategic planning and policy, explore efficiencies and sharing resources where appropriate, and provide for joint advocacy, negotiation and collaborative marketing.

Recommendation 12

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government develop a business case for the establishment of a natural history museum in Canberra.

Recommendation 13

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government relocate the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) from its current location on the Acton Peninsula to a new location in Canberra's Parliamentary Zone; and expand the remit and facilities of AIATSIS to constitute a comprehensive national institution focused on the history, culture and heritage of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This should include public exhibition facilities, and a national resting place for repatriated ancestral remains that cannot immediately return to Country. The institution should be developed under the leadership and in comprehensive consultation with Indigenous Australians.

5 Resourcing Canberra's national institutions

Recommendation 14

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government revisit the recommendations of Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit Report 413, *The Efficiency Dividend: Size does matter*, with a view to adopting measures to offset the disproportionate impact of the efficiency dividend on small agencies including Canberra's national institutions. This may include setting a threshold amount for institutions' annual expenditure below which the efficiency dividend would be excluded or reduced.

Recommendation 15

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government reassess the Average Staffing Level caps on Canberra's national institutions, to reduce the cost and skills-retention impacts these are presently having, and avoid the need for institutions to undertake less efficient temporary labour hire arrangements.

Recommendation 16

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government consider the adoption of a strategic and coordinated approach to the management and maintenance of national institutions' buildings and facilities.

Recommendation 17

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government coordinate and support the development of a permanent shared collection storage facility for Canberra's national institutions, to replace the current piecemeal and inadequate arrangements and create maximum efficiency. This should be developed and implemented in close consultation with relevant institutions to ensure it is fit-for-purpose to meet their current and future needs.

Recommendation 18

The Committee recommends that Canberra's national institutions ensure that their plans and budgets include clear and documented processes to account for the whole-of-life costs of collections and acquisitions. Assessments of whole-of-life costs need to form part of strategies for managing institutions' existing collections, and also consideration of potential new donations and acquisitions.

Recommendation 19

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government, in conjunction with national institutions, develop a new shared exhibition space on suitable national land in Canberra.

Recommendation 20

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government acknowledge the need for the digitisation of analogue audio-visual items in the collections of the institutions, to ensure that all such material is digitally preserved by 2025, and develop a clear and coherent whole of government strategy across institutions to get this done.



National institutions examined by the Committee

The following is a list of the Canberra-based national institutions considered by the Committee:

- Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies;
- Australian Institute of Sport;
- Australian National Botanic Gardens;
- Australian War Memorial;
- CSIRO Discovery Centre;
- High Court of Australia;
- Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House;
- National Archives of Australia;
- National Electoral Education Centre;
- National Film and Sound Archive of Australia;
- National Gallery of Australia;
- National Library of Australia;
- National Museum of Australia;
- National Portrait Gallery;
- Parliament House; and
- Questacon – The National Science and Technology Centre.

For further detail, please refer to ‘Scope of the inquiry’ in Chapter 1.

Introduction

- 1.1 Canberra's national institutions are a major drawcard for the nation's capital, attracting local, interstate and overseas visitors. By preserving and promoting Australia's history, culture, arts, science and democracy, they help to tell our national story, and to connect Australians and overseas visitors with that story. They also contribute significantly to the economy of the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and to the character of Canberra as the national capital.
- 1.2 In evidence given to its inquiry the Committee received a resounding endorsement of the value and role of Canberra's national institutions, including that they are 'fundamental to our self-understanding as a people and a society',¹ and that together, they represent 'who we are – to understand what it means to be in Australia and to have a greater belief in ourselves'.²
- 1.3 Over the years a number of national institutions based in Canberra have been subject to budgetary pressures. Simultaneously, public expectations of institutions have changed with rapid technological development and audiences shifting from consumers to co-collaborators.³ Demand for their services continues to grow. Meanwhile the institutions must ensure that they continue to meet legislative requirements and public expectations relating to their governance and accountability. The national institutions therefore face both exciting opportunities and significant challenges to protect and enhance their work into the future.

1 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 3.

2 The Hon. Dr Brendan Nelson, Director, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 38.

3 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 5.

- 1.4 This report reflects the outcomes of the Committee's inquiry into Canberra's national institutions, which examined their strategic value, their engagement with the Australian people, and their governance and resourcing challenges.

Past reports

- 1.5 A number of parliamentary committee and government reports have been produced in the past that relate to some of the national institutions based in Canberra. While these have not all focused directly on the work of the institutions, they have covered relevant themes including the effect of efficiency dividends, and private sector support for the arts, which influence the work of national institutions based in Canberra. Previous reports referred to in this report include:
- the 2008 inquiry by Parliament's Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit into the impact of efficiency dividends on small agencies, including cultural institutions;⁴
 - a 2011 Australian Government review into private sector support for the arts in Australia,⁵ conducted by Mr Harold Mitchell AC; and
 - Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) performance audits of the National Collections: *Safeguarding Our National Collections* (1998); *Safe and Accessible National Collections* (2005); and *Management of the National Collections* (2018).⁶

Conduct of the inquiry

- 1.6 On 20 March 2018, the (then) Minister for Regional Development, Territories and Local Government, the Hon. Dr John McVeigh MP, wrote to the Committee requesting that it inquire into Canberra's national institutions, and proposing terms of reference for such an inquiry. On 26 March 2018, the Committee adopted the terms of reference referred by the Minister and opened its inquiry.

4 Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit, *Report 413: the efficiency dividend and small agencies: size does matter*, December 2008, Canberra, p. 56.

5 Mr Harold Mitchell, *Building Support: Report of the Review of Private Sector Support for the Arts in Australia*, October 2011.

6 Australian National Audit Office, 'Performance audit reports', <https://www.anao.gov.au/pubs/performance-audit>, viewed on 22 January 2019.

- 1.7 The inquiry was advertised for public submissions on 26 March 2018. Submissions were invited from government departments with national institutions within their portfolio, some of the contributors to previous inquiries, and other relevant stakeholders.
- 1.8 The Committee received 83 submissions and 14 supplementary submissions, which are listed in Appendix A. The Committee also received 8 exhibits, which are listed in Appendix C.
- 1.9 The Committee held five public hearings in Canberra between June and December 2018, at which it heard from a range of national institutions based in Canberra, as well as other relevant people and organisations. The public hearings held and witnesses heard are listed in Appendix B.
- 1.10 The Committee also undertook a site visit to the collection and exhibition facilities of a number of institutions in Canberra, on 14 September 2018, and held a private briefing with the ANAO in November 2018.
- 1.11 The Committee expresses its appreciation to all those who contributed to the inquiry.

Structure of the report

- 1.12 The report is structured as follows.
 - Chapter 1 (this chapter) briefly outlines background to the inquiry, and the conduct and scope of the inquiry.
 - Chapter 2 discusses the value of Canberra's national institutions, including in collecting and preserving Australia's culture and history, generating revenue for Canberra and the nation, and supporting education and research.
 - Chapter 3 examines the way the national institutions engage with the public, both within Canberra and beyond. In particular, the chapter discusses how public expectations are changing, including the growing emphasis on digital technologies. The chapter also discusses the role these institutions play in education, and their outreach beyond Canberra.
 - Chapter 4 examines the governance frameworks and processes for the national institutions, as well as processes and proposals for establishing new national institutions in Canberra.
 - Chapter 5 considers current challenges to resourcing faced by Canberra's national institutions, and how this affects their ability to meet their responsibilities now and into the future. The chapter also

discusses attracting non-government sources of revenue such as private sector and philanthropic support.

Scope of the inquiry

- 1.13 The Committee acknowledges that the term 'Canberra's national institutions' differs from pre-existing terminology used in other contexts and reports, such as 'National Cultural Institutions' and 'National Collecting Institutions'.
- 1.14 The Department of Communications and the Arts identifies the following Canberra-based institutions as National Cultural Institutions:
- the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House;
 - the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia;
 - the National Gallery of Australia;
 - the National Library of Australia;
 - the National Museum of Australia; and
 - the National Portrait Gallery.⁷
- 1.15 The National Cultural Institutions also include several institutions not located in Canberra: the Australian National Maritime Museum; Bundanon Trust; Australia Council for the Arts; Australian Film, Television and Radio School; and Screen Australia.
- 1.16 The 'National Collecting Institutions' comprise eight entities responsible for Australia's national collections of heritage and cultural assets. The six Canberra-based National Cultural Institutions listed at paragraph 1.14 are National Collecting Institutions, along with:
- the National Archives of Australia; and
 - the Australian War Memorial.⁸
- 1.17 Consistent with its terms of reference, the Committee focused its examination on institutions based in Canberra. Moreover, the Committee considered that the term 'national institutions' should extend beyond the cultural and collecting institutions, to encompass other institutions of a national character located in Canberra and overseen by a Commonwealth

7 Department of Communications and the Arts, 'Impact of our National Cultural Institutions', 2018, <https://www.arts.gov.au/what-we-do/museums-libraries-and-galleries/impact-our-national-cultural-institutions>, viewed 3 September 2018.

8 See Australian National Audit Office, *Management of the National Collections*, Report 46 of 2017-2018, June 2018, Table 1.1.

Government agency, which also contribute to Canberra's role in preserving, expressing and promoting Australia's national identity.

1.18 Therefore, in addition to the Canberra-based National Cultural Institutions and National Collecting Institutions listed in paragraphs 1.14 and 1.16 above, the Committee examined evidence from and in relation to the following institutions, considered by it to be national institutions:

- the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies;
- the Australian National Botanic Gardens;
- the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) Discovery Centre;
- the High Court of Australia;
- Parliament House;
- the National Electoral Education Centre;
- Questacon – The National Science and Technology Centre; and
- the Australian Institute of Sport.

1.19 Some evidence given to the inquiry noted that the term 'Canberra's national institutions' could be interpreted broadly to include a vast range of entities,⁹ with many submissions suggesting that additional sites could be included within the definition.¹⁰

1.20 The Committee also received evidence from a number of organisations that wished to be considered national institutions, and others proposing the establishment of new national institutions. Chapter 4 of this report considers the establishment of new national institutions.

9 For example: H C Burmester, *Submission 3*, pp. [1-2]; Lake Burley Griffin Guardians Incorporated, *Submission 45*, pp. 1-3.

10 For example: H C Burmester, *Submission 3*, pp. [1-2]; Mr Brendon Kelson, *Submission 18*, p. [1]; Science and Technology Australia, *Submission 38*, p. 3; Ms Marianne Albury-Colless, *Submission 53*, p. [1]; Meredith Hinchliffe, Ms Carolyn Forster OAM and Ms Sandy Forbes, *Submission 56*, p. 1; Shane Rattenbury MLA and Caroline Le Couteur MLA, *Submission 60*, p. 1.

The shared value of national institutions

- 2.1 Globally, institutions such as museums, libraries, galleries and memorials play an important role in conserving, interpreting and facilitating engagement with information and artefacts of cultural, scientific and historical importance.¹ They also contribute to the economy through direct employment and expenditure, as well as tourism.
- 2.2 The Museum of Australian Democracy (MoAD) at Old Parliament House was one of many participants in the inquiry who described the ‘unseen’ aspects of value brought by Canberra’s national institutions:
- ... the many tens of thousands of volunteer hours, the trickle down impacts of boosted tourism, the long-term impacts on enhanced citizenship from education programs, the cultural diplomacy that draws us together.²
- 2.3 This chapter considers how national institutions located in Canberra benefit Australian society. This includes their role in the preservation and promotion of Australia’s history, culture and national identity as well as contribution to the economy. The chapter will also consider how national institutions contribute to Australia’s relations with other nations.

Preserving and presenting our history and culture

- 2.4 As noted in chapter 1, several national institutions located in Canberra are home to significant collections of a range of material. This includes art,
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1 Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, *Submission 37*, p. [1].

2 Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, *Submission 37*, p. [1]. See also Mr Gordon Ramsay MLA, Minister for the Arts and Community Events, ACT Government, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 8; Mr Neil Hermes, *Submission 9*, p. [3].

literature, historical and social material, objects relating to military history, archives, and film and sound recordings.

- 2.5 Many of the national institutions, including the National Collecting Institutions, are established under legislation which mandates them to develop, maintain and provide access to such collections.³
- 2.6 Many inquiry participants emphasised that the collections of the institutions have 'intrinsic value' and make a positive contribution to the preservation and promotion of Australia's cultural history and national identity.⁴ By preserving and providing access to material relating to Australia's political, social and cultural history, national institutions play an important role in capturing various aspects of Australia's history.
- 2.7 The Department of Communications and the Arts (DCA) described the national institutions as 'the keepers of the nation's cultural heritage. They're the keepers of our history, of our art and of our heritage assets'.⁵
- 2.8 One example was provided by the National Gallery of Australia (NGA), who told the Committee that it held by far the largest fine art collection in Australia, including 'the largest and best Indigenous [art] collection in the world', a major international collection and growing contemporary collection.⁶
- 2.9 The National Museum of Australia (NMA) submitted that its collection, along with those of the other national institutions, 'together comprise a remarkable and peerless window into the nation's culture and society'.⁷
- 2.10 Mr Jan Müller, Chief Executive Officer of the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia (NFSA), described the institutions' collective value this way:

We're all keeping memories alive. That's our basic rule. The history of a country – our media history and cultural history – can only be told by the records that are used or preserved. So the preservation and sharing of what has been preserved is our main task, which means that together we tell the whole story. That's

3 Meredith Hinchliffe, Ms Carolyn Forster OAM and Ms Sandy Forbes, *Submission 56*, p. 1. Issues relating to legislation governing national institutions are discussed further in chapter 4.

4 For example: GLAM Peak, *Submission 34*, p. 3; Council of Australasian Museum Directors, *Submission 43*, pp. [1-3]; and Dr Stephen Arnott, PSM, First Assistant Secretary, Arts Division, Department of Communications and the Arts, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 1.

5 Dr Stephen Arnott PSM, First Assistant Secretary, Arts Division, Department of Communications and the Arts, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 1.

6 Mr Gerard Vaughan AM, Director, National Gallery of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, 22 June 2018, pp. 47-48.

7 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 3.

what we should do, and that's what we do in partnership as much as possible.⁸

- 2.11 Evidence given to the Committee further highlighted that national institutions play an integral role in Australian society not only by accumulating and maintaining these collections, but crucially, by providing public access to them. The DCA noted that 'there is an obligation on our institutions to ensure that their cultural assets and their collections are available and reach out to everyone around the country'.⁹
- 2.12 The broad range of national institutions located in Canberra allows citizens to engage with various aspects of Australian history. For example, MoAD tells the 'story of Australia's journey from federation to becoming one of the world's most vibrant and multicultural democratic nations'.¹⁰
- 2.13 The National Archives of Australia (NAA) holds all of the records of the Commonwealth accumulated since Federation.¹¹ By preserving and providing access to records of all government entities, including those that were previously classified, the Archives holds Australian governments accountable to the people they serve.¹²
- 2.14 Science & Technology Australia noted that as places of memory, the institutions also provide the public opportunities to access and explore the 'stories that have shaped our communities, our nation, and our world'.¹³
- 2.15 The national institutions as a collective play an important role in collecting, preserving and providing access to Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, history and heritage. For example the NAA is home to the:
- ...documentation of the administration of Indigenous people on settlements and missions, their rations and entitlements, housing, employment, their movement, marriage, eligibility and permissions...¹⁴
- 2.16 In particular, the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) is home to 'the world's single most significant

8 Mr Jan Müller, Chief Executive Officer, National Film and Sound Archive of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 17.

9 Dr Stephen Arnott PSM, First Assistant Secretary, Arts Division, Department of Communications and the Arts, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 2.

10 Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, *Submission 37*, p. [2].

11 National Archives of Australia, *Submission 54*, p. 3.

12 National Archives of Australia, *Submission 54*, p. 3.

13 Science & Technology Australia, *Submission 38*, p. 2.

14 Ms Phyllis Williams, Regional Manager, North, National Archives of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 15.

and best contextualised collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, history and heritage'.¹⁵ The Institute's Chief Executive Officer, Mr Craig Ritchie, stressed that AIATSIS provides a significant opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to curate their own stories to the nation, and that this cannot 'be replicated by other institutions'.¹⁶

Expressing and exploring our national identity

2.17 By preserving and providing access to documents and artefacts recording Australia's political, social and cultural history, many inquiry participants argued that national institutions help to cultivate a sense of personal and national identity.¹⁷ The ACT Minister for the Arts and Community Events, Mr Gordon Ramsay MLA, observed that the national institutions are 'a representation of what it is to be Australian' and 'tell the stories of where we came from, who we are and who we hope to be'.¹⁸

2.18 Evidence to the Committee suggested that connecting people to the collections of these institutions has the potential to create a stronger society, with citizens that are engaged and have a sense of national identity.¹⁹ The Director-General of the NAA, Mr David Fricker, expressed the view that:

... if you want to have a resilient and strong society, you need a cultural prosperity. People need to feel a sense of belonging, they need to understand why and how they got to be where they are today and they need to be able to associate themselves with the future of their country.²⁰

2.19 The NMA submitted that:

15 Mr Craig Ritchie, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 56.

16 Mr Craig Ritchie, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 59.

17 Mr Brendon Kelson, *Submission 18*, p. [1]; Combined Community Councils of the Australian Capital Territory, *Submission 42*, p. 1; Council of Australasian Museum Directors, *Submission 43*, pp. [1-3]; The Hon. Dr Brendan Nelson, Director, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 38.

18 Mr Gordon Ramsay MLA, Minister for the Arts and Community Events, ACT Government, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 8.

19 For example: Mr David Fricker, Director-General, National Archives of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 16; and Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Director-General, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 17.

20 Mr David Fricker, Director-General, National Archives of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 16.

The Museum's National Historical Collection, and indeed all national collections, are fundamental to our self-understanding as a people and a society. In a world where global forces are increasingly experienced and felt at a local level, it is a matter of national interest to provide clear and accessible opportunities for all people in this country to develop a mature sense of what it means to be Australian. Knowing who we are, and who we can be, depends on us having a solid appreciation of all that has gone before.²¹

- 2.20 The Hon. Dr Brendan Nelson, Director of the Australian War Memorial (AWM), said that:

These institutions are who we are – to understand what it means to be in Australia and to have a greater belief in ourselves. We are Australians defined less by our Constitution...than we are by our values and our beliefs, and the way [we] relate to one another and see our place in the world. We are shaped most by our triumphs and our failures, our heroes and villains, the way as a people we face adversity and how we will face the inevitable adversities that are coming.²²

- 2.21 The Committee heard that the NAA's collection holds personal information relating to almost every Australian citizen and resident. This allows individuals to 'develop a deeper understanding of their own identity and their part in the history of this nation'.²³

- 2.22 Regional Manager of the NAA, Ms Phyllis Williams, reflected on the power of national institutions, the Archives in particular, to connect an individual to their own story, when she noted her own connection to the collection. She stated that:

The stories, images, voices and fingerprints of my mother and father and their families and other families are in the collections of the National Archives of Australia. They are being safeguarded and shared and made accessible for my children and our future generations of Australians.²⁴

- 2.23 The Committee was told that the institutions play an important role in exposing audiences to material that not only resounds with them, but also

21 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 3.

22 The Hon. Dr Brendan Nelson, Director, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 38.

23 National Archives of Australia, *Submission 54*, p. 3.

24 Ms Phyllis Williams, Regional Manager, North, National Archives of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 15.

challenges them.²⁵ In particular, inquiry participants stressed the importance of representing both positive and negative aspects of Australian history and culture.²⁶ Mr Fricker said that providing audiences with the opportunity to identify things they don't like in their history can provide audiences with 'a channel to correct [these] ... and to celebrate the things they do like'.²⁷

- 2.24 Some inquiry participants raised concerns that without widespread access to Canberra's national institutions, and more broadly institutions across Australia, there is a risk that citizens will become less engaged with Australia's history and cultural identity. The Director-General of the National Library of Australia (NLA), Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, observed that there may already be a 'sense of disengagement from our complex national history'.²⁸
- 2.25 Dr Mathew Trinca, Director of the National Museum of Australia, noted the importance of a sense of belonging in the current 'global flow of ideas and the discourses that are available now through the internet'.²⁹
- 2.26 Mr Fricker noted the importance of trusted national institutions in providing authentic and reliable information amid concern about 'inauthentic' sources that may be 'deliberately promoted by actors without the interests of Australia at heart'.³⁰
- 2.27 To counter these concerns, inquiry participants further emphasised the importance of ensuring that people have trusted institutions with which they can engage. Inquiry participants stressed that the institutions must reflect the stories of all Australians to ensure that everyone is able to identify and connect the collections to their personal story, their community story and their national story.³¹

25 For example: The Hon. Dr Brendan Nelson, Director, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 38; and Dr Mathew Trinca, Director, National Museum of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 52.

26 For example: Mr David Fricker, Director-General, National Archives of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, pp. 16-17; and Dr Mathew Trinca, Director, National Museum of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 52.

27 Mr David Fricker, Director-General, National Archives of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 17.

28 Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Director-General, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 17.

29 Dr Mathew Trinca, Director, National Museum of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 49.

30 Mr David Fricker, Director-General, National Archives of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 17.

31 Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Director-General, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 17; and Dr Stephen Arnott, PSM, First Assistant Secretary, Arts

2.28 NFSA CEO Mr Jan Müller commented that:

It's not just the preservation of history. If you ask us what would happen to the country without that preservation, it would probably be like being a country with Alzheimer's, because we tend to forget what we are if we don't preserve our records. But there is also an obligation towards the future. That means that we're all collaboratively thinking about what the heritage of the future would be and how it will be preserved but also how it will be used by future generations...³²

2.29 In this respect, a number of submitters and witnesses stressed the importance of comprehensive representation of Australians in the collections, exhibitions and programs of national institutions, particularly in relation to Australia's Indigenous and multicultural communities. Dr Ayres said that inclusivity in the collections of national institutions helps to 'strengthen [a] sense of cultural prosperity and effective citizenship'.³³ This issue is discussed further in chapter 3.

2.30 Mr Craig Ritchie of AIATSIS advised that its collection helps to 'promote better knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia and, as a national institution, to speak to our sense of national identity from the perspective of first Australians'.³⁴

Economic value

2.31 The Committee received evidence about the important contribution national institutions make to the Australian, and in particular the ACT's, economy. The economic benefits of national institutions derive largely from tourism, but the institutions also contribute to the ACT economy through direct employment and expenditure.³⁵

Division, Department of Communications and the Arts, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 1.

32 Mr Jan Müller, Chief Executive Officer, National Film and Sound Archive of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 17.

33 Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Director-General, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 17.

34 Mr Craig Ritchie, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 56.

35 Mr Gordon Ramsay MLA, Minister for the Arts and Community Events, ACT Government, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 8.

Tourism

- 2.32 Many submitters and witnesses emphasised that the national institutions are a major drawcard for both international and domestic travellers.³⁶
- 2.33 The ACT Government submitted that national cultural institutions form an integral part of the Canberra visitor experience and have contributed to a recent increase in overnight visitors to the capital.³⁷ In 2017, Canberra had a record breaking 2.75 million domestic overnight visitors and 243 000 international visitors.³⁸ This was supported by Museums Galleries Australia who noted that Canberra's recent tourism boom 'was driven significantly by the attractions of the iconic national institutions'.³⁹
- 2.34 More broadly, the Canberra Business Chamber submitted that in Australia the visitor economy is growing at a much faster rate than the rest of the economy.⁴⁰ The Chamber stated that in 2016-17, tourism Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased by 4.9 per cent compared to 2 per cent real GDP economy wide, and that this has driven growth in jobs and export earnings. In addition, the Chamber pointed out the flow-on implications for government revenue:
- ... continued growth in visitor numbers will also boost revenue collection for the Government producing substantial increases in collections of ticket tax (passenger movement charge), boosting GST collection and building on the more than \$8 billion in tax already contributed by the sector.⁴¹
- 2.35 Some submitters further observed that the introduction of regular international flights to Canberra has created opportunities for the national institutions to attract new and larger tourist markets from places like Singapore and New Zealand.⁴²

Other economic benefits

- 2.36 The ACT Government stated that Canberra's national institutions also contribute to the ACT economy via direct employment.⁴³ In 2017-18 the

36 For example: ACT Government, *Submission 69*, p. 1; Museums Galleries Australia, *Submission 39*, p. 2; Canberra Business Chamber, *Submission 58*, p. 5; and Mr Neil Hermes, *Submission 9*, p. [3].

37 ACT Government, *Submission 69*, p. 1.

38 ACT Government, *Submission 69*, p. 1.

39 Museums Galleries Australia, *Submission 39*, p. 2.

40 Canberra Business Chamber, *Submission 58*, p. 5.

41 Canberra Business Chamber, *Submission 58*, p. 5.

42 For example: ACT Government, *Submission 69*, pp. 3-4; and Ms Kate Driver, Acting Director, Questacon, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra 22 June 2018, p. 36.

43 ACT Government, *Submission 69*, p. 9.

AWM provided an average of 283 jobs.⁴⁴ During the same period, the NGA employed an average of 217 staff, while the NLA employed 383 staff.⁴⁵ In particular, the national institutions provide employment to staff with specialised knowledge and skills to ensure the survival of collections.⁴⁶ This includes curators and researchers as well as people trained in conserving specific materials such as paper, photographs, metals and ethnographic objects.⁴⁷ Staffing issues are discussed in further detail in chapter 5.

- 2.37 Institutions also pointed out their contribution to Australia's 'knowledge economy' in a range of ways, including supporting this country's creative and scientific industries and exports. The NMA described the contribution of the national institutions' collections and programs as 'central to building an enterprising and successful knowledge economy in the 21st century'.⁴⁸

Enhancing Australia's international relations

- 2.38 As an integral part of the Canberra visitor experience, national institutions have the potential to further international audiences' understanding of and trust in Australia. The Combined Community Councils of the ACT observed that the national institutions are visited by international tourists and foreign dignitaries, and can contribute to their overall impressions of Australia.⁴⁹ Moreover, some of the institutions participate in international touring programs, and loan material from their collections to overseas institutions.⁵⁰
- 2.39 Evidence emphasised the role Canberra-based national institutions also play in reaching out and collaborating with Australia's Asia-Pacific neighbours. For example, the NLA supports the collection of print and

44 Australian War Memorial, *Submission 32*, p. 11.

45 Community and Public Sector Union, *Submission 12*, p. 11.

46 For example: Council of Australasian Museum Directors, *Submission 43*, p. [7]; Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material Inc., *Submission 46*, p. [2]; and Ms Cassandra O'Hare, Section Secretary for the national Cultural Institutions, Community and Public Sector Union, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 10.

47 Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material Inc, *Submission 46*, p. [2]; and Heritage, Museums and Conservation program in the Faculty of Arts and Design, University of Canberra, *Submission 23*, p. [2].

48 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 3.

49 Combined Community Councils of the Australian Capital Territory, *Submission 42*, p. 1.

50 For example: National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 1; and Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, p. 9.

electronic resources in Asia and the Pacific, by maintaining an office in Jakarta and through involvement with the Internet Archive and the *Archive-It* initiative.⁵¹

- 2.40 Evidence to the Committee also highlighted that some of the institutions based in Canberra have partnered with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) to deliver programs internationally. For example, in partnership with DFAT, the NMA tours a series of graphic panel displays to diplomatic missions abroad.⁵² Additionally, DFAT and the National Electoral Education Centre (NEEC) provided support in the development of an Electoral Education Centre in Kathmandu, Nepal, in 2012, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme.⁵³
- 2.41 The Department of Industry, Innovation and Science (DIIS) stated that 'Questacon is a significant cultural diplomacy asset for Australia'.⁵⁴ The Department submitted that:
- Questacon was established as a Joint Australia-Japan Bicentennial project and from that time has enjoyed strong and cordial relationships with Japanese government agencies and science centres. Questacon enjoys excellent relationships with Canberra's diplomatic community and hosts many events with Embassies and High Commissions, as well as international delegations and VIP Visits.⁵⁵
- 2.42 Questacon has also delivered travelling exhibitions to Brunei, Thailand, South Korea, New Zealand, Vietnam, Abu Dhabi (UAE), Qatar, Hawaii (USA), Taiwan and China.⁵⁶ This includes exhibitions modelled on the *Shell Questacon Science Circus*.⁵⁷

51 Australian Library and Information Association, *Submission 6*, p. 3.

52 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 1.

53 Mr Tom Rogers, Electoral Commissioner, Australian Electoral Commission, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 21 and 23.

54 Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, p. 12.

55 Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, p. 12.

56 Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, p. 9.

57 Questacon, 'Encore!', <https://www.questacon.edu.au/together-engaging-a-nation/encore>, viewed 7 January 2019.

Education and research

School visits and programs

- 2.43 The educational value of Canberra’s national institutions, for school and tertiary students and the broader public, and the particular significance of school visits to the work of the institutions, was a major theme in evidence given to the inquiry.
- 2.44 Annually, more than 162 000 school aged children from all over Australia travel to Canberra to learn about civics, citizenship, democracy, history, science and art.⁵⁸ This complements the national curriculum and provides students with a unique opportunity to engage with and learn about the national institutions. The Committee was told that this opportunity helps students to better understand their place in Australian society.⁵⁹
- 2.45 In particular, the opportunity to visit the national institutions based in Canberra supports students’ participation in Australian democracy, through programs provided by the MoAD, the NEEC and the Parliamentary Education Office. Programs offered by MoAD are also open to the general public, encouraging greater understanding of democracy in the wider population.
- 2.46 Other institutions also emphasised the educational value of their collections and programs, including in art, history and science. Ms Mary Mulcahy from the CSIRO spoke about the qualitative effect of its education programs in the scientific sphere:
- ... we can show that this has an impact – that students are inspired, that teachers feel more capable and understand how that science is applied in the real world ... Students can actually see scientists. They see the research. They can connect and therefore see that there’s a possibility of a career. And they see how what they’re learning in the classroom is applied in the real world.⁶⁰
- 2.47 For school students who are unable to visit Canberra, opportunities also exist to access several national institutions’ programs within their own classrooms.
- 2.48 For example, the AWM offers schools and community groups across Australia the opportunity to borrow themed boxes covering conflicts from

58 Mr Gordon Ramsay MLA, Minister for the Arts and Community Events, ACT Government, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra 22 June 2018, p. 8.

59 National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Submission 26*, p. 4.

60 Ms Mary Mulcahy, Director, Education and Outreach, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 33.

the First World War until today, through its 'Memorial Box program'.⁶¹ Another example is the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation's (CSIRO) Discovery Centre, which hosts live linkups to the scientific research vessel, the *RV Investigator*.⁶² This provides both students and teachers with the opportunity to ask questions about the type of research being carried out on board the ship. The NEEC provides schools with the material to conduct their own elections through the *Get Voting* program. The program teaches students about electoral processes through participation. In 2017, the centre provided approximately 250 schools throughout Australia with *Get Voting* material.⁶³

- 2.49 The National Capital Educational Tourism Project advised that national institutions enrich students' learning experience by supporting the professional development of teachers as well. Many institutions provide content and resources that 'assist teachers in delivering educational experiences related to fields of study in which they are less confident or knowledgeable'.⁶⁴
- 2.50 Challenges for national institutions in relation to school visits and educational programs are discussed in further detail in chapter 3.

Higher education and research

- 2.51 Many of the national institutions also collaborate with universities to provide tertiary students with specialised training. For example, students in the Heritage, Museums and Conservation program in the Faculty of Arts and Design at the University of Canberra participate in 'site visits and tours, work integrated learning, internships and higher degree research opportunities' at some of the national institutions.⁶⁵ Similarly, Questacon recruits graduate students from scientific disciplines across Australia to provide presentations to towns and schools across regional Australia as parts of the *Shell Questacon Science Circus*.⁶⁶ This not only allows Questacon to reach students in regional locations across Australia, but provides university students with the opportunity to gain on the job experience relevant to their degree.

61 Australian War Memorial *Submission 32*, p. 7.

62 Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, pp. 6-7.

63 Mr Tom Rogers, Electoral Commissioner, Australian Electoral Commission, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 21.

64 National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Submission 26*, p. 4.

65 Heritage, Museums and Conservation program in the Faculty of Arts and Design, University of Canberra, *Submission 23*, p. [1].

66 Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, p. 10.

- 2.52 More broadly, the Committee was advised by Science & Technology Australia that the national institutions enable researchers across disciplines to ‘draw from a wide range of valuable and nationally significant resources, data and specimens.’⁶⁷ The Australian Historical Association submitted that the NAA and NLA provide researchers with access to a large range of historical documents.⁶⁸
- 2.53 The Australian Academy of the Humanities advised that there is a strong history of collaboration between galleries, libraries, archives and museums and the research sector in Australia, with many of the institutions supporting Australian Research Council (ARC) funded projects. Between 2001 and 2018 there were 30 ARC funded projects with a Canberra-based museum as a participating institute. Over the same period the NLA was a participating institute in over 40 ARC funded projects, and collaborated on projects involving 16 Australian universities in each state and territory.⁶⁹

Building Australia’s scientific capability

- 2.54 Evidence to the Committee highlighted that national institutions add value to Australian society by engaging the community with science and technology, and developing the nation’s scientific capability and skills.
- 2.55 In particular, DIIS noted that Questacon and the CSIRO Discovery Centre provide formal and informal opportunities for community engagement and education in science and technology.⁷⁰ The Department emphasised that this is consistent with the National Science Statement, which sets out the Australian Government’s ‘vision for an Australian society engaged in and enriched by science’.⁷¹
- 2.56 These institutions assist in supporting pride in Australian scientific achievements by introducing visitors to Canberra to Australian discoveries and scientific output.⁷² Some submitters emphasised that Questacon also plays a significant role in sharing its experience and knowledge with regional and remote communities across Australia.⁷³ This helps to ensure that appreciation and understanding of science,

67 Science & Technology Australia, *Submission 38*, p. 2.

68 Australian Historical Association, *Submission 35*, p. [1].

69 Australian Academy of the Humanities, *Submission 44*, p. 2.

70 Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, pp. 6-7.

71 Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, p. 3.

72 Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, pp. 6-7.

73 For example: Science Space, *Submission 49*; Australasian Science and Technology Engagement Network, *Submission 50*; and Australian Science Teachers Association, *Submission 33*.

technology, engineering and mathematics is encouraged throughout Australia.

Committee comment

- 2.57 Describing their value to the Committee, national institutions emphasised their preservation and promotion of Australia's cultural, social and political history, and the importance of these collections to our national identity. The institutions also highlighted their role in providing national and international audiences with access to and a greater understanding of Australian history and culture.
- 2.58 It was evident to the Committee, however, that Canberra's national institutions struggled to take the further step to articulating clearly how their work provided a direct benefit to the people of Australia, beyond the metrics of visitor numbers and economic gains. While rightly proud to state that they tell Australia's story, national institutions also need to justify *why* that story needs to be told, and *how* that adds value to the nation.
- 2.59 In the Committee's view, the strategic value of Canberra's national institutions lies in seeing themselves as one collective whole, and connecting the collections, exhibitions and programs of that whole directly to the people of Australia. It is giving Australia's people not just an understanding of our history, democracy, culture, art and achievements, but a sense of connection to that national picture. It is ensuring that all Australians identify their place in, feel part of, and are proud of, the story of Australia as a modern, successful and vibrant nation.
- 2.60 In the Committee's view, the lack of a shared vision among Canberra's national institutions about the role they play in developing that national cohesion and shared pride in Australia's story has been a key cause of their inability to attract increased funding during a constrained budget period.
- 2.61 The Committee regards it as essential that Canberra's national institutions articulate a clearer, and – importantly – collective understanding of their strategic value. They should understand themselves not as a set of separate and competing entities, but as a cohesive whole, with the core objective of connecting Australians to their national story. Their collective articulation of purpose and strategic impact should constitute the starting point for everything they do, and aspire to do.

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that Canberra’s national institutions develop and articulate a shared narrative that directly connects them with Australia’s story. That expression of shared value should underpin the work of all of the national institutions, individually and in collaboration.

- 2.62 The Committee believes that ensuring access by all Australians to Canberra’s national institutions should be a key priority. The institutions help connect citizens to a sense of identity and provide vital information about Australia’s history, culture and democratic process. Moreover, while much of the value of these institutions is unseen, they provide important benefits to both Canberra and the nation in a range of other ways including revenue from tourism, supporting education and contributing to cultural diplomacy.
- 2.63 Noting their significant strategic value, the Committee is concerned that Canberra’s national institutions must continue to be adequately supported and resourced to carry out their core functions. The intrinsic value of these institutions beyond quantitative measures needs to be considered, to ensure there is a holistic and long-term approach enabling them not just to survive, but to grow and evolve with the nation.
- 2.64 More detailed discussion about public engagement, governance and resourcing of the institutions is provided in the following chapters.

Public engagement

- 3.1 Public expectations, and the manner in which the public engages with Canberra’s national institutions, have evolved. This is in part due to broader shifts in social, political and cultural norms, along with major technological change. People visiting and engaging with the national institutions now want to experience and participate in their collections and offerings, rather than simply consume information.¹ As a result, some institutions have prioritised new initiatives to improve the visitor experience, placing citizens and communities at the centre of the process.² Examples of such initiatives include collaborating with audiences to create new content, better serving the physical needs of visitors, and creating dedicated galleries and ‘art play’ space for children, families and young people.
- 3.2 At the same time, many national institutions have to balance audience engagement with other pressures including resourcing, budget constraints, individual mandates to grow collections and the need to provide digitised content. Evidence to the Committee suggested that these demands have already resulted in some institutions reducing opening hours or closing exhibition spaces.³ Some expressed concern that in the current climate, too much emphasis on public outreach puts core functions at risk.⁴
- 3.3 This chapter reviews how national institutions engage with the public. It examines how the institutions market themselves, the use of digital

1 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 2.

2 Museums Galleries Australia, *Submission 39*, p. 6.

3 For example: Friends of the National Film and Sound Archive Inc., *Submission 13*, p. 5; and Dr Andrew Pike, *Submission 24*, p. [1].

4 For example: Honest History, *Submission 14*, p. 3.

technology, how the institutions can better engage under-represented sectors of Australian society and the use of special access programs for particular community groups. The chapter will also consider education programs conducted for school students, and how national institutions can better engage Australians outside of Canberra.

Marketing Canberra's national institutions

3.4 To some extent, many institutions have been able to rely on their national status, location in the capital and iconic architecture to attract visitors. In general, galleries, libraries, archives and museums 'occupy a unique role in society with high degrees of public trust and confidence in their collective institutional remit'.⁵ They are often in central locations and are highly recognisable. Evidence to the Committee recognised that the buildings which house some national institutions represent some of Canberra's most significant architectural landmarks.⁶ It was argued that these buildings contribute significantly to some institutions' brand recognition. For example, Ms Marianne Albury-Colless reflected that:

For visitors to Canberra the brand for our national institutions is largely represented by their very presence. Their presence is a physical experience viewed from various vantage points across Lake Burley Griffin - an impressive landscape in almost every direction.⁷

3.5 Many national institutions are instantly recognisable. Some of the institutions have even incorporated building graphics into their logos as part of their marketing strategies.⁸ The Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS) noted, for example, that Parliament House products and marketing feature the 'iconic flag mast' of Parliament House.⁹ However, the Department conceded that other entities across Canberra incorporate the flag mast in their branding as it has become 'the instantly recognisable symbol for the nation's capital'.¹⁰ The Department suggested that too much reliance on the iconic status of the building to draw visitors had

5 Australian Academy of the Humanities, *Submission 44*, p. 4.

6 For example: Australian Library and Information Association, *Submission 6*, p. 1; National Library of Australia, *Submission 41*, p. 1.

7 Ms Marianne Albury-Colless, *Submission 53*, p. [2].

8 Australian Library and Information Association, *Submission 6*, p. 1.

9 Department of Parliamentary Services, *Submission 76*, p. 2.

10 Department of Parliamentary Services, *Submission 76*, p. 1.

resulted in displays in public areas of Parliament House having changed little since the building was opened.¹¹

- 3.6 It was also noted, however, that some smaller institutions, and those located away from Canberra's Parliamentary Zone¹² and Lake Burley Griffin, could not rely on their central location and iconic buildings to attract recognition and visitors in the same way. For example, while the National Film and Sound Archive (NFSA) is housed in an iconic building, it submitted that relocating to Acton Peninsula would help increase its national profile as well as connections with other national collecting institutions.¹³
- 3.7 Moreover, while national institutions generally receive high levels of public trust and confidence, the Committee was advised that it varies between the different institutions. For example, the Committee was advised that audiences familiar with the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) 'view the brand as being an extremely trustworthy, credible and reliable source of information'.¹⁴ In contrast, submitters to the committee argued that ongoing funding pressures have significantly affected the brand of other institutions.¹⁵ The National Gallery of Australia (NGA) contended that the Australian Government's efficiency dividend has had a 'profoundly negative impact' on its brand perception.¹⁶ Similarly, the Committee was advised that the inability of the National Archives of Australia (NAA) to provide access to previously unexamined 'open period' documents in a timely manner¹⁷ has had an 'adverse impact on the brand of the Archives'.¹⁸
- 3.8 In keeping with a changing world, national institutions are increasingly using online marketing tools to raise awareness of their work and activities. For example, the Australian National Botanic Gardens (ANBG)

11 Department of Parliamentary Services, *Submission 76*, p. 2.

12 The Parliamentary Zone, often referred to as the 'parliamentary triangle', is established by the *Parliament Act 1974* (Cth) and comprises the area bounded by the southern edge of Lake Burley Griffin, Kings Avenue, State Circle and Commonwealth Avenue. Parliament House and eight other national institutions are located within the Zone.

13 National Film and Sound Archive, *Submission 28*, p. 9.

14 Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Digital Activation Research and Insights Report*, February 2015, as quoted in: Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Submission 66*, p. 5.

15 For example: Australian Historical Association, *Submission 35*, p. [1]; and National Gallery of Australia, *Submission 47*, p. 2.

16 National Gallery of Australia, *Submission 47*, p. 2.

17 Professor Frank Bongiorno, *Submission 22*, p. 1.

18 Australian Historical Association, *Submission 35*, p. [2].

told the Committee that it predominantly uses online marketing tools to promote the Gardens as a visitor destination and to advertise activities.¹⁹ The National Library of Australia (NLA) said that it 'has invested strongly in its world-leading digital platforms, ensuring that [its] local brand translates to a strong national brand and online presence'.²⁰ The NLA said that this investment had increased its brand recognition, noting that in June 2017, 83 per cent of Australians were aware of the Library, compared to only 52 per cent in 2004.²¹

- 3.9 Major exhibitions and events also play a significant role in marketing for some larger institutions. Mr David Thurrowgood suggested that the branding of national institutions was built around travelling and temporary exhibitions, and he argued that the institutions may instead benefit from branding themselves as standalone and valuable entities.²² The NGA reflected that it has traditionally focused its marketing and branding on major-income-earning 'blockbuster' exhibitions.²³ However, the NGA told the Committee that some of its recent marketing efforts have also been directed at internal, un-ticketed exhibitions. The NGA highlighted that it has collaborated with other organisations to 'assist in elevating messages and supporting campaigns to reach a broader audience'.²⁴

Visitor data

- 3.10 One indicator of the effectiveness of national institutions' marketing is the number of visitors received and visitors' satisfaction with the experience. While some of the institutions reported increased visitor numbers and high visitor experience ratings through internal surveys and travel websites such as *TripAdvisor*,²⁵ the Committee received evidence that others were suffering from decreased visitation and increased negative visitor feedback.²⁶
- 3.11 Visitor numbers for some national institutions continue to grow. For example, Questacon has had significant growth in visitor numbers over

19 Australian National Botanic Gardens, *Submission 15*, p. 10.

20 National Library of Australia, *Submission 41*, p. 1.

21 National Library of Australia, *Submission 41*, p. 1.

22 Mr David Thurrowgood, *Submission 61*, p. 2.

23 National Gallery of Australia, *Submission 47*, p. 3.

24 National Gallery of Australia, *Submission 47*, p. 2.

25 For example: Australian War Memorial, *Submission 32*, p. 3; and Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, p. 5.

26 For example: Friends of the National Film and Sound Archive Inc., *Submission 13*, p. 5.

the past decade,²⁷ with attendance at its Centres in Canberra rising to 511 000 visitors in 2016-17.²⁸ A number of submitters attributed this to Questacon's effective brand as a national and international leader in the field of science communication. Since 2003, Questacon has also won six prestigious awards and reported a visitor satisfaction rating of 93 per cent.²⁹

- 3.12 The NGA told the committee that its visitor numbers had increased in the last three years from around 630 000 to approximately 900 000 per year.³⁰
- 3.13 On the other hand, not all of Canberra's national institutions are as well known or patronised. In particular, AIATSIS, which has historically served the academic and research community, 'has often been referred to as Australia's best kept secret'.³¹ AIATSIS received just 928 visits in 2016-17.³² AIATSIS submitted that the limited public visitation was largely due to the Institute's small public display area, but that recently it has focused on rebranding the organisation and modernising its online content to increase its reach, with an emphasis on Indigenous communities. Initiatives to support this have included the launch of a new website; digital, online and physical exhibitions; community visits and community research grants.³³
- 3.14 The Friends of the National Film and Sound Archive Inc. (NFSA) advised the Committee that visits by school students to the NFSA dropped from 33 430 in 2008-9 to 13 056 in 2016-17.³⁴ It also stated that increased negative comments on forums such as *TripAdvisor* indicated that the NFSA has 'disappointed visitor expectations and lost its status as a top tourist attraction'.³⁵ The Friends suggested that this was due to reduced opening hours, the closure of an exhibition space, shop and library, and the cancellation of travelling festivals.³⁶
- 3.15 Most institutions reported collecting data on visitors to gain a better understanding of their audiences. For example, the Australian War

27 For example: Mr Neil Hermes, *Submission 9.1*, p. 1; Questacon Advisory Council, *Submission 29*, p. 3.

28 Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, p. 8.

29 Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, p. 5.

30 Mr Gerard Vaughan AM, Director, National Gallery of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 48.

31 Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Submission 66*, p. 5.

32 GLAM Peak, *Submission 34*, p. 2.

33 Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Submission 66*, p. 3.

34 Friends of the National Film and Sound Archive Inc., *Submission 13*, p. 5.

35 Friends of the National Film and Sound Archive Inc., *Submission 13*, p. 5.

36 Friends of the National Film and Sound Archive Inc., *Submission 13*, p. 5.

Memorial (AWM) conducts a general visitor survey, as well as individual surveys.³⁷ However, the AWM said that there were challenges when interviewing visitors from a non-English speaking background.³⁸ Moreover, not all of the institutions that provided evidence to the Committee replicated the practice of collecting and analysing visitor data to improve their offerings, and the comprehensiveness of the data collected varied between institutions. For example, DPS conceded that its data collection and analysis about visitors to Parliament House was limited, and that there was a critical need to enhance this to improve visitor experience.³⁹

Collective branding and marketing

- 3.16 Evidence to the Committee highlighted that marketing national institutions as a collective group can attract school groups, domestic tourists and international travellers to the Australian Capital Territory (ACT).⁴⁰ The ACT Government said that as a collective brand, national institutions located in Canberra 'have the capacity to leave a lasting impression in the minds of all those who visit'.⁴¹ In order to maximise their profile and benefit from collective recognition, a number of the national institutions based in Canberra are members of tourism associations and participate in joint marketing efforts.⁴²
- 3.17 Most of Canberra's national institutions, including all of the large institutions, participate in the ACT Government's *VisitCanberra* initiative. The program delivers a range of marketing activities domestically and internationally, including in partnership with Tourism Australia and Singapore Airlines.⁴³ The ACT Government advised that the National Museum of Australia (NMA) and the NGA are the 'most active institutions in these international programs and maintain consistent investment to influence international markets'.⁴⁴ The Committee was also

37 Ms Anne Bennie, Assistant Director, Branch Head Public Programs, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 39.

38 Ms Anne Bennie, Assistant Director, Branch Head Public Programs, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 39.

39 Mr Rob Stefanic, Secretary, Department of Parliamentary Services, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 20 September 2018, pp. 5 and 7.

40 ACT Government, *Submission 69*, p. 2.

41 ACT Government, *Submission 69*, p. 2.

42 For example: National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Submission 26*, p. 5; National Capital Attractions Association, *Submission 55*, p. 2; Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, p. 5.

43 ACT Government, *Submission 69.1*, Answer to Question on Notice, p. 3.

44 ACT Government, *Submission 69.1*, Answer to Question on Notice, p. 4.

advised that a select group of national institutions are currently collaborating with Tourism Australia, *VisitCanberra* and other cultural attractions across Australia to develop an 'international standard Australian signature cultural experience' which will aim to provide a 'product that delivers cultural enrichment in discovering the Australian story told through immersive art and history experiences'.⁴⁵

- 3.18 Some national institutions also work collaboratively to market to school groups visiting Canberra. In particular, evidence highlighted the work of the National Capital Educational Tourism Project (NCETP) which is administered by the tourism industry association, the National Capital Attractions Association (NCAA).⁴⁶ The NCETP undertakes brand and marketing activities 'based on the premise that schools are visiting Canberra, their National Capital and not any one individual institution or attraction'.⁴⁷ Currently, 22 attractions participate in the NCETP cooperative marketing program,⁴⁸ including some national institutions such as the Australian National Botanic Gardens, the CSIRO Discovery Centre, the National Archives of Australia and the High Court of Australia. The NCETP argued, however, that 'departmental constraints and fluctuations in funding' have affected the ability of some of the national institutions to join the Project.⁴⁹
- 3.19 While many of the institutions currently participate in joint marketing activities, a number of submitters to the inquiry believed that further promotion of the institutions as a collective brand could strengthen these initiatives.⁵⁰ For example, the NMA submitted that:

... there are significant opportunities to work more closely with other national institutions in co-branding and joint marketing efforts to advance the standing of these institutions as a group, both in Australia and overseas.⁵¹

45 ACT Government, *Submission 69.1*, Answer to Question on Notice, p. 4.

46 For example: National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Submission 26*; Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, p. 8; Mr Tom Rogers, Electoral Commissioner, Australian Electoral Commission, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 26; and Mr Gordon Ramsay MLA, Minister for the Arts and Community Events, ACT Government, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 8.

47 National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Submission 26*, p. 5.

48 National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Submission 26*, p. 5.

49 National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Submission 26*, p. 6.

50 For example: National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Submission 26*; Ms Marianne Albury-Colless, *Submission 53*, pp. [2-3]; National Capital Attractions Association Inc., *Submission 55*, p. 3; National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, pp. 4-5.

51 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 4.

- 3.20 The NMA believed that such activities could maximise the resources devoted to brand advancement and marketing of programs and services.⁵² The NCETP recommended the formation of an advisory board to drive collaborative marketing and branding.⁵³ The Secretary of DPS, Mr Rob Stefanic, acknowledged that the challenge is getting the current organisations that contribute to marketing to 'complement each other rather than compete'. He said that there is a willingness to collaborate but that national institutions 'have been functioning in [their] own silos for a very long time'.⁵⁴

Digital technologies

- 3.21 National institutions are increasingly engaging with new technologies in order to extend their outreach and engage with audiences in a more interactive manner. Digital initiatives include online libraries, official websites, social media, video conferences and live streams, and other written, photographic and video content.⁵⁵ Digital engagement has changed the way in which visitors interact with and experience national institutions.
- 3.22 This section will consider the use of digital technologies for public engagement. The issue of digitisation of national institutions' collections is discussed in chapter 5.

Digital interactive exhibitions

- 3.23 Increasingly cultural institutions around the world are integrating digital technologies into their physical exhibitions. The Committee received evidence that national institutions in Canberra are also beginning to integrate digital technologies into exhibitions to engage people in new ways and to encourage digital literacy and collaboration with visitors and online audiences.⁵⁶
- 3.24 For example, the NMA was the first national institution to adopt virtual reality programming in Canberra and the first to feature an immersive 3D sensory dome experience in its 2017 exhibition *Songlines: Tracking the Seven*

52 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, pp. 4-5.

53 National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Submission 26*, p. 6.

54 Mr Rob Stefanic, Secretary, Department of Parliamentary Services, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 20 September 2018, p. 2.

55 Science and Technology Australia, *Submission 38*, p. 6.

56 Museums Galleries Australia, *Submission 39*, p. 6.

- Sisters*.⁵⁷ The exhibition won the ‘Best in Show’ award at the annual Museums and Galleries National Awards ceremony for its strong use of technology, as well as its collaboration with the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara, Ngaanyatjarra and Martu communities.⁵⁸
- 3.25 The AWM has also begun to experiment with new technologies through its *Battle of Hamel Virtual Reality Experience* that can be viewed at the Memorial with a headset or on YouTube at home.⁵⁹ Museums Galleries Australia observed that these digital technologies enable full immersion and can show objects at scale and in context.⁶⁰
- 3.26 The National Portrait Gallery (NPG) has an award-winning iPad application, *Headhunt!*, for visitors aged 7-15. The application, accessed via a complimentary iPad, encourages children to explore the Gallery independently and to look closely at the artwork that interests them.⁶¹ At the end of their visit, a report containing text, image and audio created by the child is generated automatically, allowing them to share what they have learnt.⁶² The Committee similarly saw touch screen technology in use during its visits to other institutions including the NMA, National Electoral Education Centre (NEEC) and the Museum of Australian Democracy (MoAD).
- 3.27 To address growing audience expectations, a number of institutions are currently developing or piloting new programs that incorporate digital technologies. For example, the NFSA is developing a ‘pop-up’ NFSA that will use touch pad screens in public spaces across Australia to provide audiences customised access to collection material.⁶³ The AWM is developing a whole-of-Memorial audio guiding platform, intended to deliver a richer visitor experience including multi-lingual options.⁶⁴ In its submission to the inquiry, the NMA expressed a desire to embrace new forms of audience participation and engagement, including the use of digital technologies, in its gallery redevelopment program under its Master Plan.⁶⁵

57 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 5.

58 Museums Galleries Australia, ‘MAGNA 2018 Winners’, 2018, <https://www.museumsaustralia.org.au/magna-2018-winners>, viewed 24 September 2018.

59 CPSU, *Submission 12.1*, Answer to Question on Notice, p. [2].

60 Museums Galleries Australia, *Submission 39*, p. 6.

61 National Portrait Gallery, ‘Headhunt!’ 2018, <https://www.portrait.gov.au/content/headhunt/>, viewed 24 September 2018.

62 National Portrait Gallery, ‘Headhunt!’ 2018, <https://www.portrait.gov.au/content/headhunt/>, viewed 24 September 2018.

63 National Film and Sound Archive, *Submission 28*, p. 6.

64 Australian War Memorial, *Submission 32*, p. 6.

65 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 3.

3.28 However, some inquiry participants suggested that digital innovation at Canberra's national institutions has not kept pace with initiatives around the world and that more could be done in this area.⁶⁶ The Committee was told that changing audience expectations put institutions at risk if they do not modernise their displays. For example, the Electoral Commissioner, Mr Tom Rogers, observed:

As children in primary schools in particular are exposed to more and higher tech versions of displays and institutions that they visit, what they see when they come to our education centre will eventually – not at the moment – become dated, and that will impact on the experience. So there's a point at which we will need to consider potentially a redesign of the offering... That's probably a future challenge and something we need to keep a very close eye on.⁶⁷

Online presence

3.29 The increased use of the internet by national institutions for promotion and marketing was noted above. Just as importantly, in recent years, many national institutions, including AIATSIS, AWM and the NFSA, have either begun to develop or have launched new websites and new ways of using the internet for interactive engagement with the public. Many national institutions' websites now include searchable collections, online booking systems, retail outlets and publications.⁶⁸

3.30 Evidence to the inquiry indicated that these initiatives have led to an increase in website visitations. For example, after launching its new website, the NFSA reported increased unique website visits and page-views. This coincided with increased social media and newsletter subscriptions. The new website also won four communications awards.⁶⁹

3.31 The NMA has also emphasised online engagement, and told the Committee that 'the page views on our website and the capacity people have to visit the museum virtually has grown to the point that more than five million visits have been made to that site'.⁷⁰

66 For example: Mr Gordon Ramsay MLA, Minister for the Arts and Community Events, ACT Government, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 12; and Ms Marianne Albury-Colless, *Submission 53*, p. [3].

67 Mr Tom Rogers, Electoral Commissioner, Australian Electoral Commission, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 24.

68 Meredith Hinchliffe, Ms Carolyn Forster OAM and Ms Sandy Forbes, *Submission 56*, p. 3.

69 National Film and Sound Archive, *Submission 28*, p. 6.

70 Dr Mathew Trinca, Director, National Museum of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 46.

- 3.32 The Committee's visit to MoAD in particular highlighted the institution as a leader in the online space, with a virtual classroom experience (discussed later in this chapter) as well as digital storytelling initiatives using chatbots and Twitter. The Museum has been recognised for its use of innovative education technology.⁷¹
- 3.33 Some institutions, such as the NFSA and AWM, also hold online exhibitions.⁷² Online presence, in particular curated access to material, can allow institutions to reach wider audiences. Evidence to the inquiry indicated, however, that online curation is resource intensive and requires expertise to ensure rich visitor experiences.⁷³
- 3.34 While increased online engagement was generally regarded by national institutions as both necessary and beneficial, some submitters were cautious about its potential impact. Members of the ACT Legislative Assembly, Shane Rattenbury MLA and Caroline Le Couteur MLA expressed concern that increased online presence may minimise the importance of the physical presence of national institutions in Canberra.⁷⁴ Science & Technology Australia believed that 'the value of face-to-face engagement at our national institutions cannot be entirely replaced using digital tools'. Instead, the organisation suggested that digital access should serve as a gateway that encourages Australians to access collections in person through outreach programs, or by visiting Canberra.⁷⁵ The Friends of the NFSA also submitted that online engagement should complement rather than replace person-to-person experiences.⁷⁶ Similarly, during the Committee's visit to MoAD, the Museum indicated that it viewed digital engagement ideally as a tool to encourage and supplement, rather than substitute for, visiting the institution itself.
- 3.35 In addition, while greater online presence has extended the reach of national institutions to new audiences, evidence suggested that not everyone accesses these websites. The Australian Society of Archivists submitted that according to the most recent report on Australia's Digital Inclusion Index, people within the national capital, who can access the collections physically, may also be the most likely to access them digitally. In contrast, remote and regional Australians, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, people with disabilities and women over 65, are less likely to

71 Museum of Australian Democracy, *Submission 37*, pp. 3-4.

72 See: Australian War Memorial, *Submission 32*, p. 6, Meredith Hinchliffe, Ms Carolyn Forster OAM and Ms Sandy Forbes, *Submission 56*, p. 3.

73 Canberra Business Chamber, *Submission 58*, p. 6.

74 Shane Rattenbury MLA and Caroline Le Couteur MLA, *Submission 60*, p. 4.

75 Science & Technology Australia, *Submission 38*, p. 6.

76 Friends of the National Film and Sound Archive, *Submission 13*, p. 7.

access digital material hosted by national institutions. The Society recommended core, targeted funding aimed at improving access for these groups.⁷⁷

Social media

- 3.36 National institutions are using social media platforms to engage with the public in new ways. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube allow institutions to promote programs and events to targeted audiences.⁷⁸ In particular, social media enables institutions to attract new audiences, including teenagers and young people.⁷⁹ It also assists institutions to reach out to audiences beyond Canberra.⁸⁰
- 3.37 A number of institutions reported using social media in innovative ways to enable audiences across Australia to engage with their programs and collections. For example, the AWM live streams the Last Post Ceremony on YouTube and Facebook every day, allowing people to view, comment and participate in the ceremony.⁸¹ Questacon is also active across a number of social media platforms. The Department of Industry, Innovation and Science (DIIS), which administers Questacon, advised that social media channels are a valuable way to engage with Questacon's national audience, including visitors and participants in events as well as other groups such as delivery partners, financial partners, industry, education and government organisations.⁸² Questacon's YouTube Channel delivers digital engagement in science and technology through video productions from Questacon programs, and streaming and archiving of events held at the Centre.⁸³ The Department advised that there have been over 1.9 million individual views of these videos.⁸⁴
- 3.38 Social media enables dialogue between institutions and community members, and encourages the public to become co-producers of knowledge.⁸⁵ MoAD argued that social media has allowed it to 'reflect democratic traditions of debate and conversation'.⁸⁶ The Museum told the

77 Australian Society of Archivists, *Submission 51*, p. 4.

78 Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, p. 6.

79 Council of Australasian Museum Directors (CAMD), *Submission 43*, p. [5].

80 Ms Sally Barnes, Chief Executive Officer, National Capital Authority, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 3.

81 Australian War Memorial, *Submission 32*, p. 6.

82 Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, p. 6.

83 Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, p. 6.

84 Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, p. 6.

85 Council of Australasian Museum Directors (CAMD), *Submission 43*, p. 5.

86 Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, *Submission 37*, p. [3].

Committee that its Facebook page has served as a 'platform for robust, respectful discussions about Australia's democracy, and our social and political history'.⁸⁷ The Museum highlighted that a recent post about the 1996 gun reforms led to an 'insightful and productive debate about gun ownership' that received approximately 1 000 comments and reached close to 30 000 people.⁸⁸ Moreover, MoAD's Director, Ms Daryl Karp, said that by encouraging such open dialogue the Museum has gained insight into public opinion on democracy in Australia.⁸⁹

Trove

The Committee heard that the NLA has been particularly successful in creating a strong online presence, through its Trove service.⁹⁰ Trove provides Australians with access to the collections of hundreds of libraries, museums, galleries, archives, and historical associations from across Australia.⁹¹ Since its launch in 2009 Trove has developed a large audience with nearly 250 000 registered public users and more than 20 million unique users each year.⁹²

The Committee was advised that Trove is particularly successful in engaging the community with digital collections.⁹³ One contributor to the inquiry described the impact that the service has had, particularly that it has:

...created a richer and more successful engagement experience for all Australians. It is a unique collaboration on a scale that has surpassed every other national information service except for the Bureau of Meteorology.⁹⁴

The Australian Historical Association submitted that Trove has had a transformative effect on the capacity of historians to undertake research.⁹⁵

Trove also provides a unique opportunity for users to be part of the creation and enhancement of the service. The public is able to add knowledge to digital collection items through tags and comments, and curate publicly shareable lists on a range of topics. Moreover, individuals and community groups are able to correct lines of text generated by software used to digitise newspaper images.⁹⁶ This has provided communities with the opportunity to ensure that their local or regional newspapers are represented accurately.

87 Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, *Submission 37*, p. [3].

88 Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, *Submission 37*, p. [3].

89 Ms Daryl Karp, Director, Museum of Australian Democracy, Old Parliament House, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August, p. 19.

90 ANU School of Art and Design, *Submission 64*, p. 2.

91 National Library of Australia, *Submission 41*, p. 1.

92 Australian Library and Information Association, *Submission 6*, p. 2.

93 Australian National University, *Submission 68*, p. [2].

94 Name withheld, *Submission 40*, p. 2.

95 Australian Historical Association, *Submission 35*, p. [2].

96 National Library of Australia, *Submission 41*, pp. 1-2.

As of April 2018, digital volunteers had corrected 266.45 million lines of text. One individual, John Warren, has personally contributed nearly 5 million lines of text. The NLA has estimated that the value of this work is approximately \$46.3 million.⁹⁷

The Government allocated \$16.4 million to the NLA for the period 2016-17 to 2019-20 to support Trove, through the Public Service Modernisation Fund.⁹⁸ The NLA advised that this funding is being used for upgrading critical digital infrastructure, enhancing digital engagement opportunities, and increasing the number of Australian cultural collections accessible via Trove. Despite this investment, there is concern about the sustainability of Trove post June 2020, when the modernisation funding will cease.⁹⁹ In particular, submitters highlighted that attempts to reduce funding to Trove in the 2016-17 Budget had raised concerns within the community about the future of Trove specifically, and the national institutions more broadly.¹⁰⁰

Engaging under-represented visitors

- 3.39 One issue raised during the inquiry was the demographic profile of those who visit and engage with Canberra's national institutions – and more specifically, those groups within the Australian community who may not be sufficiently represented in visitor numbers. While some institutions identified a need to attract more young adults, others emphasised the importance of national institutions doing more to reach Indigenous and multicultural communities. There was also discussion about how best to cater for groups with special requirements.
- 3.40 These gaps in engagement were linked by some to a lack of representation of these groups in national institutions' collections and exhibitions. Director-General of the NLA, Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, observed that 'if people don't see themselves in our collections, then [the institutions] actually don't have anything for them'.¹⁰¹
- 3.41 Museums Galleries Australia submitted that to ensure inclusivity in collections and major exhibitions, institutions could utilise 'more collaborative methods, such as prototyping approaches, and exhibitions

97 National Library of Australia, *Submission 41*, pp. 1-2.

98 Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Director-General, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 21.

99 National Library of Australia, *Submission 41*, p. 3; Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Director-General, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 21.

100 For example: CPSU, *Submission 12*, p. 22; Australian Society of Archivists, *Submission 51*, p. 4; Shane Rattenbury MLA and Caroline Le Couteur MLA, *Submission 60*, p. 4.

101 Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Director-General, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 18.

co-developed with the citizens/users/visitors' backgrounds engaged from the start'. Museums Galleries Australia noted that a number of institutions have successfully engaged communities in the development of exhibitions, citing the NMA's *Songlines: Tracking the Seven Sisters*, and MoAD's *The "Power of Us": How Australians imagine their Democracy* as examples.¹⁰²

3.42 From another perspective, reflecting on his experience from overseas, former NGA Director Mr Gerard Vaughan told the Committee that:

One of the things that can work really well...is to find funding to bring people in from special groups...Making that really easy and bringing communities in was a very, very powerful thing to do. There must be some version of that that could apply in Canberra.¹⁰³

Young adults

3.43 One group that was identified by national institutions as being underrepresented as visitors was young adults. Evidence to the Committee canvassed initiatives that some institutions have undertaken to increase the representation of young people that engage with institutions.

3.44 Dr Mathew Trinca, Director of the NMA, told the Committee that attracting young people between 16 to 25 years of age was an 'obvious challenge' for institutions. In attempting to cater to this audience, Dr Trinca advised that:

All of us, and certainly the National Museum, now have programs devoted to trying to involve those audiences in what we do. There are nights when we open the museum. We change the quality of programming to draw people, very expressly, in the under-30 category. They have been successful in broadening the reach of institutions like ours ...¹⁰⁴

3.45 Dr Trinca provided the Committee with the example of the NMA's 2016 exhibition, *A History of the World in 100 Objects*, that trialled evening opening hours. Patronage to the exhibition as a result was much higher than anticipated and included significant visitation from those in the 16 to 30 age group, leading Dr Trinca to observe that:

102 Museums Galleries Australia, *Submission 39*, p. 6.

103 Mr Gerard Vaughan AM, Director, National Gallery of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 53.

104 Dr Mathew Trinca, Director, National Museum of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 51.

...when the exhibition is right and when the quality of the work is very high, young people will come to these places, if you give them the opportunity for access.¹⁰⁵

- 3.46 The National Gallery of Australia submitted that it had also worked to engage young adults through social media events (Instameets), fashion partnerships, and contemporary art parties.¹⁰⁶
- 3.47 Mr Angus Trumble, Gallery Director of the NPG, stressed to the Committee that national institutions must consider that they 'are competing with other forms of recreation and entertainment and diversion'. National institutions may need to consider matters such as extended or modified opening hours to cater for patrons, such as young people, who may not be able to attend institutions during standard business hours. Mr Trumble added that any such initiatives would be contingent on the availability of resources.¹⁰⁷
- 3.48 The engagement of national institutions with school students through the education system is discussed later in this chapter.

Indigenous Australians

- 3.49 Inquiry participants also expressed concern to the Committee about low patronage of Canberra's national institutions by Indigenous Australians. This was despite many institutions holding collections relevant and likely to be of interest to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including the NGA's large collection of Indigenous art and the records held by the NAA. Witnesses at public hearings advised about initiatives and exhibitions that aimed to provide better representation and inclusivity for Indigenous Australians within their offerings.
- 3.50 The Hon. Dr Brendan Nelson, Director of the AWM, told the Committee that he would like to see Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from more remote parts of the country visiting the Memorial. He spoke of the AWM's efforts to attract more Indigenous visitors, including that it is:
- ...currently touring 'For country, for Nation', an exhibition we built specifically to tell the story of Indigenous service over 120 years. We had a visit late last year of kids from Tennant Creek – not just Aboriginal kids but non-Aboriginal kids as well. When they came into the memorial and saw the APY Lands painting

105 Dr Mathew Trinca, Director, National Museum of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 53.

106 National Gallery of Australia, *Submission 47*, p. 4.

107 Mr Angus Trumble, Gallery Director, National Portrait Gallery of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, pp. 52-53.

greet them opposite the Gallipoli landing boat, their eyes were like saucers...when you go through the Roll of Honour, Aboriginal people are more than well represented among the Western Australians and the South Australians.¹⁰⁸

- 3.51 The NAA told the Committee that it engages with Indigenous communities through its state and territory offices as well as Aboriginal advisory groups.¹⁰⁹
- 3.52 Dr Ayres from the NLA believed that it could do more to better engage with Indigenous communities, advising the Committee that:
- ...for the next two or three years it's all about bringing our Indigenous material to the surface – especially next year with the International Year of Indigenous Languages, we're focusing on making sure that what we have is more visible.¹¹⁰
- 3.53 Mr Craig Ritchie of AIATSIS expressed the view that an Indigenous national institution within the Parliamentary Zone would be powerfully significant. Mr Ritchie also noted the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people curating their own stories.¹¹¹ This issue is discussed further in chapter 4.

Migrant and multicultural communities

- 3.54 The Committee was particularly interested in the role that national institutions could play in connecting new migrants to Australia's history and culture. While the Committee was told that research indicated that 'newly arrived Australians are sometimes more likely to visit Canberra than established ones',¹¹² it was clear that a number of challenges in engaging with new migrants existed including language barriers¹¹³ and a lack of understanding of relevant rules or protocols.¹¹⁴

108 The Hon. Dr Brendan Nelson, Director, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 39.

109 Ms Phyllis Williams, Regional Manager, North, National Archives of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 18.

110 Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Director-General, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 18.

111 Mr Craig Ritchie, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 58.

112 Dr Mathew Trinca, Director, National Museum of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 52. See also Ms Sharon Bailey, Acting Group Manager Settlement Services Group, Department of Social Services, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 38.

113 Ms Anne Bennie, Assistant Director, Branch Head Public Programs, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 39.

114 Ms Sharon Bailey, Acting Group Manager Settlement Services Group, Department of Social Services, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 38.

- 3.55 The Department of Social Services (DSS) proposed that providing general information, such as that many institutions and exhibitions are free, may encourage people to engage with the institutions.¹¹⁵ It also noted the importance of assessing migrant settlement patterns and providing information in a range of different languages.¹¹⁶
- 3.56 DSS acknowledged that it does not currently have an overt focus on how national institutions could connect new migrants to Australian culture and history. However, the Department expressed a willingness to 'work more closely with the national public institutions so they could be part of [the] settlement and cohesion framework'.¹¹⁷ In particular, DSS noted the potential to share information with the national institutions regarding settlement patterns and the current main languages of new arrivals. The Department also indicated the possibility of connecting the national institutions to the pre-existing networks that it has with service providers and community leaders that could lead to joint projects.¹¹⁸

Special access programs

- 3.57 Specialised services, facilities and programs can provide opportunities for community members who may otherwise have difficulty engaging with national institutions. Special access programs are run by national institutions, contributing to the health and social well-being of people with special needs,¹¹⁹ very young children and their families,¹²⁰ and people from multicultural backgrounds.¹²¹
- 3.58 Some of the programs provided by institutions include:

115 Ms Sharon Bailey, Acting Group Manager Settlement Services Group, Department of Social Services, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 38.

116 Ms Sharon Bailey, Acting Group Manager Settlement Services Group, Department of Social Services, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 39.

117 Ms Sharon Bailey, Acting Group Manager Settlement Services Group, Department of Social Services, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 38.

118 Ms Sharon Bailey, Acting Group Manager Settlement Services Group, Department of Social Services, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 38.

119 For example: National Gallery of Australia's Voluntary Guides Association, *Submission 11*, p. 3; ACT Government, *Submission 69*, p. 5.

120 For example: Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, *Submission 37*, p. [3]; National Gallery of Australia, *Submission 47*, p. 3.

121 For example: Australian National Botanic Gardens, *Submission 15*, p. 13; Australian War Memorial, *Submission 32*, p. 4.

- Art and Dementia Tours, at the NGA and NPG, that provide people living with dementia an opportunity to connect with the world of art;¹²²
 - after-hours tours with lowered audio levels at the AWM for veterans impacted by their deployment;¹²³
 - Questacon's *Little Explorers* day, held in February 2018, which included discounted entry and special displays targeted for children 0-6 years of age;¹²⁴ and
 - the ANBG's 'China Ready' strategy, implemented with the commencement of direct flights from Singapore to Canberra, that included Chinese visitor guides and maps combined with staff training.¹²⁵
- 3.59 The Cultural Facilities Corporation submitted that specialised programs can contribute to broader social wellbeing and positive health outcomes for participants.¹²⁶ Such programs can also strengthen an institution's ability to support people with specific needs more broadly. For example, DISS reflected that the Questacon Autism Access Day, in collaboration with the Marymead Autism Centre, resulted in greater autism awareness and confidence for staff, and led to the creation of permanent resources that enhance access for people with autism.¹²⁷
- 3.60 Inquiry participants were of the view that specialised programs also help to attract new and hard to reach audiences.¹²⁸ For example, approximately 1 900 people attended the Questacon *Little Explorers* day, far exceeding the usual attendance of 200 to 440 visitors for a Monday in February.¹²⁹
- 3.61 At the same time, the popularity of these events can present challenges. For example, the AWM submitted that it had experienced significant pressure on its 'requested tours model' over the past two years.¹³⁰ The Memorial flagged its intention to develop and implement a 'paid tour model' that would incorporate both guide led and audio/digital tour

122 For example: National Gallery of Australia's Voluntary Guides Association, *Submission 11*, p. 3; Australian War Memorial, *Submission 32*, pp. 4-5; Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, p. 7; ACT Government, *Submission 69*, p. 5.

123 Australian War Memorial, *Submission 32*, p. 4.

124 Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, p. 7.

125 Australian National Botanic Gardens, *Submission 15*, p. 13.

126 Cultural Facilities Corporation, *Submission 48*, p. 2.

127 Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, p. 7.

128 Hon Professor Michael Gore AO, *Submission 8*, p. [1].

129 Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, p. 7.

130 Australian War Memorial, *Submission 32*, p. 9.

products available within and outside of opening hours. Multilingual options would be part of this offering.¹³¹

- 3.62 More broadly, the NGA highlighted that in 2015, it introduced a Visitor Experience Team.¹³² The Gallery said that the team supports general queries for visitors as well as addressing issues as they arise. The Gallery explained that this new approach has ensured that visitor needs are met and has led to a positive cultural change within the organisation.¹³³

Education

- 3.63 As mentioned in chapter 2, school visits and programs form a very significant part of the work of Canberra's national institutions. Several offer outreach programs that complement the Australian Curriculum at both the primary and secondary levels. This includes physical visits by school groups to Canberra, loans of educational material, regional tours such as the *Questacon Shell Science Circus*,¹³⁴ and virtual classroom programs.

School excursions to Canberra

- 3.64 Annually, more than 165 000 students from all over Australia travel to Canberra on school visits. Evidence was given to the Committee that on average 49 students participate in each excursion and visit 12 attractions over a period of three days.¹³⁵ In order to provide students with meaningful experiences, most of Canberra's national institutions provide tailored programs for school groups.¹³⁶ These programs are often delivered in conjunction with educational materials distributed by the

131 Australian War Memorial, *Submission 32*, p. 9.

132 National Gallery of Australia, *Submission 47*, p. 3.

133 National Gallery of Australia, *Submission 47*, p. 3.

134 Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, p. 9.

135 National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Submission 26*, p. 4.

136 For example: National Gallery of Australia's Voluntary Guides Association, *Submission 11*, p. 2; Australian War Memorial, *Submission 32*, pp. 6-7; National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 3; Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67.1*, Answer to Question on Notice, pp. [2-3]; Ms Philippa Lynch, Chief Executive, and Principal Registrar, High Court of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, 24 August 2018, p. 6; Dr Judy West, Executive Director, Australian National Botanic Gardens, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 16 August 2018, p. 5; and Mr Tom Rogers, Electoral Commissioner, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 21.

- institutions. This includes pre- and post-visit activities that can be delivered in the classroom, along with digital learning resources.¹³⁷
- 3.65 The NCETP told the Committee that visiting Canberra's national institutions supports a student's education and provides them with a greater understanding of the role of government, law and democracy. It submitted that school students who have visited a parliament or national institution rank six percentile points higher in the National Assessment Program (NAPLAN) Civics and Citizenship results than students who have not.¹³⁸
- 3.66 In addition to educational programs in civics and citizenship, there is also a strong and growing engagement by visiting students in programs delivered by national institutions focusing on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education. The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) informed the Committee that it worked with students and teachers to understand how science is applied 'in the real world' and how scientific knowledge may translate into a career path.¹³⁹ As part of its site visits, the Committee also had the opportunity to visit and observe student and educator interaction at Questacon's Ian Potter Foundation Technology Learning Centre. The visit provided the Committee with an insight into how Questacon is helping to prepare Australia's next generation of scientists.
- 3.67 Many of the national institutions' educational programs are well received. For example, the NEEC reported having a visitor satisfaction rating of about 96 per cent, and almost 100 per cent of teachers suggesting the presenter was engaging and the session met curriculum needs.¹⁴⁰ The Australian Science Teachers Association strongly commended the work of Questacon and the NCETP in support of upskilling Australia's science teachers, and argued that 'there is a very viable case to boost their collective capacities to maximise their impact'.¹⁴¹

137 For example: Australian War Memorial, *Submission 32*, p. 7; Mr Tom Rogers, Electoral Commissioner, Australian Electoral Commission, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 21.

138 National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Submission 26*, p. 4.

139 Ms Mary Mulcahy, Director, Education and Research, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 33. See also Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*.

140 Mr Tom Rogers, Electoral Commissioner, Australian Electoral Commission, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra 24 August 2018, p. 21.

141 Australian Science Teachers Association, *Submission 33*, p. [2].

- 3.68 While some programs, such as those offered by the NEEC, are free,¹⁴² other institutions offer paid packages for school groups. For example, the 'Q by Night' program run by Questacon is available to both primary and secondary school groups. The package includes an exclusive guided tour of Questacon's galleries and catering options for dinner.¹⁴³
- 3.69 The NCETP told the Committee that there is a high demand from school groups to participate in national institutions' programs.¹⁴⁴ Mr Jeff Pope from the Australian Electoral Commission provided a clear example, advising that the NEEC runs up to 18 sessions a day, with a session starting approximately every half hour. Often, the NEEC is booked out two years in advance, and as of 30 August 2018, the NEEC had 56 schools on the waiting list seeking bookings in 2018-19.¹⁴⁵ Mr Pope reflected that keeping up with demand whilst delivering a high standard of product is an ongoing challenge.¹⁴⁶
- 3.70 To alleviate some of the pressure on national institutions from school bookings, the NCAA recommended extending the opening hours of key institutions so that more school groups can visit.¹⁴⁷ However, Mr Pope observed that extended hours 'can be a little problematic, given that these are school children, most of them primary kids, on camp'.¹⁴⁸ It was also noted that the demand on school tours was not constant throughout the year, with demand increasing during the school terms and when Parliament is sitting.¹⁴⁹
- 3.71 While evidence received by the Committee supported the great benefits to students from excursions to Canberra, submitters and witnesses expressed concern that insufficient resources or facilities has limited the ability of some of the national institutions to conduct education programs. For

142 Mr Tom Rogers, Electoral Commissioner, Australian Electoral Commission, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 21.

143 Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67.1*, Answer to Question on Notice, p. [3].

144 National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Submission 26*, p. 8.

145 Australian Electoral Commission, *Submission 79*, p. [3]; Mr Jeff Pope, Deputy Electoral Commissioner, Australian Electoral Commission, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 24.

146 Mr Jeff Pope, Deputy Electoral Commissioner, Australian Electoral Commission, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 24.

147 Dr Naomi Dale, President, National Capital Attractions Association, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August, p. 36.

148 Mr Jeff Pope, Deputy Electoral Commissioner, Australian Electoral Commission, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 24.

149 For example: National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Submission 26*, p. 8 and Mr Tom Rogers, Electoral Commissioner, Australian Electoral Commission, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 26.

example, the NAA has suspended its schools program, as well as broader public programs, while the building it was previously located in undergoes remediation works, and submitted that its lack of a purpose built and dedicated building ‘limit[s] the scope, scale and diversity of services, education and cultural engagement experiences it can deliver’.¹⁵⁰

3.72 More broadly, Mr Noel Langdon suggested that there is currently a lack of available trained staff to meet the demand in the education tourism market. He proposed that this has resulted in more than 40 000 children per year being unable to fulfil the democracy and civics aspect of their school curriculum.¹⁵¹ Evidence also suggested that current resourcing has the potential to constrain an institution’s ability to innovate in its delivery of school programs. For example, the NGA expressed interest in creating a new education curriculum-based unit for students and teachers across Australia. However, the Gallery submitted that such a program would require new resourcing.¹⁵²

3.73 The NCETP identified that ancillary resources, such as accommodation and transport, were also part of the broader supply chain that facilitated school excursions. The availability of these was a key part of the school excursion experience ensuring that ‘when the kids appear at the steps of Parliament House they’re well-fed, well-organised and ready for an engaging program’.¹⁵³ The NCETP advised the Committee that on average, students stay in Canberra for three nights and that the ‘ACT government has supported this endeavour by helping to provide more accommodation’.¹⁵⁴

The PACER program

3.74 To support school excursions to Canberra, the Department of Education and Training (DEET) administers the Parliament and Civics Education Rebate (PACER) program.¹⁵⁵ The program, developed in 2006,¹⁵⁶

150 National Archives of Australia, *Submission 54*, p. 7.

151 Mr Noel Langdon, *Submission 77*, p. 3.

152 National Gallery of Australia, *Submission 47*, p. 5.

153 Mr Garry Watson, Project Leader, National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 35.

154 Mr Garry Watson, Project Leader, National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 35.

155 Australian Government, ‘Parliamentary and Civics Education Rebate’, www.pacer.org.au, viewed 15 January 2019.

156 Mr Garry Watson, Project Leader, National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 26.

subsidises the cost of travel to Canberra for students in Years 4 to 12 and emphasises civics and citizenship education.¹⁵⁷

- 3.75 To be eligible for program funding, students are required to visit Parliament House, the AWM, and at least one of the two national institutions at Old Parliament House: MoAD and the NEEC.¹⁵⁸
- 3.76 To qualify for PACER funding, schools must be located at least 150 kilometres from Canberra. Rebates are paid on a sliding scale, as set out in Table 3.1, with greater funding allocated to schools that are located further from Canberra.¹⁵⁹ Table 3.2 below shows the number of schools from each state and territory that received PACER funding in recent years.

Table 3.1 PACER rebate amounts

Distance From Canberra	Funds allocated per student
150-499 kilometres	\$20
500-999 kilometres	\$30
1 000-1 499 kilometres	\$60
1 500-1 999 kilometres	\$80
2 000-2 499 kilometres	\$120
2 500-2 999 kilometres including all schools from Tasmania	\$150
3 000-3 999 kilometres	\$240
4 000 kilometres and over	\$260

Source Department of Education and Training, *Submission 80, Answer to Question on Notice, p. 2.*

- 3.77 DEET advised that in the 2017-18 financial year, a total of 1 804 schools received PACER support.¹⁶⁰ This accounted for more than 97 500 students.¹⁶¹ Evidence to the inquiry suggested that many of the schools that visit Canberra through PACER also visit other national institutions. For example, in the 2016-17 financial year, 88 per cent of schools that sought PACER funding also attended Questacon while in Canberra.¹⁶²

157 Mrs Margaret Leggett, Branch Manager, Curriculum Branch, Department of Education and Training, *Committee Hansard, Canberra, 24 August, p. 27.*

158 Mrs Margaret Leggett, Branch Manager, Curriculum Branch, Department of Education and Training, *Committee Hansard, Canberra, 24 August, p. 27.*

159 Department of Education and Training, *Submission 80, Answer to Question on Notice, p. 2.*

160 Mrs Margaret Leggett, Branch Manager, Curriculum Branch, Department of Education and Training, *Committee Hansard, Canberra, 24 August, p. 27.*

161 Mrs Margaret Leggett, Branch Manager, Curriculum Branch, Department of Education and Training, *Committee Hansard, Canberra, 24 August, p. 27.*

162 Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67.1, Answer to Question on Notice, p. [1].*

Table 3.2 PACER schools per state/territory participation figures

State/Territory	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
New South Wales	980	968	976
Queensland	315	316	316
Victoria	352	352	361
Western Australia	157	155	160
South Australia	161	140	160
Tasmania	40	43	50
Northern Territory	15	18	19
Total	2020	1992	2042

Source Department of Education and Training, Submission 80, Answer to Question on Notice, p. 1.

3.78 The NCETP advised the Committee that both students and teachers rated the program highly.¹⁶³ However, many inquiry participants suggested that the program could be strengthened.¹⁶⁴ Recommendations to improve PACER included:

- expanding the number of institutions included on both the mandatory and optional visit list;¹⁶⁵
- introducing subsidies based on additional criteria such as schools' socio-economic status or inclusion of disabled students;¹⁶⁶
- increasing funding of PACER to enable more school groups to visit;¹⁶⁷
- increasing the resourcing, staffing and opening hours at popular national institutions, specifically to cater for the lengthy waiting list of schools wishing to participate in the program;¹⁶⁸ and
- improving access to the program for students with special needs.¹⁶⁹

163 Mr Garry Watson, Project Leader, National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August, p. 37.

164 For example: Ms Kareena Arthy, Deputy Director-General, ACT Government, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 13.

165 Dr Mathew Trinca, Director, National Museum of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, pp. 53-54.

166 For example: The Hon. Dr Brendan Nelson, Director, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, pp. 39-40; and Mr Garry Watson, Project Leader, National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 35.

167 National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Submission 26*, p. 11.

168 See for example: Dr Naomi Dale, President, National Capital Attractions Association, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 36; Mr Garry Watson, Project Leader, National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 37; Australian Electoral Commission, *Submission 79*, Answer to Question on Notice p. [3].

169 Mr Garry Watson, Project Leader, National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 35.

- 3.79 The Director of the AWM, The Hon. Dr Brendan Nelson, argued that PACER is failing to adequately support schools located in regional and remote locations across Australia.¹⁷⁰ He said that he would like to see PACER 'disproportionately and unashamedly focused on kids from remote parts of the country that are a far distance from Canberra'.¹⁷¹
- 3.80 Concern was also raised that the current PACER subsidies do not adequately reflect the cost of an excursion to Canberra or sufficiently consider additional factors that may increase the cost of an excursion. The NCETP submitted that the average cost of an excursion to Canberra has doubled from \$400 to \$800 per person over the last few years whilst PACER payments have remained static.¹⁷² Dr Nelson suggested linking PACER subsidies for schools to socio-economic status scores as well as geographic distance from Canberra,¹⁷³ although DEET advised the Committee that this is not under consideration.¹⁷⁴
- 3.81 DEET acknowledged that many students do not have the opportunity to visit Canberra, despite the PACER scheme. The Department advised that it is currently considering how this can be addressed, including through virtual and other outreach programs. The Department acknowledged that 'there is also a capacity issue in terms of the available funding and what can be covered' by PACER, and that while increasing travel costs were under consideration, PACER is a subsidy and 'not designed to cover the full rate'.¹⁷⁵

Digital classrooms

- 3.82 To provide greater access to students outside Canberra, several institutions utilise digital technologies such as webinars and digital excursions.¹⁷⁶ For example, Questacon has used high-definition video conference facilities to stream live and interactive science demonstrations to school students in their own classrooms across Australia. The

170 The Hon. Dr Brendan Nelson, Director, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 40.

171 The Hon. Dr Brendan Nelson, Director, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 40.

172 National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Submission 26*, p. 11.

173 The Hon. Dr Brendan Nelson, Director, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 40.

174 Department of Education and Training, *Submission 80*, Answer to Question on Notice, p. 4.

175 Mrs Margaret Leggett, Branch Manager, Curriculum Branch, Department of Education and Training, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August, p. 29.

176 For example: National Library of Australia, *Submission 41*, p. 3; Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, *Submission 37*, p. [4].

Committee was told that between 2010 and 2015 more than 450 video conferences were held, reaching more than 13 000 students nationally.¹⁷⁷

- 3.83 MoAD advised the Committee that it has recently begun rolling out a primary school program ‘Democracy, Media and Me’ that uses video conferencing to reach regional and remote schools. The Museum is also developing a secondary school program with the hope of doubling the number of school students who access its civics and citizenship program within the next five years.¹⁷⁸ During its site visit to the Museum, the Committee observed MoAD’s pilot digital excursion program, which allowed students to undertake a virtual tour of the Museum while interacting with trained staff. Ms Daryl Karp said that this is about:

...creating a program of what we do that we can take to those schools that aren’t able to come to the national capital but to still give them what I call a ‘national capital experience’. It’s not a distance education – that is, something that could be delivered by anyone anywhere. It’s trying to recreate what we do so well, which is an absolutely transformative learning experience that is in situ, in the building, that gives [the audience] a sense of the chambers and a sense of the space.¹⁷⁹

- 3.84 The Committee was advised that similar digital classroom initiatives either exist or are being rolled out at other national institutions including the AWM,¹⁸⁰ NAA,¹⁸¹ and NMA.¹⁸²

Public outreach beyond Canberra

- 3.85 A key function of many of Canberra’s national institutions is to provide access to their collections for all Australians. As previously discussed in this chapter, digital technologies have extended the potential audience of national institutions’ collections across Australia, and internationally.¹⁸³
- 3.86 In addition, many national institutions bring their collections and experiences directly to people in regional and remote locations through outreach programs across Australia, including:

177 Raytheon, *Submission 73*, p. 2.

178 Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, *Submission 37*, p. [4].

179 Ms Daryl Karp, Director, Museum of Australian Democracy, Old Parliament House, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 17.

180 Australian War Memorial, *Submission 32*, p. 7.

181 National Archives of Australia, *Submission 54*, p. 22.

182 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 6.

183 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 4.

- travelling exhibitions;¹⁸⁴
 - loaning works from collections to galleries, museums and libraries across Australia and overseas;¹⁸⁵
 - educational outreach programs¹⁸⁶ including loans of learning resources to schools and local community groups;¹⁸⁷
 - partnering with communities;¹⁸⁸ and
 - conferences.¹⁸⁹
- 3.87 Funding for travelling exhibitions is provided to the National Collecting Institutions through the National Collecting Institutions Touring and Outreach (NCITO) program, administered by the Department of Communications and the Arts. The Department expressed the view that the NCITO's current funding envelope of \$1 million per annum is sufficient.¹⁹⁰ The Department advised that since 2009 the NCITO program has provided funding for the display of 312 exhibitions in 153 venues across Australia.¹⁹¹
- 3.88 In the science sector, DIIS advised that Questacon's travelling exhibitions had engaged over 7.6 million people in Australia and internationally between 1990 and March 2018, including 4.9 million people in regional and remote areas of Australia.¹⁹²
- 3.89 Two Canberra-based national institutions, the NAA and the NFSA, have physical state offices in Sydney and Melbourne and access centres in other states.¹⁹³ The NAA is the only institution based in Canberra to have a

184 For example: National Capital Authority, *Submission 63*, p. [6]; Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, pp. 4, 9, 10 and 13; Mr Gerard Vaughan AM, Gallery Director, National Gallery of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 48.

185 For example: National Film and Sound Archive, *Submission 28*, p. 6; Australian War Memorial, *Submission 32*, p. 8; National Library of Australia, *Submission 41*, p. 3; National Gallery of Australia, *Submission 47*, p. 4; National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, pp. 1 and 6.

186 For example: Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, p. 7; Mr Tom Rogers, Electoral Commissioner, Australian Electoral Commission, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 21.

187 For example: Australian War Memorial, *Submission 32*, p. 7.

188 For example: Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Submission 66*, p. 8.

189 For example: Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Submission 66*, p. 10; and Mr Jeff Pope, Deputy Electoral Commissioner, Australian Electoral Commission, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 25.

190 Dr Stephen Arnott, PSM, First Assistant Secretary, Arts Division, Department of Communications and the Arts, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 2.

191 Department of Communications and the Arts, *Submission 1.1*, Answer to Question on Notice, p. 3.

192 Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, p. 9.

193 Australian Society of Archivists, *Submission 51*, p. 5.

- national footprint with public access offices, reading rooms, community outreach programs and storage repositories located in the capital cities of all states and territories,¹⁹⁴ although the Australian Society of Archivists expressed concern to the Committee that about ‘successive closure of state offices, reduced reading room hours, and the extension of user-pays online access to digital copies’.¹⁹⁵
- 3.90 Inquiry participants contended that outreach services and travelling exhibitions offered by the national institutions ‘provide valuable educational and cultural connections for people outside of the ACT’.¹⁹⁶ Moreover, it was submitted that travelling exhibitions can assist galleries in regional areas to network and collaborate with other galleries in their region.¹⁹⁷ The Canberra Business Chamber suggested that outreach is a ‘fundamental way of promoting Australian culture and heritage and...sharing the nation’s assets’.¹⁹⁸
- 3.91 Science & Technology Australia believed that more could be done to promote outreach programs offered by national institutions. It recommended a collaborative approach supporting the development of a single website that hosts up-to-date information on regional programs offered by all national institutions.¹⁹⁹
- 3.92 However, Honest History expressed concern that some travelling exhibitions carry the risk of taking an institution’s collection out of context, or place an overemphasis on ‘entertainment value rather than representativeness’.²⁰⁰ The NCETP said that it was supportive of regional outreach, but contended that funding for these programs should not come at the expense of the programs available at institutions in Canberra.²⁰¹
- 3.93 A number of submitters and witnesses expressed concern that national institutions based in Canberra have significantly reduced their outreach programs in recent years.²⁰² For example, the Committee was told that the

194 National Archives of Australia, *Submission 54*, p. 7.

195 Australian Society of Archivists, *Submission 51*, p. 5.

196 Mr Gordon Ramsay MLA, Minister for the Arts and Community Events, ACT Government, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 8.

197 Meredith Hinchliffe, Carolyn Forster OAM and Sandy Forbes, *Submission 56*, p. 4.

198 Canberra Business Chamber, *Submission 58*, p. 6.

199 Science & Technology Australia, *Submission 38*, p. 5.

200 Honest History, *Submission 14*, p. 6.

201 National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Submission 26*, p. 10.

202 For example: Friends of the National Film and Sound Archive Inc., *Submission 13*, p. 8; Dr David Marshall AM, *Submission 20*, p. [1]; Museums Galleries Australia, *Submission 39*, p. 8; Cultural Facilities Corporation, *Submission 48*, p. 3; Australian Society of Archivists Inc., *Submission 51*, p. 5; Meredith Hinchliffe, Carolyn Forster OAM and Sandy Forbes, *Submission 56*, p. 4.; Canberra Business Chamber, *Submission 58*, p. 6; Mr Gordon Ramsay MLA, Minister

NFSA's 'Big Screen' travelling festival was suspended in 2015, and the loans of films and DVDs to institutions and film societies have decreased whilst fees have risen.²⁰³ The Cultural Facilities Corporation suggested that the NFSA is not the only institution to have decreased loans of its collection, submitting that 'many national institutions have increased the number and level of costs, and extended the advance timelines applied to the loan of collection material'.²⁰⁴

- 3.94 Evidence to the Committee suggested that ongoing budget reductions have significantly contributed to the paring back of outreach programs.²⁰⁵ Museums Galleries Australia submitted that the NPG is 'unable to satisfy demand from regional galleries' and its 'resourcing has been reduced to such an extent that it is harming [the Gallery's] capacity to deliver core programs, far less fulfil [its] national remit'.²⁰⁶ Moreover, concern was raised that some institutions are either no longer able or willing to conduct outreach such as travelling exhibitions without external funding.²⁰⁷

Committee comment

- 3.95 It is evident to the Committee that Canberra's national institutions are deeply committed to sharing their offerings with the public, and to exploring new and enhanced ways to engage with their audiences. The Committee strongly supports these efforts. At the same time, the Committee believes that improvements could be made to strengthen public engagement by the national institutions.
- 3.96 The Committee also recognises that many of the institutions are balancing the need to strengthen and evolve their public engagement against a number of competing pressures, in an environment of constrained resources. Resourcing of Canberra's national institutions is discussed in further detail in chapter 5.

for the Arts and Community Events, ACT Government, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 8.

203 Friends of the National Film and Sound Archive Inc., *Submission 13*, p. 8.

204 Cultural Facilities Corporation, *Submission 48*, p. 3.

205 For example: CPSU, *Submission 12*, p. 2; and Mr Gordon Ramsay MLA, Minister for the Arts and Community Events, ACT Government, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 8.

206 Museums Galleries Australia, *Submission 39*, p. 8.

207 For example: CPSU, *Submission 12*, p. 17; and Meredith Hinchliffe, Carolyn Forster OAM and Sandy Forbes, *Submission 56*, p. 3.

Marketing Canberra's national institutions

- 3.97 The Australian public now enjoys unprecedented choices in the activities and experiences available to them. As such, the Committee believes that it is imperative for Canberra's national institutions to develop stronger branding and marketing strategies.
- 3.98 While many national institutions enjoy a high level of public trust and confidence, and some benefit from a central location and iconic buildings, the Committee endorses the recognition by all institutions that they can not be complacent about continued public interest. The Committee also exhorts national institutions to recognise that while budget constraints may affect their reputation and brand strength, governance issues and poor decisions also have an impact.²⁰⁸ The Committee is encouraged by evidence that many institutions are focusing on new and stronger promotion such as major exhibitions and innovative events, and enhancing their presence on the internet and social media.
- 3.99 Monitoring visitor information is crucial. While the Committee welcomes the fact that visitor numbers to many institutions are increasing, it is concerned by evidence suggesting that some national institutions may not be collecting and analysing enough data on their visitors to ensure that their offerings are appropriate, targeted and promote growth. In the Committee's view, it is imperative that all national institutions collect and evaluate timely and disaggregated visitor data to inform their marketing and activities.
- 3.100 One area where the Committee sees potential for significant growth is collective branding and marketing by Canberra's national institutions. The Committee welcomes evidence that this is already occurring to some extent, through forums such as *VisitCanberra* and the NCETP. However, the Committee is keen to see collective marketing continue to grow and to incorporate more national institutions. Major events and exhibitions occurring during the same season can provide a strong platform for such promotions, if institutions collaborate to maximise publicity around them and use them as a springboard for cross-promotion and for raising awareness of the core offerings of all the institutions.
- 3.101 The Committee believes that the national institutions are best placed to determine whether stronger joint marketing can be achieved through the existing mechanisms, or whether a new forum is needed. Broader proposals for a more formal consolidated governance structure or

208 Sally White, 'NGA splashes on armchairs during budget cuts', 6 April 2018, The Sydney Morning Herald, <https://www.smh.com.au/national/act/nga-splashes-on-armchairs-during-budget-cuts-20180405-p4z7vs.html>, viewed 12 March 2019.

collaborative body for national institutions, and the purposes this might serve, are discussed in chapter 4. However, the Committee emphasises the principle that Canberra's national institutions have much more to gain from cooperation than from competition.

Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that Canberra's national institutions make a stronger concerted effort to undertake collective branding and marketing, including the use of joint campaigns capitalising on major events and exhibitions occurring during the same season. These initiatives should be organised through structured collaboration, and based on the best available visitor data.

Digital technologies

- 3.102 The use of digital technology is an increasingly important aspect of how Canberra's national institutions engage with their audiences, both to enhance their physical exhibitions, and to facilitate virtual interaction with their collections and offerings for audiences everywhere. The Committee is pleased to see that a number of national institutions have received accolades for their work in this space, and many have reported increased patronage through online gateways.
- 3.103 The Trove service managed by the NLA is a particularly impressive digital tool. The Committee was interested to learn about how Trove enables users not only to access the collection of the National Library and its partners, but also to actively contribute to the resource.
- 3.104 The Committee is of the view that, where a strong case exists for the utility of a particular digital resource or where the digital resource is generating revenue, such as Trove, the Australian Government should recognise its value on an ongoing basis, and consider how additional resources, including staff, could be allocated to further develop it.
- 3.105 The Committee notes the views it heard during the inquiry about the importance of 'keeping up' in the digital space, with changing audience expectations requiring constant innovation. The Committee also acknowledges the evidence it received about the potential exclusion of certain segments of the community from access to institutions' online or digital resources, such as remote and regional Australians, older people, Indigenous Australians and people with disabilities. The Committee encourages the national institutions to pay particular attention to

measures, whether within or in addition to the digital space, to ensure that such audiences are not left behind.

- 3.106 In addition, the Committee does not believe that digital programs can completely replace physical collections, and should not be considered a substitute for encouraging actual visits to national institutions.

Under-represented visitors

- 3.107 The Committee was interested in exploring where 'gaps' exist in the public engagement of Canberra's national institutions, and emphasises the importance of ensuring that the story of Australia collectively told by the national institutions reaches all Australians. The Committee notes that national institutions identified young adults, Indigenous Australians and migrant and multicultural communities as key audiences to whom more outreach was needed.
- 3.108 The Committee took note that a crucial element in attracting diverse visitors was ensuring the inclusivity of the institutions' offerings. The Committee welcomed positive examples of institutions working directly with communities to this end, such as the NMA's successful *Songlines* exhibition.
- 3.109 The Committee encourages national institutions to engage with relevant Australian Government agencies to seek support for initiatives targeting these audiences. In particular, the Committee welcomes evidence provided by DSS that linking with its settlement services may provide a means for national institutions to connect with new migrants, and recommends that the Department and the institutions pursue such collaboration.

Recommendation 3

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government, through the Department of Social Services and in conjunction with Canberra's national institutions, develop a program that encourages new migrants to Australia to visit Canberra's national institutions.

- 3.110 The Committee also welcomed hearing about special access programs offered by some institutions to engage with community members who require additional support to access the national collections, such as people with disability, people with dementia and the very young. In the Committee's view, such programs are important and worthy of continued

support, particularly where they have broader benefits for the health and well-being of participants.

Schools

- 3.111 The Committee notes the great significance of schools and education programs to the work of many of Canberra's national institutions. The Committee believes that school visits to Canberra are extremely worthwhile, and can even have a transformative effect in bringing history, society, civics, politics, science and the arts alive for Australian students. Importantly, the Committee considers that these excursions can promote an enduring interest in government, politics and policy, and lifelong engagement in the democratic processes that shape Australian society.
- 3.112 The Committee is very concerned about the significant waiting list of schools that wish to access programs conducted by national institutions in Canberra. It is alarming to learn that some national institutions have waiting lists that stretch for years, and that some may lack the resources and trained staff to conduct educational programs to meet this demand. While resourcing is considered later in this report, the Committee believes that it is imperative upon the Australian Government, working in cooperation with the national institutions, to ensure that all Australian school students have access to the education programs conducted in Canberra if desired. The ACT Government should also monitor the availability of suitable accommodation to ensure that it is sufficient to cater for the increasing demand for school visits to Canberra's national institutions. The Committee makes the observation that there may be opportunities for visiting schools to avail themselves of underutilised athlete accommodation at the Australian Institute of Sport campus.
- 3.113 The PACER program is one of the key conduits between schools across Australia and the education programs conducted by Canberra's national institutions. The program facilitates almost 100 000 student visits to Canberra each year, which is excellent. But it is clear that PACER subsidies support visits by many more students from NSW, Victoria and southern Queensland than those based further away, particularly in remote and regional communities.
- 3.114 The Committee believes more action must be taken to redress this imbalance, to ensure that the unique educational outcomes offered by Canberra's national institutions are accessible to Australian students on a more equitable basis. Several measures that would strengthen the PACER program were proposed to the Committee, including lifting the level of the rebate to account for growth in travel costs, increasing subsidies for schools that have further to travel, building in consideration of schools

with particular challenges and students with special needs, and additional resourcing for national institutions to address the strong demand for school programs. Bearing in mind these and other suggestions made to the inquiry, the Committee recommends that the Australian Government undertake a comprehensive review of the PACER program.

Recommendation 4

The Committee recommends that the Department of Education and Training undertake a comprehensive review of the PACER program, to include consideration of:

- **ways to increase capacity to enable participation by all interested schools and students;**
- **criteria for prioritising applications and funding support;**
- **the funding level provided to the program overall and for each student; and**
- **governance of the program including membership of its education advisory committee.**

3.115 It is also clear that there is a growing interest in the STEM education initiatives presented by Canberra's national institutions. In the Committee's view, there is a need for the development of incentives to promote the inbound science education market, that are distinct from the support for citizenship and civics programs supported by PACER. The Committee notes that the existing PACER program does not incentivise visiting students to undertake programs at the science-related national institutions, such as Questacon and the CSIRO Discovery Centre. The Committee believes that there is merit in the Australian Government developing a parallel scheme that incentivises school students to visit science-focussed national institutions, but that is distinct from the PACER initiative, to allow maximum flexibility for schools planning to visit the national capital.

Recommendation 5

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government, in conjunction with Canberra's science-focussed national institutions, develop a program to encourage and promote engagement in science education by school students visiting Canberra.

- 3.116 The Committee is encouraged by the digital classroom initiatives being developed by a number of national institutions. The Committee considers that these types of virtual programs can provide school groups in regional and remote locations with high-quality opportunities to learn about Canberra's national institutions, especially in circumstances where a physical visit is not possible. The Committee believes, however, that such programs should ideally supplement rather than replace physical visits to Canberra, and the Committee understands that it is possible that demand for visits to Canberra may in fact increase as a result. The Committee views this as a positive and – consistent with the recommendations above – encourages the Australian Government to consider how a future increase in demand might be appropriately resourced.
- 3.117 Finally, the Committee draws attention to an observation raised during the inquiry, that national institutions could do more to engage Senators and Members of the House of Representatives in the promotion of the Canberra-based, touring and online programs and resources offered by the institutions, to schools within their states, territories or electorates. The Committee is confident that Members and Senators would welcome targeted information from the national institutions to share with their local schools and communities.

Civics and democracy

- 3.118 One of the most positive aspects of the Committee's inquiry was hearing that Australians have a genuine interest in being informed about their democracy and democratic institutions. The key national institutions that facilitate engagement with civics and democracy are Parliament House, particularly its visitor services and Parliamentary Education Office (PEO); and MoAD and the NEEC at Old Parliament House. The Committee was particularly impressed by the electoral education program provided by NEEC, which generates both understanding of and enthusiasm for the people's role in democracy through the electoral process.
- 3.119 In the Committee's view there is a case for improved coordination between these institutions, to ensure that they are presenting a shared and consistent vision about Australian democracy, and to provide a clear

delineation of the programs and activities conducted by each, so that roles and functions are not duplicated. To achieve this, the Australian Government may wish to determine whether a closer administrative and operational alignment for these institutions, such as bringing them together under the auspices of the Parliamentary Presiding Officers, is required.

- 3.120 The Committee observes that such a model might also deliver much-needed efficiencies if the management and operations of Parliament House and Old Parliament House were integrated. Moreover, the Committee understands that Parliament House is presently facing space constraints and rents commercial space elsewhere for some of its operations. Integration may provide an opportunity to utilise space in Old Parliament House as a working extension of Parliament House, possibly in relation to educational, support and visitor services.

Recommendation 6

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government review the objectives, roles and functions of the Museum of Australian Democracy, the National Electoral Education Centre and the visitor and education services at Parliament House; and consider the merits of their closer administrative and operational alignment.

- 3.121 The Committee identified that the NEEC and PEO in particular play a key role in providing electoral and parliamentary education programs to school students. However, due to facilities and capacity limitations, neither of these is able to extend their programs to the general public in a significant way. The Committee believes that the programs offered by NEEC and PEO about our electoral and parliamentary systems, respectively, could have great value in inspiring, engaging and empowering participation in democracy by adult visitors as well as school students. This would ideally include the expansion of NEEC at Old Parliament House to offer further full, pre-booked programs and a new 'walk-up' electoral education experience for impromptu visitors.
- 3.122 The Committee recognises that both the PEO and NEEC would need expanded facilities and staffing to make this possible, particularly given the evidence received that they are already unable to meet the high demand from school groups. Nevertheless, the Committee believes that such an investment by the Government would be a worthwhile one, to enhance both the democratic engagement of citizens and the strategic

value of two of Canberra's key national institutions.

Recommendation 7

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government consider expanding the facilities and resourcing of the Parliamentary Education Office and the National Electoral Education Centre, to allow them to offer regular programs to public visitors as well as school groups, and the NEEC to also offer a walk-up experience for impromptu visitors.

3.123 The Committee's visit to MoAD during the inquiry provided an opportunity to see firsthand the Museum's current exhibitions and to speak with staff about its activities. The Committee has some concern that there may be a disconnect between MoAD's fundamental strategic role, and some of the directions it is now taking in its engagement with the public. The legislation establishing Old Parliament House sets out its functions as:

- (a) to conserve, develop and present the Old Parliament House building and collections;
- (b) to provide public programs and research activities related to Australia's social and parliamentary history; and
- (c) to provide a range of other services for visitors to Old Parliament House;

along with undertaking other relevant tasks conferred on it by law or by the Arts Minister from time to time.²⁰⁹

3.124 MoAD itself describes its principal role as being: 'to tell the story of Australia's remarkable democratic heritage, including conserving and presenting Old Parliament House as a pre-eminent element of that heritage'.²¹⁰

3.125 The Committee is of the view that MoAD should focus on developing visitors' understanding of the nation's democratic history, and inspiring their faith in our democracy. Importantly, MoAD should encourage and empower visitors in a positive way about their agency in Australia's political system, rather than focusing on critical debates and discourse about democracy that may be best left to academic, think tank or media analysis. 2019 marks ten years since MoAD was established, and the

209 Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Establishing Old Parliament House) Rule 2016 [F2016L00739], section 9.

210 Museum of Australian Democracy, *Statement of Intent 2018-19*, <https://www.moadoph.gov.au/about/corporate-documents/>, viewed 19 March 2019.

Committee considers that it would be timely to undertake an assessment of whether it is appropriately focused on and effective in achieving its core role and responsibilities.

Recommendation 8

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government examine the present objectives and activities of the Museum of Australian Democracy, with a view to ensuring that the Museum is appropriately focused on its core responsibilities: to tell the story of Australia's remarkable democratic heritage, and inspire citizens' engagement in democracy.

- 3.126 A final observation relating to the issue of civics and democracy, is the Committee's view that there is a need for enhanced understanding of and engagement with Australia's political party system. Our political parties have played an essential role in the strength and stability of our democracy. Our democracy can be further strengthened through active engagement in our democratically governed and member-owned and operated political parties, particularly given the rise of activist political companies that have no broad membership-based ownership or governance structures.
- 3.127 Australia's political parties have significant archives of material and records from both campaigns and policy development that have formed an important part of our country's democratic history. The Committee considers that this material should be placed on the public record, preserved and presented as part of our national story. A more detailed history and presentation of each of Australia's political parties would, in the Committee's view, form a relevant and valuable addition to the collection and exhibitions of MoAD. In the Committee's assessment, political parties do not have the resources to independently and comprehensively undertake this task, meaning that assistance from the Australian Government would be required.

Recommendation 9

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government work with political parties to create centres for each political party, located at MoAD, to collect, preserve, research and make available publications and exhibitions on the parties' history, campaigns, policies and achievements.

Public outreach beyond Canberra

- 3.128 Outreach programs conducted by Canberra's national institutions are an important tool to reach new audiences around Australia and internationally. These include online platforms, as noted above, but also travelling exhibitions, loans of collection items to other institutions, and partnering with communities to conduct events. A few national institutions have permanent offices outside Canberra to allow community members to access collection materials, although the Committee is disappointed to learn that some of these activities are being scaled back.
- 3.129 The Committee is also concerned to learn that some national institutions have reduced or ended outreach programs as a result of resource constraints. While resource issues will be discussed later in this report, it is not acceptable that fewer resources available to national institutions result in denying communities in regional, rural and remote Australia access to elements of Australia's history, culture and records that are held in Canberra. In considering the value of outreach programs, particularly where there are risks of programs being reduced or eliminated, the Committee urges Canberra's national institutions to explore all avenues, including sourcing external funding and building partnerships, to maintain links to communities around Australia.

Governance

- 4.1 All Australian Government entities, including Canberra’s national institutions, are accountable to the Australian Government and Commonwealth Parliament for their strategic direction, governance and use of publicly-funded financial, physical and human resources. For the national institutions, this accountability is determined by each institution’s establishing legislation and other relevant laws, along with the Australian Government’s legislative responsibilities, policy objectives and resource management frameworks.
- 4.2 This chapter considers the evidence received during the inquiry relating to the governance of national institutions. This chapter also discusses how future national institutions might be established in Canberra, along with proposed areas of focus for any new national institutions.

Oversight and administration

- 4.3 The operation of Canberra’s national institutions is subject to oversight and scrutiny by the Commonwealth Parliament and the Australian Government.
- 4.4 While each institution has differing governance, legislative and administrative arrangements, each is overseen – if not administered – by a relevant Australian Government department under the responsibility of a minister. Each institution reports on its activities to the relevant minister via either a board of management constituted under its establishing legislation or through the reporting framework of the relevant department.

- 4.5 Within the framework of federal government, relevant accountability mechanisms also apply to the work of national institutions, such as Department of Finance measures, workplace laws and independent auditing by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO).
- 4.6 As elaborated below, Parliament also plays an important role both in establishing the legislative regime under which national institutions operate, and in scrutinising their performance.

Legislation

- 4.7 Many of Canberra's national institutions are established through legislation outlining the role and function of the institution, and providing for independent governance arrangements including the selection and composition of a board of management. Examples include the National Film and Sound Archive (NFSA), National Museum of Australia (NMA), Australian War Memorial (AWM) and the National Gallery of Australia (NGA).¹ Such institutions are administered by an Australian Government department.
- 4.8 Some institutions are established by legislation but do not have independent governance arrangements, such as the Australian National Botanic Gardens (ANBG), or are business units within an Australian Government department, such as Questacon. In contrast, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), the High Court of Australia (HCA), National Electoral Education Centre (NEEC) and the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) are established with the independent status and legislative obligations of a statutory authority.
- 4.9 Canberra's national institutions must comply with their own establishing legislation where it exists, as well as other Commonwealth legislative obligations including those set out in the *Public Governance Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth) (PGPA Act), which 'establishes a coherent system of governance and accountability for public resources, with an emphasis on planning, performance and reporting'.² Under the PGPA Act,

1 National institutions that are established by legislation and administered by an Australian Government Department are: Australian Institute of Sport (*Australian Sports Commission Act 1989* (Cth)); Australian War Memorial (*Australian War Memorial Act 1980* (Cth)); National Archives of Australia (*Archives Act 1983* (Cth)); National Film and Sound Archive of Australia (*National Film and Sound Archive Act 2008* (Cth)); National Gallery of Australia (*National Gallery Act 1975* (Cth)); National Library of Australia (*National Library Act 1960* (Cth)); National Museum of Australia (*National Museum of Australia Act 1980* (Cth)); National Portrait Gallery of Australia (*National Portrait Gallery of Australia Act 2012* (Cth)).

2 Department of Finance, 'PGPA Act 2013', <https://www.finance.gov.au/resource-management/pgpa-act/>, viewed 4 September 2018.

the person or group of persons responsible for, and with control over, each Commonwealth entity's operations is known as the 'Accountable Authority' and may include a government or parliamentary department, a listed entity or a body corporate established by a law of the Commonwealth.³

- 4.10 Evidence given to the inquiry raised concerns about the need for national institutions to be underpinned by a contemporary legislative regime that reflected institutions' operation in a modern, technologically driven environment that had regard for evolving community expectations.

Modernising legislation

- 4.11 Representatives of a number of national institutions told the Committee about the positive impact that a more modern legislative regime would have. Mr David Fricker, Director-General of the National Archives of Australia (NAA), advised that in relation to the Archives, 'our legislation predates the internet'.⁴ The Archives had recently undertaken an extensive review of its own legislation to determine how it could better align with 'the digital age and contemporary records and information management requirements'.⁵ The NAA advised that some amendments to the *Archives Act 1983* were currently before Parliament and that it was working with the Attorney-General's Department to bring other legislative measures before Parliament in future.⁶ Mr Fricker told the Committee that legislative clarity would allow the NAA to 'raise revenue within proper ethical frameworks' as well as improve its capacity to 'provide value added services and to strike a fair fee or charge for services'.⁷
- 4.12 One concern relating specifically to the NAA that was raised during the inquiry was that the Archives was often unable to meet its own statutory timeframe for requests for records, particularly with respect to the examination and release of previously classified documentation.⁸ Acknowledging the issue, Mr Fricker advised that the Archives had incurred significant resources and costs involved with defending cases

3 *Public Governance Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth), s. 12.

4 Mr David Fricker, Director-General, National Archives of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 25.

5 National Archives of Australia, *Submission 54*, p. 33.

6 National Archives of Australia, *Submission 54*, pp. 30-33.

7 Mr David Fricker, Director-General, National Archives of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 25.

8 Mr David Fricker, Director-General, National Archives of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 20. See also: Community and Public Sector Union, *Submission 12*, p. 10; Professor Frank Bongiorno, *Submission 22*, p. 2; Science & Technology Australia, *Submission 38*, pp. 3-4.

brought against the agency on this matter.⁹ The NAA also submitted that legislative amendments presently in train would enable it to better manage requests for records from high volume applicants.¹⁰

- 4.13 According to Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Chief Executive Officer of the National Library of Australia (NLA), revised privacy legislation would assist the NLA in navigating new privacy and cybersecurity requirements, such as those recently introduced in Europe, which would apply to European-based users of the Library's online resources.¹¹
- 4.14 Mr Craig Ritchie, Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Institute of AIATSIS, advised the Committee that an external review of the Institute and an assessment of the state of its collection had been conducted in recent years. The assessment of the collection revealed it to be 'at catastrophic risk for lots of reasons relating to the size of the appropriation resources available and the facilities'. As a result, the Australian Government facilitated legislative amendments that 'effectively modernised the act', along with additional budget appropriations.¹²

The Copyright Act 1968 (Cth)

- 4.15 The provisions of the *Copyright Act 1968 (Cth)* (Copyright Act) are also relevant to the work of some national institutions. A number of institutions cited aspects of the Copyright Act as requiring reform to ensure they can respond to changing community expectations. For example, according to Mr Jan Müller, Chief Executive Officer of the NFSA, reforming parts of the Copyright Act would allow:
- ... cultural institutions to be able to share that material with our public without any commercial meaning, simply because we need to share the material that we digitise and that we hold in our collections.¹³
- 4.16 NFSA submitted that copyright was a significant challenge for it due to clients being required to obtain licences from rights owners for many uses. NFSA continues 'to pursue solutions through reliance on available

9 Mr David Fricker, Director-General, National Archives of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 20;

10 National Archives of Australia, *Submission 54*, p. 30.

11 Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Chief Executive Officer, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 27.

12 Mr Craig Ritchie, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 58.

13 Mr Jan Müller, Chief Executive Officer, National Film and Sound Archive, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 25.

exceptions, stakeholder relationships, process improvement, and advocacy for reforming relevant regulation'.¹⁴

- 4.17 The NLA also faces significant challenges in relation to the Copyright Act. Dr Ayres told the Committee that it had taken 23 years of advocacy to get changes made to the Act to allow for collection of digital publications, and that 'modernisation [of the Act] is an ongoing process'. Dr Ayres said the NLA would continue to advocate for amendments to the Act in areas such as broadening its 'fair use' provisions.¹⁵

Commonwealth Parliament

- 4.18 While the Commonwealth Parliament is responsible for the legislative frameworks governing Canberra's national institutions, the institutions are also subject to Parliament's oversight and scrutiny through mechanisms including committee inquiries and the Senate Estimates process. National institutions also engage with Parliament in various capacities, including through submissions and appearances before parliamentary committees conducting inquiries on issues of relevance to them, and direct engagement with Members and Senators.
- 4.19 In 2008, a report of Parliament's Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit (JCPAA) inquired into the impact of the Commonwealth's efficiency dividend on small agencies, including national cultural institutions.¹⁶ That inquiry found that smaller agencies, such as Canberra's national institutions, face particular challenges. In relation to national cultural institutions, the Committee noted the significant incompatibility between the 'legislated mandate of these agencies to grow and develop their collections at the same time as needing to find productivity improvements beyond those in the general economy and delivering a wider range of services due to technological change'.¹⁷
- 4.20 The report made a number of recommendations discussed in chapter 5 of this report, particularly in relation to the impact of the efficiency dividend. In its response to the JCPAA's report in 2010, the Australian Government agreed in part with only one of the eight recommendations.¹⁸

14 National Film and Sound Archive of Australia, *Submission 28*, p. 4.

15 Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Chief Executive Officer, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 26.

16 Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit, *Report 413: the efficiency dividend and small agencies: size does matter*, December 2008, Canberra.

17 Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit, *Report 413: the efficiency dividend and small agencies: size does matter*, December 2008, Canberra, p. 56.

18 Government response to Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit, *Report 413: the efficiency dividend and small agencies: size does matter*, February 2010, Canberra.

Australian National Audit Office

- 4.21 Over the past two decades, the ANAO has undertaken three performance audits of the national collections: *Safeguarding Our National Collection* (1998); *Safe and Accessible National Collections* (2005); and *2017-18 Management of the National Collections* (2018).
- 4.22 The most recent audit, conducted in 2018, assessed whether the NGA and the AWM had implemented effective collections management practices.¹⁹ The importance of the audit can be underscored by the fact that together, the two institutions are responsible for some 70 per cent of the items within Australia's national collections, valued at an estimated \$7 billion.²⁰ The audit concluded that both agencies had deficiencies in governance and collection management practices.
- 4.23 The ANAO found that the AWM had instituted effective governance structures to oversee its responsibilities. However, the NGA:
- required improvement to ensure that its Council fulfils its legislative obligations in relation to financial management;²¹
 - was in an 'at risk' financial position with cash flow issues and had recently added 'solvency' to its strategic risk register as a 'major' risk, although this needed to be considered in light of matters such as the urgent maintenance works required to its building;²²
 - had used injections of equity, designed for the purchase and maintenance of artworks, for operating costs, contrary to the intention of Parliament in making this appropriation;²³ and
 - had a recently implemented risk management framework that had yet to reach maturity and required improvements in the manner that senior management monitored, responded to and reported risks.²⁴
- 4.24 The ANAO found that both institutions lacked 'a meaningful performance framework aligned to program objectives'. In addition, the AWM did 'not include any performance indicators or measures in its Portfolio Budget
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19 Australian National Audit Office, *Report No. 46 2017-18 Management of the National Collections*.

20 Australian National Audit Office, *Report No. 46 2017-18 Management of the National Collections*, p. 7.

21 Australian National Audit Office, *Report No. 46 2017-18 Management of the National Collections*, p. 8.

22 Australian National Audit Office, *Report No. 46 2017-18 Management of the National Collections*, p. 9.

23 Australian National Audit Office, *Report No. 46 2017-18 Management of the National Collections*, p. 9.

24 Australian National Audit Office, *Report No. 46 2017-18 Management of the National Collections*, p. 9.

Statements (PBS) or Corporate Plan'. Concerns were also raised about both institutions' 'partially established documentation in relation to their collections management frameworks' that required process improvements along with centralised and consistent storage, monitoring and review.²⁵

- 4.25 Both national institutions responded to the audit, accepting the ANAO's recommendations and acknowledging the concerns that were raised.²⁶
- 4.26 While broader collection management and storage issues applicable to all national institutions will be considered in chapter 5, the ANAO's audit also outlined a number of key governance, risk management and records management learnings applicable to all national institutions, particularly those charged with care of the national collection. These included that:
- entities should ensure that budget allocations for ongoing maintenance, storage and security are appropriate according to risk;
 - entities should have systems in place to provide the Accountable Authority with assurance that budgets are being managed appropriately and within the intent of appropriations; and
 - entities should identify all relevant policies, plans and procedures; assess and fill in any gaps in these framework documents, ensuring that they meet applicable standards; and maintain them using appropriate version control and approval. Regular review is necessary to ensure that they are current and relevant; as is maintaining them in a central and accessible location.²⁷
- 4.27 The 2018 report also drew attention to certain recommendations made in its previous 2005 report in relation to management of the national collections, which agencies had agreed to at the time, but were being raised again in 2018.²⁸

Australian Government oversight and administration

- 4.28 The Committee received some evidence challenging the administrative and working arrangements between national institutions and their administering Australian Government departments.

25 Australian National Audit Office, *Report No. 46 2017-18 Management of the National Collections*, p. 9.

26 Australian National Audit Office, *Report No. 46 2017-18 Management of the National Collections*, p. 13.

27 Australian National Audit Office, *Report No. 46 2017-18 Management of the National Collections*, p. 14.

28 Australian National Audit Office, *Report No. 46 2017-18 Management of the National Collections*, pp. 59-60.

- 4.29 Dr Stephen Arnott of the Department of Communications and the Arts (DCA), the portfolio through which many of Canberra's national cultural institutions are administered, described the Department's close relationship with national institutions. He advised that the Department assists each institution to ensure that accountability and governance arrangements are consistent with relevant PGPA Act and other legislative obligations. DCA works with relevant institutions to manage funding and programs while also advising the Minister on institutions' activities.²⁹ DCA's submission further outlined its role with national institutions to develop policy and manage funding programs to support the delivery of some exhibitions.³⁰
- 4.30 Some inquiry participants expressed dissatisfaction with arrangements for government administration of national institutions. Honest History submitted to the inquiry that the portfolio arrangements have implications for funding, particularly where a portfolio Minister is responsible for multiple institutions competing for the same pool of funds.³¹ It asserted that competition between institutions could be lessened if regular reviews of administrative arrangements were conducted.³² Mr Brendon Kelson, a former Director of the AWM, pointed out that the need to 'ease the competition for funds' was the catalyst for the Memorial moving between administrative portfolios in the mid-1980s.³³ The National Capital Attractions Association (NCAA) argued that institutions' funding via various portfolios created a 'silo effect' and may diminish 'the collective impact and strategic options for institutions'.³⁴
- 4.31 Science & Technology Australia offered the view that national institutions 'should maintain a balance between accountability and independence' while it was appropriate that they remained accountable to the Australian Government.³⁵ The DCA said that useful scope existed for it, as a portfolio department, to provide corporate support to institutions within its remit, such as assessing corporate planning documents and annual reports.³⁶

29 Dr Stephen Arnott PSM, First Assistant Secretary, Arts Division, Department of Communications and the Arts, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 3.

30 Department of Communications and the Arts, *Submission 1*, pp. 1-2.

31 Honest History, *Submission 14*, p. 9.

32 Honest History, *Submission 14*, p. 3.

33 Mr Brendon Kelson, *Submission 18*, pp. [3-4].

34 National Capital Attractions Association, *Submission 55*, p. 5.

35 Science & Technology Australia, *Submission 38*, p. 4.

36 Dr Stephen Arnott PSM, First Assistant Secretary, Arts Division, Department of Communications and the Arts, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 3.

- 4.32 One national institution cited by some inquiry participants as not having optimal portfolio arrangements was Questacon. Questacon is administered directly by the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science (DIIS) as a division of the department, rather than having its own legislated status and independent board of management. Some submitters, including former senior officers at Questacon, believed that the institution should be transitioned into a statutory agency, consistent with the findings of several recent reviews.³⁷ The proposed re-classification was supported by some inquiry participants due to the perception that Questacon's portfolio arrangements precluded it from pursuing commercial opportunities,³⁸ or receiving philanthropic contributions.³⁹
- 4.33 In contrast to these views, however, Ms Kate Driver, Acting Director of Questacon, advised the Committee that Questacon's portfolio arrangements had not prevented it from generating revenue by commercial means or sponsorship,⁴⁰ or via the establishment of a philanthropic foundation.⁴¹ Mrs Rebecca Manen of DIIS also supported Questacon's existing portfolio arrangements, stating that they assisted the Government in the development of science engagement policy.⁴²

Boards of national institutions

- 4.34 Most national institutions are overseen by a board or council responsible for strategic direction and governance.⁴³ Board composition and operation is usually determined by the relevant institution's establishing legislation⁴⁴ and its members are appointed by either the Governor-General⁴⁵ or the

37 Questacon Advisory Council, *Submission 29*, p. 5; ACT Government, *Submission 69*, pp. 7-8.

38 See for example: Ms Kareena Arthy, Deputy Director-General, ACT Government, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 11.

39 Mr Gordon Ramsay MLA, Minister for the Arts and Community Events, ACT Government, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 9.

40 Ms Kate Driver, Acting Director, Questacon, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 35.

41 Ms Kate Driver, Acting Director, Questacon, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, pp. 35-36.

42 Mrs Rebecca Manen, Acting General Manager, Science Policy Branch, Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 36.

43 See for example: Council of Australasian Museum Directors, *Submission 43*, pp. 9-10;

44 See for example: *National Film and Sound Archive of Australia Act 2008* (Cth), s. 10; *National Portrait Gallery of Australia Act 2012* (Cth), s. 15; and *National Museum of Australia Act 1980* (Cth), s. 10.

45 See for example: *National Gallery Act 1975* (Cth), s. 13; and *National Library Act 1960* (Cth), s. 10.

relevant minister.⁴⁶ Boards of national institutions are also usually the 'accountable authority' for the purposes of the PGPA Act.⁴⁷

4.35 During the inquiry, concerns were raised about the composition of national institutions' boards and their respective responsibilities. Some national institutions asserted that existing board arrangements were appropriate and well-developed.⁴⁸ However, some inquiry participants believed that measures to strengthen national institutions' boards should be implemented to ensure that boards:

- comprise a diverse membership representing the Australian community;⁴⁹
- comprise appropriate expertise and experience for strategic development',⁵⁰ including relevant professional or academic expertise;⁵¹
- have membership contingent on an understanding of the institution's history and culture;⁵²
- include an employee representative to represent staff interests;⁵³
- are structured at arm's length, away from either political⁵⁴ or donor influence;⁵⁵
- establish a gender quota target;⁵⁶
- improve due diligence protocols consistent with the findings of the recent Royal Commission into the Financial Sector;⁵⁷ and
- are administered efficiently without requiring significant resource allocation at the expense of core business.⁵⁸

46 See for example: *National Portrait Gallery of Australia Act 2012* (Cth), s. 16; and *National Museum of Australia Act 1980* (Cth), s. 13(2).

47 Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013, s. 12(2).

48 Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, *Submission 37*, p. [5]; National Library of Australia, *Submission 41*, p. 5.

49 See for example: *Honest History*, *Submission 14*, p. 10; Cultural Facilities Corporation, *Submission 48*, p. 4; Shane Rattenbury MLA and Caroline Le Couteur MLA, *Submission 60*, p. 4.

50 Friends of the National Film and Sound Archive Inc., *Submission 13*, p. 6.

51 See for example: Friends of the National Film and Sound Archive Inc., *Submission 13*, p. 6; Ms Marianne Albury-Colless, *Submission 53*, p. [4]; National Association of the Visual Arts, *Submission 65*, p. [2]; Name withheld, *Submission 74*, p. [5].

52 See for example: Friends of the National Film and Sound Archive Inc., *Submission 13*, p. 6; Dr Andrew Pike, *Submission 24*, p. [2]; Meredith Hinchcliffe, Carolyn Forster OAM and Sandy Forbes, *Submission 56*, pp. 6-7.

53 Shane Rattenbury MLA and Caroline Le Couteur MLA, *Submission 60*, p. 4.

54 Dr Andrew Pike, *Submission 24*, p. [2].

55 *Honest History*, *Submission 14*, p. 10.

56 National Association of the Visual Arts, *Submission 65*, p. [2].

57 National Association of the Visual Arts, *Submission 65*, p. [2].

- 4.36 Inquiry participants considered whether national institutions' boards should include current or former members of parliament. Dr Ayres of the NLA advised that the current members of parliament who sat on its board 'understand our business. They are passionate about our collections and they helped to bring us up to parliament. We couldn't have done it without them'.⁵⁹
- 4.37 Mr Fricker of the NAA had a similar perspective, adding that the members of parliament who were on its advisory council 'bring a great deal to the advisory council in terms of how we should address the challenges that we face'.⁶⁰ This, he advised, included how institutions should respond to and work with government and Parliament. It also included guidance through strategic leadership and direction.⁶¹
- 4.38 Ms Meg Labrum from the NFSA outlined the contribution of former members of parliament on the NFSA's board, noting that their contributions stem from having 'some personal interest in aspects of what the archive does' along with potential political connections that 'have also been useful in terms of promoting some of the things that we're doing'.⁶²
- 4.39 On the other hand the Hon. Dr Brendan Nelson, himself a former federal minister and now the Director of the AWM, advised that he could see both advantages and disadvantages to the idea of parliamentarians sitting on the Memorial's council. He was concerned about the risk of partisan influence and told the Committee that 'I personally wouldn't be recommending that the benefits of appointing serving MPs or senators to it [the council] would outweigh the downside'.⁶³

Consolidating oversight and governance

- 4.40 Some inquiry participants considered that there was a need for national institutions to undertake better long-term policy development,⁶⁴ along with the ability to strategically work together.⁶⁵

58 Name withheld, *Submission 74*, p. [4].

59 Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Chief Executive Officer, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 29.

60 Mr David Fricker, Director-General, National Archives of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 29.

61 Mr David Fricker, Director-General, National Archives of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 29.

62 Ms Meg Labrum, General Manager, Collections and Access, National Film and Sound Archive, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 30.

63 The Hon. Dr Brendan Nelson, Director, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 42.

64 Museums Galleries Australia, *Submission 39*, p. 2.

65 See for example: National Capital Attractions Association, *Submission 55*, p. 5.

- 4.41 The Committee was advised that there was no current formal structure under which national institutions could collectively develop policy for the sector, nor had an assessment of establishing one been undertaken, but the directors of institutions worked closely together.⁶⁶ Some inquiry stakeholders were of the view that a formal structure such as a new Australian government entity, an independent expert advisory body or a council for national institutions⁶⁷ could provide a collective mechanism representing national institutions.⁶⁸
- 4.42 Inquiry participants proposed the types of functions a representative body could undertake, including:
- consideration of longer term financial and staffing arrangements,⁶⁹ and enhanced industry leverage;⁷⁰
 - collaboration for branding, marketing efficiencies, enhanced access and visitation arrangements;⁷¹
 - identification and facilitation of capital programs, such as to provide for additional exhibition space;⁷²
 - effective advocacy and negotiation with the National Capital Authority (NCA) and state and territory governments on regional outreach and planning and development issues;⁷³ and
 - sharing lessons and data to improve the management and activities of national institutions.⁷⁴
- 4.43 Some inquiry participants proposed that the Australian Government consider the Smithsonian Institution in the United States as a model upon which collective governance could be based.⁷⁵ Under this model, each

66 See for example: Dr Stephen Arnott PSM, First Assistant Secretary, Arts Division, Department of Communications and the Arts, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 6 and National Capital Authority, *Submission 63*, p. [5].

67 See for example: Shane Rattenbury MLA and Caroline Le Couteur MLA, *Submission 60*, p. 3.

68 See for example: Dr David Marshall, *Submission 20*, p. 1; National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Submission 26*, p. 6; Ms Kareena Arthy, Deputy Director-General, ACT Government, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 9.

69 See for example: Mr Neil Hermes, *Submission 9*, p. [3]; Mr Brendon Kelson, *Submission 18*, p. [2].

70 Mr Neil Hermes, *Submission 9*, p. [3].

71 National Capital Educational Tourism Project, *Submission 26*, p. 6.

72 See for example: Mr Neil Hermes, *Submission 9*, p. [6]; Mr Brendon Kelson, *Submission 18*, p. [2].

73 Shane Rattenbury MLA and Caroline Le Couteur MLA, *Submission 60*, p. 3.

74 Shane Rattenbury MLA and Caroline Le Couteur MLA, *Submission 60*, p. 3.

75 See for example: Mr Neil Hermes, *Submission 9*, p. [6]; National Capital Attractions Association, *Submission 55*, p. 5; Ms Kareena Arthy, Deputy Director-General, ACT Government, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 13.

institution retained its own identity but fell under the fiscal umbrella of the Smithsonian.⁷⁶

Developing new institutions

4.44 As discussed in chapter 2, Canberra's national institutions represent and promote vital aspects of Australia's history, arts and culture. With this in mind, the inquiry considered both the establishment process for new institutions and proposals for new national institutions in the national capital. While this report will not consider the merits of each new institution proposed in evidence to the Committee, this section examines some proposals which in the Committee's view have significant merit.

Establishment process

4.45 The Committee's terms of reference included examining 'the process for establishing new institutions'. While the Australian Government does not have a specific policy for the establishment of new national institutions, frameworks exist that enable the establishment of new Commonwealth activity, such as the development of a new national institution, to be undertaken by the Commonwealth.

4.46 In assessing proposed new activities, the Australian Government has developed a 'governance structures policy' administered by the Department of Finance. The policy sets out two key points of decision that must be determined prior to the creation of a new activity:

- deciding whether the government can or should conduct an activity itself and, if so;
- establishing the appropriate governance arrangements for conducting that activity.⁷⁷

4.47 The types of governance structure that can be established are specified in the PGPA Act as follows:

- a non-corporate Commonwealth entity, which may be established as a Department of State, a Parliamentary Department or a listed entity;
- a corporate Commonwealth entity, which may be established as a statutory authority, a statutory corporation or a government business enterprise; or

76 Mr Neil Hermes, *Submission 9*, p. [7].

77 Department of Finance, 'Governance policy', <https://www.finance.gov.au/resource-management/governance/policy/>, viewed 4 January 2019.

- a Commonwealth company under the Corporations Act, which may be established as a company limited by shares or a company limited by guarantee.⁷⁸

4.48 There are important differences in the structure and legal personality of each type of entity including whether it is primarily funded through the Budget or has the capacity to operate commercially.⁷⁹ In the case of any new national institution, its structure under the PGPA Act would be determined by its primary activities and proposed financial arrangements.

4.49 In considering the process for developing new national institutions, inquiry participants presented a range of perspectives. The NCA advised the Committee that it 'recognised that the decision regarding the establishment of a new cultural institution is one for the government of the day and that the scale and scope of the facilities are dependent upon the circumstances of the time'.⁸⁰ In responding to any future proposals for new national institutions, particularly within the Parliamentary Zone, the NCA has created:

...an urban design framework able to respond to requirements of any institution that may be created. The core of this is the National Capital Plan. In the National Capital Plan is a series of campus squares that are indicative about what sort of things could go where, but they are definitely not fixed.⁸¹

4.50 The NCA also confirmed that 'there is ample land for new or expanded institutions in the national triangle'.⁸²

4.51 Museums Galleries Australia submitted that:

The process for establishing new institutions should be part of a coherent national policy framework which would enable essential master planning for the sustainable development of current and future institutions and the cultural economy of Canberra.⁸³

78 Department of Finance, 'Types of governance structures', <https://www.finance.gov.au/resource-management/governance/policy/structure-types/>, viewed 4 January 2019.

79 Department of Finance, 'Types of governance structures', <https://www.finance.gov.au/resource-management/governance/policy/structure-types/>, viewed 4 January 2019.

80 Ms Sally Barnes, Chief Executive Officer, National Capital Authority, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 1.

81 Ms Sally Barnes, Chief Executive Officer, National Capital Authority, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 1.

82 Ms Sally Barnes, Chief Executive Officer, National Capital Authority, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 1.

83 Museums Galleries Australia, *Submission 39*, p. 9.

- 4.52 Inquiry participants suggested that in establishing any new national institutions in Canberra, consideration should be given to various other factors including:
- appropriate governance controls to ensure new institutions operate with high accountability;⁸⁴
 - administration by the portfolio department that most closely oversees the relevant subject matter of the institution;⁸⁵
 - a gap analysis to consider aspects of Australian culture not represented by existing institutions;⁸⁶ and
 - impact on the aesthetics around Lake Burley Griffin.⁸⁷

Proposals for new institutions

- 4.53 In response to the Committee's terms of reference, inquiry participants presented the Committee with a broad range of proposals for new national institutions that could be established in Canberra.
- 4.54 While it is beyond the scope of this inquiry to debate the merits of each of these proposals, key themes emerged and included new institutions focussed on:
- representation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;⁸⁸
 - a natural history museum;⁸⁹
 - science and technology;⁹⁰
 - Australia's multiculturalism;⁹¹
 - expanded cultural heritage institutions to cover literature, theatre, art, music and sport;⁹²

84 See for example: *Honest History, Submission 14*, p. 11; Meredith Hinchcliffe, Carolyn Forster OAM and Sandy Forbes, *Submission 56*, p. 7.

85 *Honest History, Submission 14*, p. 11.

86 See for example: Ms Marianne Albury-Colless, *Submission 53*, p. [4].

87 See for example: Lake Burley Griffin Guardians, *Submission 45*, p. 3; Ms Marianne Albury-Colless, *Submission 53*, p. [2].

88 See for example: National Association for the Visual Arts, *Submission 65*, p. [2]; ACT Government, *Submission 69*, p. 10; National Gallery of Australia, *Submission 47*, p. 5.

89 See for example: Mr Phil Creaser, *Submission 2*, p. [1]; Mr Neil Hermes, *Submission 9.1*, p. 1; Australian Academy of Science, *Submission 10*, p. 3; National Capital Attractions Association, *Submission 55*, p. 3; ACT Government, *Submission 69*, p. 2.

90 See for example: Australian Academy of Science, *Submission 10*, p. 3; Heritage, Museums and Conservation Program, University of Canberra, *Submission 23*, p. [2]; National Capital Attractions Association, *Submission 55*, p. 3.

91 ACT Government, *Submission 69*, p. 10.

92 See for example: National Centre for Australian Children's Literature Inc., *Submission 17*, p. 1; Ms Lexi Sekules, *Submission 25*, p. 1; Ms Marianne Albury-Colless, *Submission 53*, p. [4]; ACT

- a bushfire museum and National Bushfire Memorial;⁹³
 - cultural innovation;⁹⁴
 - representation for LGBTIQ Australians;⁹⁵
 - a National Rock Garden;⁹⁶ and
 - a peace museum.⁹⁷
- 4.55 Of these proposals, new national institutions that focussed on natural history and provided representation for Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were particularly well supported by inquiry participants.⁹⁸

Natural History Museum

4.56 The development of a Natural History Museum or Centre in Canberra attracted strong support from inquiry participants, including from the ACT Government. The museum is proposed to have primary carriage of presenting an accessible public natural history collection.⁹⁹

4.57 The rationale for a new institution focused on natural history was underscored in a submission from Ms Julia Landford, who argued that such a museum:

...would help to support and promote a new era of scientific enquiry through full public engagement. Every Australian should be able to engage with biodiversity and environmental issues; they must be able to see and learn about Australia's diverse insect, animal, plant, marine species, and mineral collections through both physical specimens and new technologies.¹⁰⁰

Government, *Submission 69*, pp. 10-11. It should be noted that the National Centre for Australian Children's Literature Inc. already exists in Canberra but is seeking recognition as a national institution.

93 ACT Government, *Submission 69*, p. 10.

94 National Capital Attractions Association, *Submission 55*, p. 3.

95 ACT Government, *Submission 69*, p. 11.

96 National Rock Garden Trust Inc., *Submission 36*, p. 1. It should be noted that the National Rock Garden Inc. already exists in Canberra but is seeking recognition as a national institution.

97 Medical Association for the Prevention of War (Australia), *Submission 57*, p. 5.

98 See for example: National Gallery of Australia, *Submission 47*, p. 5; Ms Marianne Albury-Colless, *Submission 53*, p. [4]; National Association for the Visual Arts, *Submission 65*, p. [2]; Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Submission 66*, p. 2; ACT Government, *Submission 69*, p. 10.

99 See for example: Mr Phil Creaser, *Submission 2*, p. [1]; Mr Neil Hermes, *Submission 9.1*, p. 1; Australian Academy of Science, *Submission 10*, p. 1; National Capital Attractions Association, *Submission 55*, p. 3; ACT Government, *Submission 69*, p. 10; Ms Julia Landford, *Submission 70*, p. 4; Mr Doug Rogan, *Submission 71*, p. [1].

100 Ms Julia Landford, *Submission 70*, p. 1-2.

- 4.58 Key benefits from the establishment of a natural history museum proposed by submitters included:
- attracting national and international tourism;¹⁰¹
 - public engagement with science-based issues;¹⁰² and
 - a centralised national facility for natural history collections.¹⁰³
- 4.59 Other possible functions of such a museum were also suggested, including:
- domestic and international outreach;¹⁰⁴
 - cultivating public-private partnerships to fund education and research platforms as well as assist in the dissemination of findings and promote natural science information;¹⁰⁵
 - bringing citizen scientists together in Australia through online innovation;¹⁰⁶ and
 - providing student and public education programs, resources and workshops across a broad range of natural science disciplines.¹⁰⁷

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and a national resting place

- 4.60 A range of views were presented to the Committee emphasising the importance of better representing Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at the heart of Canberra's national institutions. Mr Ritchie from AIATSIS told the Committee that:

...there is something powerfully significant about the idea of a significant Indigenous institution in the Parliamentary Triangle. That would take some serious investment by government, of course...¹⁰⁸

- 4.61 The ACT Government submitted that:

Celebrating and promoting a better understanding of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history could be achieved through the establishment of a distinct Aboriginal and

101 Mr Phil Creaser, *Submission 2*, p. [2].

102 Australian Academy of Science, *Submission 10*, p. 3.

103 Mr Doug Rogan, *Submission 71*, p. [2].

104 Ms Julia Landford, *Submission 70*, p. 2.

105 Ms Julia Landford, *Submission 70*, p. 2.

106 Ms Julia Landford, *Submission 70*, p. 3.

107 Ms Julia Landford, *Submission 70*, p. 3. See also Mr Doug Rogan, *Submission 71*.

108 Mr Craig Ritchie, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 8.

Torres Strait Islander Museum and Gallery. Large collections of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artefacts are already held across various institutions which are not readily on display.¹⁰⁹

4.62 The National Association of the Visual Arts was of the view that no new national institutions should be considered until there has been a commitment to 'establishing, building and sustaining a First Nations cultural institution'.¹¹⁰ The Association cited several key criteria for the development of a national institution that recognised Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including that it be:

- developed under the self-determined leadership of First Nations Elders and cultural leaders;
- governed by a decision-making model that is in alignment with the Uluru Statement; and
- located on a site that is culturally appropriate and culturally safe.¹¹¹

4.63 ACT Legislative Assembly members Shane Rattenbury and Caroline Le Couteur proposed that Canberra's existing Aboriginal Tent Embassy 'be given standing as an interim national institution'.¹¹² Commenting on the broader issue of Indigenous recognition within Canberra's national institutions, they raised the fact that:

The Australian War Memorial still does not have a monument to fallen Aboriginal Warriors and those who died protecting their culture and country in the Frontier Wars. The Australian public are interested in Aboriginal history in Australia, thus it would be a positive addition for tourists to have the Tent Embassy better supported, and Aboriginal defence force members commemorated.¹¹³

4.64 As an alternative to a new national institution, the Committee heard that consideration should be given to whether AIATSIS, the key existing Australian Government entity charged with preserving Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, heritage and culture, should be expanded.

4.65 According to AIATSIS, an expanded remit for its work could incorporate a range of projects enabling it to transform to a more outward facing agency, including:

109 ACT Government, *Submission 69*, p. 10.

110 National Association for the Visual Arts, *Submission 65*, p. [2].

111 National Association for the Visual Arts, *Submission 65*, p. [2].

112 Shane Rattenbury MLA and Caroline Le Couteur MLA, *Submission 60*, p. 5.

113 Shane Rattenbury MLA and Caroline Le Couteur MLA, *Submission 60*, p. 5.

- Knowledge and Discovery centre – a state-of-the-art technological hub for people to learn about and interact with the AIATSIS collection.
- Extended digital reach and exhibition capacity – a physical and digital expansion to enhance reach and accessibility.
- National Resting Place – AIATSIS to be the custodian of our ancestors with a place where people gather for reflection, education, and learning.
- National Centre of Excellence – a national forum for dialogue and for people to encounter and be transformed by the culture and story of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.¹¹⁴

4.66 In its submission to the inquiry, AIATSIS advised that in any transition to a more outward facing national institution, consideration must be given to its existing facility on the Acton Peninsula, which was no longer fit for purpose. It advised the Committee that at its current location:

Exhibition space is highly restricted, and the facility is lacking in appropriate space as a national forum for people to encounter and be transformed by the story of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.¹¹⁵

4.67 To remedy this situation, Mr Ritchie of AIATSIS advised the Committee that the agency has been developing a capital proposal, to be put to government, that would:

...allow us to extend our facility and create some innovative spaces for people to engage in all sorts of ways, not just traditional museum gallery activities, but utilising digital technology to be able to generally and really powerfully engage with the culture and history of Australia's Indigenous people.¹¹⁶

4.68 AIATSIS agreed that an appropriate facility could potentially be developed in the Parliamentary Zone and could include a national resting place.¹¹⁷ AIATSIS submitted to the inquiry that such a memorial:

...would offer a place where people would gather for reflection, for education, and for learning. It would be a place for the individual and a place for all.¹¹⁸

114 Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Submission 66*, p. 2.

115 Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Submission 66*, p. 3.

116 Mr Craig Ritchie, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 58.

117 Mr Craig Ritchie, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, pp. 58-59. See also Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Submission 66*, pp. 3-4.

118 Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Submission 66*, p. 4.

- 4.69 The Committee was told that the issue of a national resting place had previously been considered on a number of occasions.¹¹⁹ The concept responds to the removal for more than 150 years of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ancestral remains from their Indigenous Country, to be placed in museums, universities and private collections in Australia and overseas. While the return of ancestors to their traditional lands is extremely important to Australia's Indigenous peoples, in some cases their exact location of origin can not be identified. In other cases, traditional owners may not have suitable land for their reburial on Country.
- 4.70 At present, remains which cannot be returned to Country are housed mostly in the National Museum of Australia, and also in some state museums. Indigenous people have expressed concern for some time, however, that museums are not a culturally appropriate location for their ancestors. They have sought the establishment of a national resting place where these ancestral remains could be housed in a way that recognises their deep significance, accords them respect and dignity, and allows Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to visit and pay respect to them in culturally appropriate ways.¹²⁰
- 4.71 Most recently, the final report of Parliament's Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, in 2018 discussed the issue of a national resting place.¹²¹ In particular, that Committee's report supported:
- ... the proposal to establish a national place of healing in Canberra. The Committee acknowledges views that such issues involve sensitive cultural considerations and should be developed after further consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as necessary.¹²²

119 Dr Stephen Arnott PSM, First Assistant Secretary, Arts Division, Department of Communications and the Arts, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 6. See also Mr Craig Ritchie, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 59 and Ms Marianne Albury-Colless, *Submission 53*, pp. [4-5].

120 For detailed discussion of the national resting place proposal, see Attorney-General's Department Advisory Committee for Indigenous Repatriation, *National Resting Place Consultation Report 2014*, <https://www.arts.gov.au/documents/national-resting-place-consultation-report-2014>, viewed 12 March 2019.

121 Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, *Final Report*, November 2018, p. 185.

122 Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, *Final Report*, November 2018, paragraph 6.104.

Committee comment

4.72 As Australian Government entities, Canberra's national institutions are accountable to the Australian people, through the Commonwealth Parliament and Government, for their operations and management of public resources. The Committee believes that effective management and governance arrangements and appropriate oversight are essential to ensure that the institutions continue to enjoy public support.

Oversight and administration

4.73 The Committee notes the evidence it received from national institutions regarding the need for a modern and appropriate legislative framework to assist institutions adapt to an evolving set of public expectations. The Committee welcomes the examples provided to it about measures being undertaken to update and reform legislation relevant to some institutions. The Committee believes that it is imperative upon the Australian Government to ensure that institutions have the appropriate legislative arrangements to effectively conduct their activities in contemporary Australian society.

4.74 While the role of Parliament with respect to national institutions is well established, the Committee is concerned about evidence received during the inquiry about the lack of action taken in response to the 2008 report of the JCPAA on the impact of the efficiency dividend on small agencies. Matters pertaining to the efficiency dividend will be discussed in detail in chapter 5 of this report, but in relation to the principle of parliamentary oversight, the Committee is disappointed that recommendations by a parliamentary committee that may have led to an improved operational environment for many national institutions were not supported.

4.75 The Committee is also particularly interested in the enduring nature of the themes identified in audits examining national institutions conducted by the ANAO over the past decade. In the Committee's view, several themes permeate across audit reports from 2005 and 2018, including in relation to governance, risk management and records management. At a broad level, it is of significant concern to the Committee that issues raised in 2005 remain to be resolved by some national institutions, and were the subject of repeated audit findings in 2018. At a time when national institutions are seeking support from Australian taxpayers for new and expanded resources to continue to fulfil their roles, it is imperative that their governance, including financial management, be above question.

- 4.76 The Committee has some specific governance-related concerns about the outcomes of the 2018 audit of the AWM and NGA. In particular, the Committee is of the view that:
- the AWM must include objective performance measures as part of future Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS) or Corporate Plans, and indicate the basis on which these will be determined, benchmarked and assessed;
 - the NGA must similarly undertake a clear process to determine, benchmark and assess its key performance indicators, in light of the ANAO's conclusion that some of these were not met;
 - the NGA should clarify whether it continues to be at an 'at risk' position with respect to cash flow issues and whether it still faces a 'major risk' with respect to solvency; and if so, the urgent measures being undertaken to redress that situation; and
 - the NGA should take immediate measures to strengthen its financial governance and oversight, given the ANAO's finding that Collection Development Acquisition Budget funds had been utilised for the NGA's operational costs rather than its collection development.
- 4.77 In the Committee's assessment, many of the recommendations made by the ANAO in both its 2005 and 2018 reports are likely to be applicable to the ongoing operations of all of Canberra's national institutions. Given the apparent lack of implementation of some of the 2005 recommendations, the Committee considers that stronger monitoring of institutions' responses to audit findings may be warranted. In its *Draft Annual Audit Work Program 2019-20*,¹²³ the ANAO has proposed a 'follow-on' audit which would consider reforms undertaken in response to its 2018 report, and also examine the collection management practices of a further two of the 12 national collecting institutions. The Committee welcomes this, and is of the view that such an audit should be expanded to examine the compliance of all relevant national institutions with the findings and recommendations that remain outstanding from its previous reports.

123 Australian National Audit Office, *Draft 2019–20 Annual Audit Work Program*, <https://www.anao.gov.au/work-program/draft>, viewed 2 April 2019.

Recommendation 10

The Committee recommends that during the 2019-2020 financial year the Australian National Audit Office conduct a follow-up audit of Canberra's National Collecting Institutions, with a particular focus on monitoring their implementation of relevant recommendations made in the ANAO's 2005 and 2018 reports relating to the national collections.

- 4.78 The Committee notes views expressed during the inquiry that some national institutions may benefit from either changed portfolio circumstances or reclassification under the PGPA Act. The Committee considers, however, that the administration of portfolios and the entities within them should remain a matter for the Australian Government. Having said that, the Australian Government should ensure that its administrative arrangements provide each national institution with the best opportunity to discharge its responsibilities and capitalise on potential new commercial opportunities. The latter issue will be considered in chapter 5.

Boards of management

- 4.79 The Committee is of the view that that the boards of national institutions provide an opportunity for members with various perspectives including with government, corporate and industry expertise to shape the strategic direction of each institution. The Committee agrees with some inquiry participants that additional measures could strengthen board appointments. In particular, the Committee finds attractive the notion that the boards of national institutions should include representatives who reflect Australia's cultural diversity; possess relevant strategic, professional and subject matter expertise; and understand the institution's history and culture.
- 4.80 The Committee also sees that there is value in the appointment of current or former members of parliament to institutions' boards, particularly to assist in navigating competing political and policy objectives that may arise. In making or recommending such appointments, relevant ministers or the Governor-General should have regard to the capacity of the proposed appointee to bring relevant experience and an apolitical perspective grounded in the best interests of the institution concerned.

Consolidating oversight and governance

- 4.81 The Committee is cognisant of views expressed during the inquiry that pointed to the need for national institutions to develop a collective policy,

strategy and negotiation mechanism. A number of suggestions for how this could be achieved were presented including the development of a new Australian Government oversight agency, an independent expert advisory body or a council for national institutions.

- 4.82 The Committee did not find a compelling case for the significant restructuring of arrangements to consolidate national institutions under a single agency or portfolio. The Committee considers that it would be more appropriate for the Australian Government to convene a less directive but highly consultative structure, such as a council, comprising senior representatives of each institution. Such a structure could be utilised to develop collective strategic planning and policy; explore efficiencies, including sharing of resources; and provide for joint advocacy, negotiation and collaborative marketing efforts. Any new structure should include representatives from the NCA and the ACT Government.

Recommendation 11

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government, in consultation with Canberra's national institutions, the National Capital Authority and the ACT Government, develop a formal consultative structure for national institutions, to pursue the alignment of their strategic planning and policy, explore efficiencies and sharing resources where appropriate, and provide for joint advocacy, negotiation and collaborative marketing.

Developing new national institutions

- 4.83 Evidence given to the inquiry made it clear that there is strong community interest in the development of new national institutions to be based in Canberra. It was apparent from the evidence that in developing new national institutions, a clear strategic focus and strong governance framework should be part of the decision-making process undertaken by the Australian Government. Additionally, the Committee considers that the resourcing issues to be discussed in chapter 5 should be addressed prior to the creation of any new national institution.
- 4.84 The Committee was pleased to see the breadth of potential focus areas for new institutions in Canberra raised by inquiry participants. Some of these proposed innovative ideas that could be explored in further detail in the coming years. However, the Committee believes that two proposals made to the Committee are worthy of more detailed immediate consideration by the Australian Government: a natural history museum; and a national

institution that represents our nation's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, located within the Parliamentary Zone.

- 4.85 The Committee agrees that there is a case for a new national natural history museum to be based in Canberra. While there are currently various national institutions that focus on aspects of Australia's natural history and sciences, there is scope for a more integrated public scientific and research institution that could capitalise on the existing natural sciences resources in Canberra, enhance tourism and also develop opportunities for more commercial engagement for Australian science.

Recommendation 12

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government develop a business case for the establishment of a natural history museum in Canberra.

- 4.86 The Committee believes that formal public recognition of Australia's Indigenous heritage in our nation's capital is long overdue. The Committee noted that many participants in the inquiry held a similar view. While several national institutions highlighted their Indigenous collections or exhibitions, this does not substitute for a comprehensive and highly visible national institution focused on Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander story. The present representation of Indigenous Australia within the core national institutions precinct of the Parliamentary Zone is chiefly one of protest, and does not provide for a broader acknowledgement and celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, heritage and culture.
- 4.87 The Committee believes that there is a need for formal recognition of Australia's Indigenous heritage within the Parliamentary Zone. This includes a national resting place for ancestral remains that are unable to be returned to Country or that the relevant communities choose to house temporarily or permanently in the national memorial.
- 4.88 The Committee's site visit to AIATSIS' headquarters on the Acton Peninsula highlighted the unheralded value of that agency as a national institution through its research and preservation activities. It was also apparent to the Committee that AIATSIS offers an untapped visitor experience that could be further developed with larger facilities. As such, the Committee believes that the Australian Government should consider relocating AIATSIS from its current location to new, purpose built facilities in the Parliamentary Zone. The new site should be easily

accessible to the public, incorporate a public exhibition space and a national resting place.

Recommendation 13

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government relocate the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) from its current location on the Acton Peninsula to a new location in Canberra's Parliamentary Zone; and expand the remit and facilities of AIATSIS to constitute a comprehensive national institution focused on the history, culture and heritage of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This should include public exhibition facilities, and a national resting place for repatriated ancestral remains that cannot immediately return to Country. The institution should be developed under the leadership and in comprehensive consultation with Indigenous Australians.

- 4.89 The Committee notes that the relocation of AIATSIS into the Parliamentary Zone may also present an opportunity for the NFSA to relocate to the premises vacated by AIATSIS on the Acton Peninsula. The NFSA's current facilities and its case for such a move are discussed in chapter 5.

Resourcing Canberra's national institutions

- 5.1 As discussed in chapter 2, Canberra's national institutions have vital roles to play in preserving and presenting Australia's national story. This includes, for many, legislated mandates to collect, maintain and preserve aspects of Australia's art, culture and history, and to make these available to the Australian people.
- 5.2 Bearing in mind the discussion in previous chapters about the purposes, activities and expectations of national institutions, this chapter considers the adequacy of the financial and other resources available to them to fulfil their functions. This includes national institutions' annual budget appropriations, the impact of the efficiency dividend and institutions' staffing capacity. It also considers the maintenance of Commonwealth facilities, collection storage, the need for expanded exhibition space, parking issues and the need for digitisation of physical collection materials.
- 5.3 In addition to the Commonwealth funded resources available to national institutions, this chapter also examines their capacity to derive additional income and funding from other sources such as private sector and philanthropic support, or exploiting commercial opportunities.

Resource challenges

- 5.4 The adequacy of Commonwealth financial and physical resources available to national institutions was the subject of a great deal of evidence received by the inquiry. In particular, submitters raised concerns that diminishing budgetary resources, coupled with the Commonwealth's efficiency dividend, had compromised national institutions' ability to maintain adequate staffing levels, facilities and services, and fulfil the need for the digitisation of physical collection material.

Budgets and the efficiency dividend

- 5.5 The Australian Government is responsible for the determination and allocation of annual budget appropriations for each of Canberra's national institutions. Annual appropriations are used to cover core expenditure on activities and staffing. Appropriations may also vary to fund new policy proposals approved by the government.
- 5.6 All Commonwealth entities, including national institutions, have been subject to an efficiency dividend on annual appropriations since 1987.¹ The efficiency dividend, applied at a rate determined for each financial year, has been defined as an 'annual reduction in funding for the overall running costs of an agency' and is intended to realise savings resulting from productivity increases by Commonwealth agencies.² While the rate of the efficiency dividend has varied since its inception,³ the Committee was advised that in 2017-18 it was 2.5 per cent, and would be 2 per cent in 2018-19 and 1.5 per cent in 2019-20.⁴
- 5.7 The Committee was told that the efficiency dividend has had a significant and compounding effect on Canberra's national institutions over the past decade.⁵ This has included a 3 per cent 'efficiency target' imposed on some National Cultural and Collecting Institutions within the Communications and Arts portfolio in the 2015-16 financial year in addition to the usual efficiency dividend requirements.⁶
- 5.8 The Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU) submitted to the Committee that budgetary pressures on cultural institutions have meant that they have 'struggled to fulfil their legislated mandate within the ongoing funding'.⁷ This assessment was supported by a number of national institutions including the National Film and Sound Archive

1 Community and Public Sector Union, *Submission 12*, p. 5. See also: Nicholas Horne, 'The Commonwealth efficiency dividend: an overview', 13 December 2012, Australian Parliamentary Library, https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/BN/2012-2013/EfficiencyDividend, viewed 13 December 2018.

2 Nicholas Horne, 'The Commonwealth efficiency dividend: an overview', 13 December 2012, Australian Parliamentary Library.

3 Nicholas Horne, 'The Commonwealth efficiency dividend: an overview', 13 December 2012, Australian Parliamentary Library.

4 Australian National Botanic Gardens, *Submission 15.1*, Answer to Questions on Notice, p. 1. See also: Community and Public Sector Union, *Submission 12*, p. 6.

5 See for example: Childers Group, *Submission 31*, p. [3]; Australian War Memorial, *Submission 32*, p. 11; Museums Galleries Australia, *Submission 39*, p. 1; National Gallery of Australia, *Submission 47*, p. 2.

6 Community and Public Sector Union, *Submission 12*, p. 6.

7 Community and Public Sector Union, *Submission 12*, p. 4.

(NFSA), which submitted to the Committee that its appropriation had decreased in recent years:

Between 2014-15 and 2017-18 the NFSA's total appropriation has decreased...[as] a result of the application of the efficiency dividend...The reduction in funding has demanded a need to reduce ASL [Average Staffing Levels].⁸

5.9 The National Archives of Australia (NAA) also advised that its operational appropriation had decreased in recent years, although is projected to increase over upcoming forward estimates to coincide with an approved refurbishment project.⁹

5.10 The National Gallery of Australia (NGA) told the Committee about the challenges it faced as a result of budgetary pressures, submitting to the inquiry that:

Funding reductions have put the core purposes of the NGA at risk, with questions around financial sustainability, caring for the collection and the planning of our loans programs under constant review.

While we understand that these cuts have been uniformly imposed across the APS it is hoped the Committee will take note of the profoundly negative impact they have had on the running of the organisation, staff morale, brand perception and the ability to foster a culture of new ideas and innovation. The level of current government appropriation is \$47 million per annum, the same sum provided by government in 2007. The implications of this statement are obvious...¹⁰

5.11 The NFSA articulated the challenge faced by many national institutions, advising the Committee that one of its greatest challenges was to remain within its current funding arrangements and to:

...adequately invest in critical infrastructure, including maintenance of land, buildings and the national audiovisual collection, while also undertaking programs to promote preserving and sharing the collection in digital format. A key priority for us is to maximise our revenue base as well as using our existing resources in the most efficient and effective manner possible. The combined impacts of the efficiency dividend and

8 National Film and Sound Archive, *Submission 28*, pp. 4-5.

9 National Archives of Australia, *Submission 54*, p. 8.

10 National Gallery of Australia, *Submission 47*, p. 2.

rising staffing costs have meant that the resources available to us to fulfil our mandate are becoming increasingly stretched.¹¹

- 5.12 The Australian Society of Archivists agreed that 'there have been clear indicators the level of resourcing of the national cultural institutions has been shrinking over many years'.¹² However, it advised the Committee that there was some improvement in the budgetary position for national institutions recently as part of the 2017-18 Commonwealth budget, due to the allocation of:

...\$48.5 million...over three years to support Australia's national cultural collections and allow them to transition to more modern and sustainable operating models. This includes upgrading outdated ICT systems and other assets.¹³

- 5.13 Mr Craig Ritchie, Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS), described the impact of the efficiency dividend on his small national institution:

For us, it has a particularly difficult effect. In this financial year, it costs us \$300,000 dollars, and it will rise to \$600,000 in 2019-20. When you've got an appropriation of \$20 million, that eats away fairly significantly. Our average staffing costs are \$100,000. If you convert that into staff numbers from having to absorb that every year – as for every institution and every part of government, it has an impact on your ability to deliver outcomes.¹⁴

- 5.14 The Hon. Dr Brendan Nelson, Director of one of Canberra's largest national institutions, the Australian War Memorial (AWM), said that the Memorial had also been impacted by the efficiency dividend, although he advised that the Australian Government had recognised the effect of this impact:

In the last five years we have lost \$7.9 million from the efficiency dividend and to the end of the estimates period it will amount to \$10.2 million. That has obviously had an impact. However, the government has been very responsive to us. In the 2016-17 [Mid-Year Economic and Financial Outlook] MYEFO we were given \$4 million to essentially allow us to cope with significantly increasing demand for services, which offset the impact of [the] efficiency

11 National Film and Sound Archives, *Submission 28*, p. 4.

12 Australian Society of Archivists, *Submission 51*, p. 6.

13 Australian Society of Archivists, *Submission 51*, p. 6. See also: Australian War Memorial, *Submission 32*, p. 9; National Library of Australia, *Submission 41*, p. 3.

14 Mr Craig Ritchie, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 57.

dividend. That of course is \$4 million over four years, so in the 2020-21 budget year we fall off a cliff.¹⁵

- 5.15 The efficiency dividend has challenged the ability of many national institutions to capitalise on their strengths.¹⁶ In some cases, national institutions have had to reduce existing activities including travelling exhibitions, services to the public, face-to-face outreach and content creation.¹⁷ A number of examples were provided to the Committee including that:
- the NGA, National Portrait Gallery (NPG), National Library of Australia (NLA), National Museum of Australia (NMA), Museum of Australian Democracy (MoAD), and AWM have had many fewer travelling exhibitions than previously;¹⁸
 - MoAD's research library, fellowships and summer scholarships to study Australian prime ministers have been discontinued;¹⁹ and
 - the NFSA is unable to digitally restore old Australian films or create its own exhibitions without a collaboration with another institution.²⁰
- 5.16 The impact of the efficiency dividend on smaller agencies was the subject of an inquiry by the Commonwealth Parliament's Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit (JCPAA) in 2008, as discussed in chapter 4.²¹ One of that committee's recommendations provided two options for managing the efficiency dividend: that an exemption from the efficiency dividend apply to either the first \$50 million of all agencies' appropriations, or alternatively that an exemption be applied to the first \$50 million of all agencies' appropriations where departmental expenses

15 The Hon. Dr Brendan Nelson, Director, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 43.

16 See for example: Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Director-General, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 20; The Hon. Dr Brendan Nelson, Director, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 43; GLAM Peak, *Submission 34*, p. [3]; Australian Academy of the Humanities, *Submission 44*, p. 1.

17 See for example: Community and Public Sector Union, *Submission 12*, p. 2; Mr Luke Gosling OAM MP, *Submission 75*, p. 2; Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Director-General, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 18.

18 Meredith Hinchcliffe, Carolyn Forster OAM and Sandy Forbes, *Submission 56*, p. 4. See also: Community and Public Sector Union, *Submission 12*, p. 2.

19 Meredith Hinchcliffe, Carolyn Forster OAM and Sandy Forbes, *Submission 56*, p. 2.

20 Mr Jan Müller, Chief Executive Officer, National Film and Sound Archive, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 22.

21 Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit, 'Report 413: The efficiency dividend: size does matter', December 2008, https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_Committees?url=jcpaa/efficdiv/index.htm, viewed 13 December 2018.

totalled less than \$150 million.²² Both options excluded appropriations provided to 'departments of state'. This particular recommendation was not agreed to by the Australian Government and the present Committee was advised that the impact on Canberra's national institutions, as a result of the efficiency dividend, remains.²³

- 5.17 Some participants in this Committee's inquiry were supportive of the concept that national institutions should either be exempt from the efficiency dividend,²⁴ or have funding reductions reversed.²⁵

Staffing

- 5.18 Staff members at Canberra's national institutions are passionate about their work and the important role played by their institutions. The Committee was told that the institutions' staff are often highly educated and many employees have very specialised skills, particularly with respect to the maintenance of items within the national collections.²⁶
- 5.19 The inquiry was told of the impact that ongoing staff reductions at national institutions had due to the efficiency dividend and also the Average Staffing Level (ASL) cap imposed by the Australian Government.²⁷ The ASL cap is the Australian Government's 2015-16 Budget commitment to return the size of the permanent staffing level of the Australian Public Service to levels that were last recorded in the 2006-07 Budget.²⁸ In determining its workforce requirements, each Australian

22 Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit, 'Report 413: The efficiency dividend: size does matter', December 2008, https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_Committees?url=jcpaa/effidiv/index.htm, viewed 13 December 2018.

23 See for example: Walter Burley Griffin Society Inc., *Submission 5*, p. [2]; Community and Public Sector Union, *Submission 12*, p. 6; Mr Peter Jones and Ms Susan Taylor, *Submission 21*, p. [1]; Australian War Memorial, *Submission 32*, p. 11; Mr Luke Gosling OAM MP, *Submission 75*, p. 2; Ms Cassandra O'Hare, Section Secretary for the National Cultural Institutions, Community and Public Sector Union, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 10.

24 See for example: Community and Public Sector Union, *Submission 12*, p. 3; Mr Peter Jones and Ms Susan Taylor, *Submission 21*, p. [1]; National Gallery of Australia, *Submission 47*, p. 2; National Association for the Visual Arts, *Submission 65*, p. [1]; Name withheld, *Submission 74*, p. 1. Museums Galleries Australia, *Submission 39*, p. 2. See also: Walter Burley Griffin Society Inc., *Submission 5*, p. [2]. Mr Gerard Vaughan AM, Director, National Gallery of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 48.

25 Mrs Beth Vincent-Pietsch, Deputy Secretary, Community and Public Sector Union, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 12.

26 Ms Cassandra O'Hare, Section Secretary for the National Cultural Institutions, Community and Public Sector Union, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 10.

27 See for example: Mr Peter Jones and Ms Susan Taylor, *Submission 21*, p. [1].

28 Australian Government, 2015-16 Budget Paper No. 4, Part 2: Staffing of Agencies, https://www.budget.gov.au/2015-16/content/bp4/html/bp4_part_02.htm, viewed 29 January 2019.

Government entity is required to estimate 'the average number of employees receiving salary or wages over the financial year, with adjustments for casual and part-time staff, to show the average full-time equivalent'.²⁹ According to the CPSU, the existence of the ASL cap means that 'regardless of funding levels or operational requirements, agencies are forced to have a maximum average staffing level'.³⁰

- 5.20 In addition to concerns expressed by the CPSU, a number of national institutions submitted to the committee that they had either reduced or intended to reduce staff numbers to comply with the ASL cap.³¹
- 5.21 Science & Technology Australia told the Committee more generally that the efficiency dividend had resulted in the loss of staff at the NLA:
- In 2016, an efficiency dividend cut \$4.4 million from the Australian Library resulting in the loss of 22 full-time positions among the core library staff. These cuts came from the Library's digitisation project, which is one of the only mechanisms by which the Library can provide access to its vast and valuable collections to the rest of the country.³²
- 5.22 The NLA itself told the Committee that ASL caps 'pose a significant challenge to membership-based enterprises such as Trove which require long-term staffing to deliver the value members expect in return for their annual fees'.³³ As a result of ASL cap constraints, the NLA faces a challenge to grow a service that generates revenue.³⁴
- 5.23 The AWM, on the other hand, advised the Committee that in addition to the recent funding increases to offset some of the impact of the efficiency dividend, it had:
- ...just been advised that we are to receive another eight ASL for this year and we'll go to 12 ASL additional next year, which will take us back to where we were a decade ago...³⁵

29 Australian Government, 2015-16 Budget Paper No. 4, Part 2: Staffing of Agencies, https://www.budget.gov.au/2015-16/content/bp4/html/bp4_part_02.htmhttps://www.budget.gov.au/2015-16/content/bp4/html/bp4_part_02.htm, viewed 29 January 2019.

30 Community and Public Sector Union, *Submission 12*, p. 11.

31 Community and Public Sector Union, *Submission 12*, p. 9; National Film and Sound Archives, *Submission 28*, p. 5; National Gallery of Australia, *Submission 47*, p. 2; National Archives of Australia, *Submission 54*, p. 9; National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 10.

32 Science & Technology Australia, *Submission 38*, p. 3.

33 National Library of Australia, *Submission 41*, p. 4.

34 National Library of Australia, *Submission 41*, p. 4.

35 The Hon. Dr Brendan Nelson, Director, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 43.

- 5.24 Issues identified to the Committee resulting from staff reductions at national institutions included mental health impacts on remaining staff, health and safety issues and incidents or damage to collection items occurring due to increased workloads.³⁶
- 5.25 The CPSU advised that it had undertaken its own survey of staff at Canberra's national institutions that revealed increased staff workloads; unfilled vacancies; an increased reliance on casuals, contractors or labour hire; and activities being reduced as a result of budgetary constraints.³⁷ Some inquiry participants stressed that steps should be taken to stem the impacts on institutions' staff including the need for national institutions to further invest in staff given their 'depth of knowledge, efficiency and expertise related to collection management, development and interpretation'.³⁸
- 5.26 The Committee was told that some national institutions recruit temporary staff to cover staffing shortfalls, because such recruitment is not subject to the ASL cap.³⁹ These temporary employees are often required to conduct core activities that would have ordinarily been conducted by permanent staff.⁴⁰ The Committee was advised of the disadvantages of such staffing arrangements including that there is a loss of corporate knowledge, increasing workloads on existing staff and the loss of specialist skills gained by temporary staff that have required significant training to attain.⁴¹ In addition, it was noted that the cost of recruiting and retaining temporary staff is higher than that associated with permanent staff or those on longer contracts.⁴²

36 See for example: Community and Public Sector Union, *Submission 12*, pp. 9-10 and 13; and Ms Cassandra O'Hare, Section Secretary for the National Cultural Institutions, Community and Public Sector Union, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 11.

37 Community and Public Sector Union, *Submission 12*, p. 9.

38 Council of Australasian Museum Directors, *Submission 43*, p. 7. See also: Heritage, Museums and Conservation Program in the Faculty of Arts and Design, University of Canberra, *Submission 23*, p. [1].

39 See for example: Community and Public Sector Union, *Submission 12*, p. 11; The Hon. Dr Brendan Nelson, Director, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 41; Mr Craig Ritchie, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 57.

40 Community and Public Sector Union, *Submission 12*, p. 11. See also: Meredith Hinchcliffe, Carolyn Forster OAM and Sandy Forbes, *Submission 56*, p. 2.

41 Community and Public Sector Union, *Submission 12*, p. 10 and 13. Also supported by Meredith Hinchcliffe, Carolyn Forster OAM and Sandy Forbes, *Submission 56*, p. 2.

42 See for example: Ms Anne Bennie, Assistant Director, Branch Head Public Programs, Australian War Memorial; *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 41 and Community and Public Sector Union, *Submission 12*, p. 11.

- 5.27 Some inquiry participants were of the view that that there needed to be more flexibility around the administration of ASL caps,⁴³ such as temporary increases tied to specific projects.⁴⁴

Volunteers

- 5.28 Volunteers form an important aspect of the operation of many of Canberra's national institutions, often working alongside remunerated staff in a variety of roles including the enhancement of the visitor experience. Evidence to the inquiry suggested that the value of work contributed by highly-skilled volunteers at Canberra's national institutions should not go unrecognised.⁴⁵
- 5.29 The NGA, NLA and Australian National Botanic Gardens (ANBG) all highlighted the substantial contribution volunteers make to these institutions. In particular, the Committee was told that volunteers enhance the visitor experience by providing unique opportunities, such as free of charge behind the-the-scenes tours of the NLA⁴⁶ or guided tours tailored to the interest of visitors at the NGA.⁴⁷
- 5.30 The NLA is supported by volunteers around Australia who work to correct text in local publications as part of its *Trove* service. The NLA told the Committee that as 'at April 2018, 266.45 million lines of text have been corrected by these digital volunteers, with the total value of this work to date estimated at \$46.3 million'.⁴⁸
- 5.31 The ANBG has over 150 volunteers contributing over 32 000 hours per year.⁴⁹ Volunteers at the ANBG work:
- ...across a range of activities and areas including the Herbarium, National Seed Bank, Library, photography collection, Botanical Resource Centre, education section, Flora Explorer drivers, tour guides and the ANBG's Visitor Centre. The Friends of the ANBG also provide many volunteer opportunities through the Friends' special interest groups including the Growing Friends, Botanic Art

43 See for example: Questacon Advisory Council, *Submission 29*, p. 6.

44 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 10.

45 Meredith Hinchliffe, Carolyn Forster OAM and Sandy Forbes, *Submission 56*, p. 6. See also: National Gallery of Australia Voluntary Guides Association, *Submission 11*, p. 1.

46 See for example: Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Director-General, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 26 and National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 10.

47 National Gallery of Australia Voluntary Guides Association, *Submission 11*, p. 1.

48 National Library of Australia, *Submission 41*, p. 2.

49 Australian National Botanic Gardens, *Submission 15*, p. 9.

Group, Photography Group, Thursday Talk and Activities committee.⁵⁰

- 5.32 The Committee was advised that some national institutions are in the process of improving how volunteer programs are operated. To address current gaps in its volunteer program, the NAA advised that it is currently developing a National Volunteer Strategy to establish a consistent approach to the development and delivery of a new national volunteer program across the institution.⁵¹ However, the CPSU submitted to the Committee that some of its members employed at the NAA had expressed concern that funding reductions had led the NAA to become reliant on volunteers for the provision of some services.⁵²
- 5.33 The Friends of the National Film and Sound Archive Inc. noted that the Archive currently operates a limited volunteer program at its offices in both Canberra and Sydney, although it submitted to the inquiry that the NFSA does not have a 'tradition of utilising volunteers in its daily routine work'.⁵³ The Friends suggested that an appropriately managed volunteer program could enlarge the NFSA's resource base through the use of 'skills, collection knowledge and corporate memory'.⁵⁴

Facilities

- 5.34 National institutions are largely responsible for the maintenance and management of their own physical facilities. Evidence to the inquiry considered several issues for national institutions in managing this responsibility including:
- facility maintenance;
 - collection storage;
 - expanded or shared exhibition space;
 - parking; and
 - digitisation.

Facility maintenance

- 5.35 Most facilities utilised by Canberra's national institutions for their public-facing operations are Commonwealth assets. The regular maintenance

50 Australian National Botanic Gardens, *Submission 15*, p. 9. See also Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens, *Submission 16*, p. 2.

51 National Archives of Australia, *Submission 54*, p. 25.

52 Community and Public Sector Union, *Submission 12*, p. 16.

53 Friends of the National Film and Sound Archive Inc., *Submission 13*, p. 7.

54 Friends of the National Film and Sound Archive Inc., *Submission 13*, p. 7.

- costs for these facilities are generally factored into institutions' annual budget appropriation from the Australian Government.
- 5.36 However, Mr Andrew Smith, Chief Planner of the National Capital Authority (NCA) told the Committee that despite the need for institutions to maintain their facilities 'funding generally has not kept pace with the needs for maintenance. A lot of the physical infrastructure has deteriorated to a point where major capital works are required'.⁵⁵
- 5.37 This was consistent with evidence given to the Committee by several national institutions. The NFSA described how its building in Acton was 'no longer fit for purpose'.⁵⁶ The NGA submitted that funding reductions had reduced its capacity to support building maintenance and capital replacement.⁵⁷ The NAA told the Committee that the cost of operating Commonwealth-owned facilities had a disproportionate effect on discretionary activities.⁵⁸
- 5.38 In this respect, the Committee was advised by the Department of Finance (DoF) that an individual national institution may seek to lodge a new policy proposal for major capital works. In doing so, it may seek the assistance of the Department to develop a business case.⁵⁹
- 5.39 National institutions provided the Committee with examples of the types of projects that had received additional funding from the Australian Government including:
- security upgrades at the High Court of Australia, funded in the 2018-19 Budget;⁶⁰
 - significant repairs to be undertaken at the NPG, resulting in its closure for six months in 2019 and for which a tender process to determine costings is being undertaken at the time of this report;⁶¹

55 Mr Andrew Smith, Chief Planner, National Capital Authority, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 4.

56 Mr Jan Müller, Chief Executive Officer, National Film and Sound Archive, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 22. See also: National Film and Sound Archive, *Submission 28*, p. 9.

57 National Gallery of Australia, *Submission 47*, p. 2.

58 Mr David Fricker, Director-General, National Archives of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 22.

59 Ms Lorraine Holcroft, Assistant Secretary, Commercial and Government Services, Department of Finance, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 43.

60 Ms Philippa Lynch, Chief Executive and Principal Registrar, High Court of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 7.

61 Ms Lorraine Holcroft, Assistant Secretary, Commercial and Government Services, Department of Finance, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 45. See also: National Portrait Gallery, Media Release, 15 March 2018, 'National Portrait Gallery to undergo renovation work', <https://www.portrait.gov.au/content/npg-renovation>, viewed 20 January 2019; and Australian Government, AusTender, 8 September 2018, 'National Portrait Gallery of

- an additional appropriation of \$13.6 million in the 2017-18 Budget to fund critical building works at Old Parliament House, including upgrading accessibility for compliance with the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth) and the Building Code of Australia;⁶² and
- a \$6.2 million capital injection for urgent repairs on the NGA's building, funded as part of the 2018-19 MYEFO.⁶³

5.40 The Committee was also advised that a major revitalisation of the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) campus in Canberra was under consideration by Sport Australia and the Australian Government. Funding for this project was yet to be committed at the time of this report.⁶⁴

Collection storage

5.41 Many of Canberra's national institutions are responsible for the collection, preservation and display of items representing Australia's history, art, culture and records. As part of its inquiry, the Committee considered evidence concerning the challenge some national institutions are facing to find cost effective and best practice storage solutions as their collections continuously grow and age.

5.42 A number of national institutions and other submitters advised the Committee that there were concerns about storage options for collection items.⁶⁵ For example:

- the NMA acknowledged that it faced challenges with regard to collection storage as previously identified by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO);⁶⁶
- AIATSIS advised that the issue of storage was critical, particularly as its current limited storage facilities 'are at capacity and they're ageing';⁶⁷ and

Australia Stage 2 Building Works – Invitation To Register Interest', <https://www.tenders.gov.au/?event=public.atm.showClosed&ATMUUID=92EC0198-9513-F5BD-7CF9E84DD7AC33>, viewed 29 January 2019.

62 Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, *Submission 37.1*, Answer to Question on Notice, p. [2].

63 Australian Government, 'Budget 2018-19, Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook' Appendix A, p. 162, <https://www.budget.gov.au/2018-19/content/myefo/index.html>, viewed 29 January 2019.

64 Ms Kate Palmer, Chief Executive Officer, Sport Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 6 December 2018, p. 1.

65 Mr Gerard Vaughan AM, Director, National Gallery of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 48. See also: Ms Kassandra O'Hare, Section Secretary for the National Cultural Institutions, Community and Public Sector Union, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 11.

66 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 10.

- the NLA advised that its physical collections are growing at some 2.5 linear kilometres a year and it estimates that by 2020 it will be in 'dire need' of a yet-to-be-identified storage solution.⁶⁸
- 5.43 During its site inspections in September 2018, the Committee visited the storage facilities of the NAA, NMA and AIATSIS. The Committee saw firsthand the significant storage challenges facing these institutions, and was able to discuss with them some of their pressing issues including the appropriateness and condition of facilities, and the limitations of commercial leasing arrangements for storage.
- 5.44 The institutions emphasised the fact that storage needs will only increase in volume and complexity into the future, as all the institutions' collections continue to grow, and as existing items age. Ms Cassandra O'Hare from the CPSU told the Committee that, for example, the 'National Archives were recently given a new, beautiful building but were only given enough storage in this new building to accommodate what they currently own – nothing extra.'⁶⁹ However, The NAA submitted to the Committee that in response to its additional storage needs:
- In late 2019, the Archives will increase the national storage capacity through the completion of a project that will add 75 shelf kms in a re-furnished building located in Mitchell, Australian Capital Territory. The additional building will not be full for a number of years.⁷⁰
- 5.45 The Committee considered the ANAO's 2018 report, *Management of the National Collections*, which considered the collection management frameworks at both the AWM and the NGA. Storage for national collection items was amongst the issues examined by the ANAO and, while the audit relates specifically to the two national institutions concerned, the ANAO's concerns could be broadly applicable to all national institutions with a collecting mandate.
- 5.46 The ANAO's audit made a number of key storage-related recommendations for the AWM and the NGA including:
- the need for both institutions to improve collection management frameworks, particularly with respect to the identification, assessment,

67 Mr Craig Ritchie, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 56.

68 Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Director-General, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 16.

69 Ms Cassandra O'Hare, Section Secretary for the National Cultural Institutions, Community and Public Sector Union, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 11.

70 National Archives of Australia, *Submission 54*, p. 30.

regular review and consistent storage of policies, plans and procedures which are relevant to the management of their collections,⁷¹

- the need for improvements to both institutions' collection acquisition procedures including assessment of the whole-of-life costs of acquisitions,⁷² and
- that the NGA develop and implement a long-term storage solution for the National Collection, ensuring compliance with storage standards for artworks.⁷³

5.47 Both the AWM and the NGA agreed with all of the recommendations made in the audit.⁷⁴ It should be noted that some of these issues were also raised in the ANAO's previous national collections audit conducted in 2005, where the ANAO recommended that the NGA in particular should improve physical security in collection storage areas.⁷⁵ In working towards implementing the ANAO's 2018 recommendations, the NGA advised the Committee that additional capital funding was allocated in the 2018-19 Budget.⁷⁶ This allocation was supplemented by additional funding from the Department of Communication and the Arts.⁷⁷

Shared storage facilities

5.48 The Committee was provided with possible solutions to the storage issues faced by some national institutions, particularly in light of the issues raised by the ANAO's audit. Dr Mathew Trinca of the NMA suggested that a collaborative effort to store particular types of material held by national institutions could 'solve the Commonwealth's very real and considerable problem around national collections being adequately stored'.⁷⁸ The NMA's submission to the inquiry advised that its Cultural

71 Australian National Audit Office, *Report No. 46 2017-18 Management of the National Collections*, Recommendation 3.

72 Australian National Audit Office, *Report No. 46 2017-18 Management of the National Collections*, Recommendations 5 and 6.

73 Australian National Audit Office, *Report No. 46 2017-18 Management of the National Collections*, Recommendation 8. See also: Mr Gerard Vaughan AM, Director, National Gallery of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, pp. 48-49.

74 Australian National Audit Office, *Report No. 46 2017-18 Management of the National Collections*.

75 Australian National Audit Office, *Report No. 59 of 2004-2005, Safe and Accessible National Collections*, paragraph 52.

76 Australian Government, 2018-19 Budget, Budget Paper No. 2, Part 3 Capital Measures, <https://www.budget.gov.au/2018-19/content/bp2/index.html>, viewed 29 January 2019.

77 Dr Stephen Arnott PSM, First Assistant Secretary, Arts Division, Department of Communications and the Arts, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 4.

78 Dr Mathew Trinca, Director, National Museum of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 55. See also Mr Gerard Vaughan AM, Director, National Gallery of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 55.

and Corporate Shared Services Centre (CCSSC) (discussed later in this chapter):

...offers opportunities for the Canberra-based collecting institutions to come together to build a shared, purpose built collection storage facility, which would also enable public access to these important national objects.⁷⁹

- 5.49 The NAA also submitted to the Committee that with respect to its new storage facility, that it was 'open to approaches from other cultural institutions and agencies to pay for temporary storage particularly where they are experiencing storage pressures'.⁸⁰

Whole-of-life costs of collection items

- 5.50 One of the issues raised by the ANAO and closely linked to the issue of storage was the need for assessment of the whole-of-life costs of collection items. The AWM told the Committee that it had improved upon its previous acquisition policy that had resulted in items simply being delivered to it, and the Memorial 'wound up with storerooms full of stuff that we were still processing years afterward'.⁸¹ As part of its acquisition process, the AWM has now instituted a centralised team that is responsible for:

...a process where we're able to turn around a donation for the offer. Most of them come in through a web portal, so people write out what they've got, send us photographs and we do most of the initial assessments off site, without the item actually coming in.

When we say we're really interested in something, it comes to the site and has that final assessment. We'll be looking at things like whether it has potential hazards – asbestos, radiation, those sorts of things. That has enabled us to squeeze the process, which in some stages took several years, down to three months, which is our benchmark.⁸²

- 5.51 Ms Daryl Karp of MoAD also suggested that an analysis of the costs of its long term storage was required, advising the Committee that:

79 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 10.

80 National Archives of Australia, *Submission 54*, p. 30.

81 Major General Brian Dawson (Ret.), Assistant Director, Branch Head National Collection, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 44. See also: Ms Cassandra O'Hare, Section Secretary for the National Cultural Institutions, Community and Public Sector Union, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 14.

82 Major General Brian Dawson (Ret.), Assistant Director, Branch Head National Collection, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 44.

The sheer acquisition costs are quite significant ... The cost of storage is significant, especially if it's a large object. You make the decision that it is too costly to have.⁸³

Expanded exhibition space

5.52 A lack of physical space at many national institutions has constrained the breadth of collection items on public display. The inquiry heard that some national institutions had reached the limits of their existing exhibition space, and were keen to expand it. This would enable institutions to improve the capacity to display items and to increase offerings such as 'blockbuster' exhibitions that draw increasingly large numbers of visitors, especially from interstate.⁸⁴ It was pointed out that major exhibitions allow for a national institution to significantly increase its profile, but because of the space required and visitor capacity available, are not suitable to be hosted by all national institutions.⁸⁵

5.53 The NGA, for example, told the Committee of the need for additional space, advising that:

Of all the galleries in Australia...we've got by far the biggest collection. But, if you take the major institutions, particularly those in Sydney, in Melbourne and in Brisbane, we have by far the smallest building. It's a real problem for us, because we cannot do justice to the national collections. We try and we try, we turn things over now more regularly than we did in the past, but that costs more money and puts more pressure on staff, but that's the best way we can respond to this chronic lack of space – and it's chronic. We need better for the national collection...⁸⁶

5.54 During the inquiry, the AWM also advised that its biggest challenge was a lack of space for its activities and that a business case was being prepared for an expansion of its current facilities.⁸⁷ Some submitters argued against the proposed expansion, however, suggesting that alternatives to create

83 Ms Daryl Karp, Director, Museum of Australian Democracy, Old Parliament House, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 20.

84 Mr Peter Jones and Ms Susan Taylor, *Submission 21*, p. [1].

85 See for example: Mr Neil Hermes, *Submission 9.1*, p. 2; Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, *Submission 37*, p. [5]; Mr Craig Ritchie, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 58.

86 Mr Gerard Vaughan AM, Director, National Gallery of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, pp. 48-49.

87 The Hon. Dr Brendan Nelson, Director, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 41. See also Department of Finance, *Submission 78*, Answer to Questions on Notice, p. 4.

more space at the AWM existed including development behind its existing facilities,⁸⁸ or that the proposed expenditure could be better spent on the mental health and well-being of returned service men and women and their families.⁸⁹ On 1 November 2018, the Australian Government announced its approval of \$498 million in funding for the AWM expansion plan.⁹⁰

- 5.55 The inquiry also highlighted that a number of other national institutions had also mooted expansion plans, although these were yet to be approved or funded by the Australian Government. Proposed expansion plans highlighted to the Committee included:
- a proposed doubling of the NMA's existing exhibition space,⁹¹ as part of a master plan for its site unveiled during the inquiry;⁹²
 - a proposed new building at the NGA allowing it to significantly expand exhibition space and incorporate commercial facilities,⁹³
 - the proposal for a new National Archives Cultural Headquarters Building, which would enable the NAA to reach new audiences through reference services, exhibition and education programs, and other interactive public access experiences, and importantly expand specialist family history and Indigenous research services,⁹⁴ and
 - a proposed new building for the NFSA to be located at the Acton Peninsula.⁹⁵
- 5.56 The Committee was also advised of plans canvassed with DoF in 2003 to expand Questacon, including an IMAX theatre and commercial car parking facilities. The proposal did not proceed to Cabinet-level consideration.⁹⁶

88 Mr Henry Burmester, *Submission 3*, pp. [3-4].

89 Mr Brendon Kelson, *Submission 18*, pp. [4-5].

90 Prime Minister the Hon Scott Morrison MP and Minister for Veterans' Affairs the Hon Darren Chester MP, *Joint Media Release – Telling the stories of our service men and women*, 1 November 2018, <https://www.awm.gov.au/media/press-releases/telling-the-stories>, viewed 8 February 2019.

91 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 1.

92 Sally Pryor, 'National Museum unveils \$266 million expansion plans', 8 December 2018, *The Canberra Times*, <https://www.canberratimes.com.au/national/act/national-museum-unveils-266-million-expansion-plans-20181204-p50k7b.html>, viewed 10 January 2019.

93 Mr Gerard Vaughan AM, Director, National Gallery of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 48. See also National Gallery of Australia, *Submission 47*, p. 6.

94 National Archives of Australia, *Submission 54*, p. 18. See also: National Archives of Australia, *Submission 54.1*.

95 National Film and Sound Archive, *Submission 28*, p. 9. See also: Friends of the National Film and Sound Archive Inc., *Submission 13*, p. 7.

96 Mr Neil Hermes, *Submission 9.1*, pp. 1 and 3.

A shared exhibition space

- 5.57 The Committee explored whether a shared exhibition space in the Parliamentary Zone to facilitate temporary exhibitions could be developed, particularly to benefit national institutions located outside the Zone.
- 5.58 The ANBG submitted to the Committee that a shared facility would allow selections of its collection material to be displayed to the public, from 'the extensive natural history collections to archival and library treasures, most of which are not open to the public on a regular basis'.⁹⁷
- 5.59 Other national institutions were supportive of the concept in principle, but expressed some hesitation, arguing:
- that such a space would require significant 'cultural adaptation' between institutions given the differing perspectives that each would bring;⁹⁸
 - that an intimate connection to the individual institutions' collections may be lost because 'there's a certain character that goes along with how you present an exhibition';⁹⁹
 - that there may be difficulties in identifying which organisation would maintain, fund and staff the space;¹⁰⁰
 - that the space could be perceived as a cost-cutting measure and diminish Australia's collection and heritage;¹⁰¹ and
 - that present collection-sharing arrangements between national institutions worked well and already allowed the collection material of one national institution to be showcased in the context and setting of another national institution, such as recent collaborations between the AWM and the NGA.¹⁰²

97 Australian National Botanic Gardens, *Submission 15*, p. 7.

98 See for example: Mr Angus Trumble, Gallery Director, National Portrait Gallery of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 54.

99 Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Director-General, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 19.

100 See for example: Mr Angus Trumble, Gallery Director, National Portrait Gallery of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 54.

101 Mr David Fricker, Director-General, National Archives of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 19.

102 See for example: Mr Gerard Vaughan AM, Director, National Gallery of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 54; Dr Mathew Trinca, Director, National Museum of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 54.

Parking

- 5.60 Parking within proximity to the national institutions, particularly those located within the Parliamentary Zone, was another concern raised during the inquiry. Two key issues emerged: the availability of adequate parking facilities for visitors, and the availability of revenue generated through paid parking at or near national institutions.
- 5.61 The NCA advised the Committee that the availability of parking for visitors to national institutions, particularly during times of peak demand, had become an issue.¹⁰³ The NCA said that while it worked with national institutions to find parking solutions, including the development of expanded car parking facilities,¹⁰⁴ circumstances where visitors are unable to find parking continue to arise. The impact of parking availability was that national institutions could miss out on potential visitors and the revenue they generated.¹⁰⁵
- 5.62 Evidence to the inquiry indicated that school excursions and other tour groups visiting national institutions also had an impact on parking in the Parliamentary Zone. The NCA stated that there is a lack of central coordination regarding the movement of large groups around the Zone, and that there is a need to consider how infrastructure demands could be coordinated during peak times.¹⁰⁶ During the course of the inquiry, a new, free 'Culture Loop' shuttle bus was instituted to allow patrons to move between many of Canberra's key national institutions.¹⁰⁷
- 5.63 Connected to the issue of parking availability was that of paid parking. According to the ACT Government, paid parking was introduced for land managed by the NCA in 2004 to prioritise spaces for visitors to the national institutions and to assist with ongoing parking management in the Parliamentary Zone and surrounding areas.¹⁰⁸
- 5.64 The introduction of paid parking in the Parliamentary Zone and at the NMA had, according to Meredith Hinchcliffe, Carolyn Forster OAM and

103 Mr Andrew Smith, Chief Planner, National Capital Authority, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, pp. 4-5.

104 Mr Andrew Smith, Chief Planner, National Capital Authority, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 5. See also: Ms Daryl Karp, Director, Museum of Australian Democracy, Old Parliament House, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 16.

105 Mr Andrew Smith, Chief Planner, National Capital Authority, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 5.

106 Mr Andrew Smith, Chief Planner, National Capital Authority, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 4.

107 ACT Government, *VisitCanberra*, 'Culture Loop', <https://visitcanberra.com.au/transport/5c1af6635b5633dc7cbe402f/culture-loop>, viewed 8 February 2019.

108 ACT Government, *Submission 69*, p. 7.

- Sandy Forbes, resulted in a decrease in visitor numbers to national institutions. They submitted that the impact of paid parking on the NLA for example was that visitor numbers fell by 10 000 people in its first month of operation. They also argued that paid parking had a financial impact on researchers who physically accessed the national institutions.¹⁰⁹
- 5.65 Paid parking on national land in Canberra, including within the Parliamentary Zone, generates revenue for the Commonwealth, with ticket sales and infringements on national land resulting in estimated revenue of \$98.2 million in the financial years 2015-16 to 2017-18.¹¹⁰
- 5.66 The Committee was advised that the revenue generated through paid parking on national land was generally not retained by the national institutions where it was raised and instead reverted to the Commonwealth's Consolidated Revenue Fund.¹¹¹ Of the national institutions within the Parliamentary Zone, only the High Court of Australia has legislative authority to retain and use the revenue collected through paid parking.¹¹² The ANBG, located outside the Zone, advised the Committee that it sets and retains fees generated through paid parking 'based on market rates and reviewed on an annual basis'.¹¹³
- 5.67 The ACT Government was supportive of the idea that revenue raised from paid parking should be returned to the respective national institution that raised it. Such a proposal, according to the ACT Government, would provide 'an opportunity for the Australian Government to reallocate this revenue stream to support the funding and operations of Canberra's national institutions'.¹¹⁴ DoF advised the Committee that any change of this kind would require a decision by government.¹¹⁵

Digitisation of collections

- 5.68 During the inquiry the Committee was advised that 'less than 10% of all national cultural institutions' records have been digitised as a whole'.¹¹⁶

109 Meredith Hinchcliffe, Carolyn Forster OAM and Sandy Forbes, *Submission 56*, p. 6.

110 ACT Government, *Submission 69*, p. 7.

111 See for example: Lake Burley Griffin Guardians, *Submission 45*, p. 2; Meredith Hinchcliffe, Carolyn Forster OAM and Sandy Forbes, *Submission 56*, p. 6; National Capital Attractions Association, *Submission 55*, p. 5; ACT Government, *Submission 69*, p. 7.

112 High Court of Australia, *Submission 81*, Answer to Questions on Notice, p. [3]; Ms Philippa Lynch, Chief Executive and Principal Registrar, High Court of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, pp. 7-8.

113 Australian National Botanic Gardens, *Submission 15*, p. 18. See also: Meredith Hinchcliffe, Carolyn Forster OAM and Sandy Forbes, *Submission 56*, p. 6.

114 ACT Government, *Submission 69*, p. 7.

115 Department of Finance, *Submission 78*, Answer to Questions on Notice, p. 3.

116 Australian Society of Archivists, *Submission 51*, p. 4.

The pressing need for the physical materials in national institutions' collections to be digitised was a resourcing priority raised by several institutions and other submitters. This was emphasised as important both to improve access for all Australians¹¹⁷ consistent with institutions' mandates¹¹⁸ and to mitigate against the risk of collection items, such as audio-visual materials, degrading over time.¹¹⁹

- 5.69 Many national institutions advised the Committee that digitisation of collection material was a priority, particularly from an accessibility perspective.
- 5.70 The Committee was told that the magnitude of the digitisation task required resourcing and supporting infrastructure that was currently beyond the financial capacity of many institutions.¹²⁰ This included the need for:
- modern IT systems¹²¹ that are complemented with sophisticated cybersecurity arrangements;¹²²
 - storage capacity for both physical material and its digital equivalent;¹²³ and
 - timely investment in the skills required to operate and maintain equipment¹²⁴ so that materials do not degrade further.¹²⁵
- 5.71 A key challenge identified by some national institutions was the need to ensure audio-visual materials currently held in analogue format were

117 See for example: National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 10; National Film and Sound Archive, *Submission 28*, p. 4.

118 See for example: Australian Society of Archivists, *Submission 51*, p. 4.

119 National Film and Sound Archive, *Submission 28*, p. 3.

120 See for example: National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 10.

121 See for example: Dr Marie Louise-Ayres, Director-General, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 21; Mr Jan Müller, Chief Executive Officer, National Film and Sound Archive of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 28.

122 See for example: Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Director-General, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, pp. 27-28; Mr David Fricker, Director-General, National Archives of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 28; and National Archives of Australia, *Submission 54*, Attachment 1, p. [1].

123 See for example: National Film and Sound Archive, *Submission 28*, p. 4; National Archives of Australia, *Submission 54*; Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Director-General, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 16 and 18.

124 Mr Jan Müller, Chief Executive Officer, National Film and Sound Archive of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 19.

125 Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material Inc., *Submission 46*, p. 2.

- digitised within the next few years, to ensure that content did not degrade and that materials and facilities were available to undertake digitisation.¹²⁶
- 5.72 The Committee's visit to AIATSIS provided one glimpse of the task ahead for those national institutions that have large holdings of such analogue audio-visual materials. AIATSIS has implemented a strategy to address the issue, despite its limited resources. Along with other institutions, AIATSIS viewed the audio-visual digitisation task as requiring completion by the year 2025, to avert the risk that this material would be permanently lost.
- 5.73 For projects of this scale to be successfully completed, it was impressed upon the Committee that both a clear national strategy,¹²⁷ and an investment in additional resource allocation for national institutions, including staff, were required.¹²⁸ At present, institutions conducted their own digitisation initiatives for this material such as the specialist audio-visual digitisation Service Provider Panel managed by the NAA, and *Deadline 2025*, developed by the NFSA.¹²⁹
- 5.74 In discussions with the Committee, national institutions also drew attention to the misperception that digitisation of the national collections would eventually reduce the need for physical storage space.¹³⁰ Institutions noted that digitisation generally supplemented rather than replaced physical items, which were not destroyed, and therefore the challenge of resourcing physical storage discussed above would remain relevant into the future.

Collaboration between national institutions

- 5.75 Given budgetary and resourcing constraints for national institutions, coupled with the need to embrace new ways of showcasing Australia's national collection, evidence to the inquiry demonstrated a strong interest by institutions in working collaboratively.
- 5.76 The NMA submitted to the inquiry that while each national institution:

126 See for example: Dr Andrew Pike, *Submission 24*, p. [1]; National Film and Sound Archives, *Submission 28*, p. 8; National Archives of Australia, *Submission 54*, p. 15; Name withheld, *Submission 74*, p. [1]. See also Mr Jan Müller, Chief Executive Officer, National Film and Sound Archive of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 15.

127 See for example: National Archives of Australia, *Submission 54*, p. 15.

128 See for example: Dr Andrew Pike, *Submission 24*, p. [1].

129 National Archives of Australia, *Submission 54*, p. 15.

130 See for example: Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Director-General, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 16 and National Film and Sound Archive, *Submission 28*, p. 10.

...has clear roles and mandates to address and fulfil, there is a real and growing need to develop greater collaboration and co-operative enterprise between us all. There is great strength in the diversity represented by the individual institutions and their brands, and in exploiting opportunities as they arise to come together for specific program and operational initiatives, in the national interest.¹³¹

- 5.77 A range of examples of how national institutions already worked together emerged during the inquiry and included that:
- The ANBG has established collaborative relationships with likeminded institutions in Canberra to enable the exchange of display materials, educational activities and participation on advisory committees. It has also developed more formal partnerships with academic institutes around scientific activities.¹³²
 - The NFSA has collaborated with similar institutions to bring exhibitions to Canberra, and to bring them to Australians via touring displays.¹³³
 - The AWM and the NGA collaborated to hold an exhibition on the work of war artist, Arthur Streeton in late 2017.¹³⁴
- 5.78 The NLA has worked collaboratively with other collecting and archival institutions around Australia to build broader capacity in the sector.¹³⁵ The Australian Society of Archivists drew attention to the NAA's partnership with the website Ancestry to offer greater online access to Fremantle passenger arrival lists to users of both websites.¹³⁶
- 5.79 Broader collaborations that benefit national institutions also exist. For example, the NCA has worked with national institutions and others to create a draft urban design framework for the Acton Peninsula Precinct.¹³⁷ Collaborations also exist between academic institutes such as the Australian National University and Canberra's national institutions on academic projects and the development of digital resources across fields in science, humanities, social sciences and the arts.¹³⁸

131 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 2.

132 Australian National Botanic Gardens, *Submission 15*, p. 7.

133 Dr Jan Müller, Chief Executive Officer, National Film and Sound Archive, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 22. See also: National Film and Sound Archive, *Submission 28*, p. 7.

134 Mr Gerard Vaughan AM, Director, National Gallery of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 54. National Gallery of Australia, 'Arthur Streeton: The art of war', <https://nga.gov.au/streeton/>, viewed 30 January 2019.

135 Australian Library and Information Association, *Submission 6*, p. 3.

136 Australian Society of Archivists, *Submission 51*, p. 6.

137 National Capital Authority, *Submission 63*, p. [5].

138 Australian National University, *Submission 68*, p. [2].

Cultural and Corporate Shared Services Centre

- 5.80 One project that highlights broader collaborative efforts between Canberra's national institutions is the CCSSC, which is administered by the NMA. The CCSSC was created in 2016 to 'support cultural and small corporate agencies within the Australian Public Service (APS) ... [and] provides high quality services tailored to meet the unique business requirements of cultural agencies'.¹³⁹ The Committee was told that the CCSSC was 'delivering savings and enabling partner institutions to focus on delivery of programs and services'.¹⁴⁰ At present, MoAD and the NAA use the services of the CCSSC which includes IT, finance, payroll, records management and accessibility.¹⁴¹ The NMA advised the Committee that it had received funding of \$8.9 million over three years to enable collecting agencies to migrate to the CCSSC.¹⁴²
- 5.81 The NMA outlined the benefits of the CCSSC for participating institutions and the Commonwealth which included:
- access to improved, high level service delivery;
 - compliance in key areas including security and electronic records management;
 - standardisation of enterprise resource planning platforms; and
 - aggregated purchasing power for contracts and services.¹⁴³
- 5.82 The Australian Society of Archivists expressed concerns that since the announcement of the CCSSC, little information regarding its framework and operations had been provided outside the NMA's corporate plan. While noting the benefits of resource consolidation and shared services, it expressed caution about the need to ensure that collaborators could still meet their individual mandates.¹⁴⁴

Private sector sponsorship, donations and philanthropic support

- 5.83 As Canberra's national institutions continue to face budgetary pressures, many have sought to build partnerships with private sector and philanthropic entities to support their work. The Committee was told that
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139 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 8.

140 Council of Australasian Museum Directors, *Submission 43*, p. [7].

141 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 8.

142 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 8.

143 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, pp. 8-9.

144 Australian Society of Archivists, *Submission 51*, p. 7.

in recent years, private sector and philanthropic income for some of Canberra's national institutions had risen.¹⁴⁵ Evidence to the inquiry also suggested that private sector and philanthropic support was valuable for many national institutions in conveying their work outside the national capital, including internationally.¹⁴⁶

- 5.84 In 2011 the Australian Government appointed Mr Harold Mitchell AC to chair a review into *Private Sector Support for the Arts in Australia*.¹⁴⁷ Mr Mitchell's report found that there was potential to strengthen private donation to the arts in Australia, but that arts organisations often lacked the skills and expertise to access them, while 'the limited funds available to many arts organisations creates a situation where they cannot afford dedicated staff to drive a strategic approach to fundraising'.¹⁴⁸ The report made several recommendations that aimed to help arts organisations attract increased private sector support.
- 5.85 The NMA advised the Committee that it viewed private sector support as 'inextricably tied to developing and maintaining its relationship to the broader Australian public. Corporate interests and philanthropic funds are attracted to institutions and programs that can demonstrate close engagement with communities of interest and their publics'.¹⁴⁹
- 5.86 The inquiry was told about the fundraising capabilities of some national institutions. A number of institutions, such as the NGA and NPG, were already successful fundraisers.¹⁵⁰ Other national institutions, such as Questacon and AIATSIS, had implemented philanthropic foundations to pursue fundraising opportunities.¹⁵¹ The NLA had undertaken a review of opportunities available to it and expected to implement recommended strategies.¹⁵²
- 5.87 Fundraising for Canberra's national institutions was also part of the role played by those with an interest in the work of particular institutions. For example, the Friends of the ANBG submitted to the Committee that it had established a public fund, which sought tax deductible donations and

145 Council of Australasian Museum Directors, *Submission 43*, pp. [6-7].

146 See for example: Department of Communications and the Arts, *Submission 1*, p. 1 and National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 6.

147 H Mitchell, *Building Support: Report of the Review of Private Sector Support for the Arts in Australia*, October 2011.

148 H Mitchell, *Building Support: Report of the Review of Private Sector Support for the Arts in Australia*, October 2011, p. 31.

149 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 7.

150 National Association of the Visual Arts, *Submission 65*, p. [2].

151 Ms Kate Driver, Acting Director, Questacon, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 35; Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, *Submission 66*, p. 11.

152 National Library of Australia, *Submission 41*, p. 4.

which had allocated some \$1 million in funds for specific projects at the ANBG.¹⁵³

- 5.88 The Committee received examples of how private sector and philanthropic support had been successfully engaged to assist national institutions in furthering their objectives.
- 5.89 The NGA submitted to the Committee that it had successfully worked with philanthropic donors to support four exhibitions which have 'replaced diminishing cash contributions from corporate partners'.¹⁵⁴ In addition, the NGA had also developed:
- a 'Foundation Board' made up of representatives from most Australian states to engage Australia-wide donors; and
 - a dedicated fundraising team to attract funds to support current and future initiatives.¹⁵⁵
- 5.90 In another example, Questacon:
- has partnered with the Ian Potter Foundation to enable the ongoing operations of Questacon's *Smart Skills Outreach Program* and Ian Potter Foundation Technology Learning Centre in Canberra;¹⁵⁶
 - has been the beneficiary of funds raised through an independent philanthropic foundation;¹⁵⁷ and
 - has a range of long-term partnerships with corporate organisations that provide both financial and technical in-kind support as well as a foundation to support the advancement of science education and advancement.¹⁵⁸
- 5.91 Other national institutions also highlighted initiatives with the private sector and philanthropists:
- the ANBG has received support from the Ian Potter Foundation which resulted in the largest donation received in its history;¹⁵⁹

153 Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens, *Submission 16*, p. 2. Supported by Australian National Botanic Gardens, *Submission 15*, p. 17.

154 National Gallery of Australia, *Submission 47*, p. 5.

155 National Gallery of Australia, *Submission 47*, pp. 5-6.

156 The Ian Potter Foundation, *Submission 4*, p. [1]. See also Questacon Advisory Council, *Submission 29*, p. 5.

157 Ms Kate Driver, Acting Director, Questacon, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, pp. 35-36.

158 Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, p. 12. See also: Questacon Advisory Council, *Submission 29*, p. 5.

159 Australian National Botanic Gardens, *Submission 15*, p. 15.

- MoAD has developed some sponsorship and grant income and is developing a new plan for future partnerships and philanthropic initiatives;¹⁶⁰
 - the NLA has a long history of philanthropic support with funds raised currently being invested into digital initiatives;¹⁶¹ and
 - the NMA has attracted the corporate support of key suppliers of transport, media, accommodation and food and beverage partners to conduct touring exhibitions.¹⁶²
- 5.92 The NLA told the Committee that corporate donors were no longer attracted to supporting one-off international exhibitions held in Canberra.¹⁶³ Instead, many donors are looking at longer-term engagement initiatives such as supporting scholarships.¹⁶⁴ For example, Raytheon Australia, which has a long term partnership with Questacon, submitted to the Committee that it has a 'strong responsibility to help generate a workforce pipeline for new engineers. This starts with encouraging students to take up those school subjects that will equip them to study science and engineering at university'.¹⁶⁵ The company is also a strong supporter of Questacon continuing to develop its partnerships with other commercial partners.
- 5.93 Some concern was raised during the inquiry about the appropriateness of expectations that national institutions could significantly supplement their resources with private or philanthropic funds.
- 5.94 Some inquiry participants questioned whether it was realistic to seek increased support from such sources, noting that unlike the United States and Europe, there is no entrenched culture of philanthropic support for national institutions in Australia.¹⁶⁶ A number of submitters argued that private funding and philanthropic support should not be relied upon to fund core functions that are within the legislative responsibility of

160 Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, *Submission 37*, p. [4].

161 National Library of Australia, *Submission 41*, pp. 3-4. See also Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Director-General, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, pp. 24.

162 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 6.

163 National Library of Australia, *Submission 41*, p. 4. See also Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Director-General, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, pp. 23-24.

164 Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Director-General, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 24.

165 Raytheon Australia, *Submission 73*, p. 1.

166 See for example: Mr Gordon Ramsay MLA, Minister for the Arts and Community Events, ACT Government, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, pp. 8 and 10; Ms Marianne Albury-Colless, *Submission 53*, p. [4].

government.¹⁶⁷ It was also noted that the exercise of attracting funding was resource intensive for national institutions.¹⁶⁸

- 5.95 Some also cautioned that any measures to increase non-governmental resourcing should ensure that donors do not seek to influence the content of national institutions' operations or exhibitions,¹⁶⁹ and that there should be transparency around the sources of funding.¹⁷⁰ The Department of Parliamentary Services and the National Electoral Education Centre advised that, given the nature of their work requiring strict independence and political impartiality, they did not consider it appropriate to accept any or certain types of private sector or philanthropic support.¹⁷¹

Developing other sources of revenue

- 5.96 Many of Canberra's national institutions provided evidence to the inquiry regarding their efforts to develop additional revenue sources to supplement their annual appropriations from the Australian Government. In some cases, income was produced simply to recover the costs related to an activity.¹⁷² In other instances, income generated was directed to furthering institutions' own philanthropic ambitions, such as the NMA's recent *Songlines* exhibition where the proceeds of merchandise were

167 See for example: Community and Public Sector Union, *Submission 12*, pp. 18-19; Meredith Hinchcliffe, Carolyn Forster OAM and Sandy Forbes, *Submission 56*, p. 6; National Association for the Visual Arts, *Submission 65*, p. [2]; Mr Luke Gosling OAM MP, *Submission 75*, p. 3; Mr Gordon Ramsay MLA, Minister for the Arts and Community Events, ACT Government, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, pp. 8 and 10. See also Museums Galleries Australia, *Submission 39*, p. 8; Cultural Facilities Corporation, *Submission 48*, p. 4.

168 See for example: Community and Public Sector Union, *Submission 12*, p. 19; Australian National Botanic Gardens, *Submission 15*, p. 17.

169 See for example: Cultural Facilities Corporation, *Submission 48*, p. 4; Australian Society of Archivists, *Submission 51*, p. 6. See also Mr Peter Jones and Ms Susan Taylor, *Submission 21*, p. [3]; Meredith Hinchcliffe, Carolyn Forster OAM and Sandy Forbes, *Submission 56*, p. 5; Medical Association for Prevention of War, *Submission 57*, p. 4; Mr Luke Gosling OAM MP, *Submission 75*, p. 3; Ms Cassandra O'Hare, Section Secretary for the National Cultural Institutions, Community and Public Sector Union, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 24 August 2018, p. 13.

170 *Honest History*, *Submission 14*, p. 8.

171 See for example: Department of Parliamentary Services, *Submission 76*, p. 3; Mr Tom Rogers, Electoral Commissioner, Australian Electoral Commission, *Committee Hansard*, 24 August, 2018, p. 21.

172 See for example: Australian National Botanic Gardens, *Submission 15*, p. 18; National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, pp. 6-7; Department of Parliamentary Services, *Submission 76*, p. 3; Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Director-General, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 23.

directed to social inclusion and sustainability projects that assisted Indigenous artists and communities.¹⁷³

5.97 Inquiry participants provided the Committee with numerous examples of the initiatives undertaken by national institutions to develop additional sources of revenue, including:

- rental of floor space to similar institutions or venue hire for events;¹⁷⁴
- national digital infrastructure services, such as the NLA's Trove service, offered on a membership-based, co-investment model alongside state libraries, local councils, universities and individual philanthropists;¹⁷⁵
- retail, food and beverage outlets;¹⁷⁶
- admission charges and memberships;¹⁷⁷
- school and public education programs¹⁷⁸ including special meal packages to engage school students after hours;¹⁷⁹
- fee-for-service contracts to grow plants for government clients;¹⁸⁰ and
- securing grant funding, such as to deliver conservation programs and partnerships.¹⁸¹

5.98 Inquiry participants considered whether there were additional opportunities available for national institutions to raise revenue. DoF advised the Committee that, under the Australian Government's Charging Framework, 'entities can charge for regulatory, resource or commercial type activities. Revenue from charging activities is treated in different ways depending on the charging category and any government decision on the treatment of revenue'.¹⁸² Identification of opportunities to charge for activities was a matter for individual institutions although the Department engaged with entities to determine the viability of the

173 National Museum of Australia, *Submission 59*, p. 7.

174 See for example: Australian National Botanic Gardens, *Submission 15*, p. 18; Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, *Submission 37*, p. [5]; National Library of Australia, *Submission 41*, p. 4.

175 National Library of Australia, *Submission 41*, p. 4. See also: Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Director-General, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 21.

176 See for example: Australian National Botanic Gardens, *Submission 15*, p. 18; Australian War Memorial, *Submission 32*, p. 9; National Library of Australia, *Submission 41*, p. 4.

177 Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67*, p. 13.

178 Australian National Botanic Gardens, *Submission 15*, p. 18.

179 Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, *Submission 67.1*, Answer to Question on Notice, p. [3].

180 Australian National Botanic Gardens, *Submission 15*, p. 18.

181 Australian National Botanic Gardens, *Submission 15*, p. 18.

182 Department of Finance, *Submission 78*, Answer to Questions on Notice, p. 2.

opportunities identified.¹⁸³ The Department also advised the Committee that revenue from commercial activities 'can generally be retained by the entity charging for these types of activities, subject to any government decision on how revenue should be treated'.¹⁸⁴

- 5.99 The National Association of the Visual Arts submitted that opportunities for new revenue generation from activities such as venue hire and other external usage of national institutions would only materialise if there was significant investment from the Australian Government to improve buildings and facilities.¹⁸⁵ On the other hand, it was suggested that revenue could be derived through capitalising on direct international flights to Canberra, including from Singaporean school students undertaking mandatory international travel.¹⁸⁶
- 5.100 The imposition of admission charges to national institutions that were currently free to visit was also discussed during the inquiry. Although the Committee was told that many national institutions once charged a fee for admission,¹⁸⁷ Questacon is the only national institution in Canberra to do so currently and generates some 45 per cent of its revenue from general admission.¹⁸⁸ Some national institutions charge admission to special exhibitions or 'blockbuster' events¹⁸⁹ but this was not the case for all institutions.¹⁹⁰ It was noted however that 'charging fees for special exhibits does play an important role in cross-subsidising other activities by cultural institutions'.¹⁹¹ Submitters to the inquiry, however, generally supported the principle that entry to national institutions' general collections should continue to be free of charge, on the basis that this encouraged increased visitation.¹⁹²

183 Department of Finance, *Submission 78*, Answer to Questions on Notice, p. 1.

184 Department of Finance, *Submission 78*, Answer to Questions on Notice, p. 2.

185 National Association of the Visual Arts, *Submission 65*, p. [2].

186 Ms Kate Driver, Acting Director, Questacon, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 36.

187 See for example: National Capital Attractions Associations, *Submission 55*, p. 5; Meredith Hinchcliffe, Carolyn Forster OAM and Sandy Forbes, *Submission 56*, p. 6.

188 Mr Neil Hermes, *Submission 9.1*, p. 1.

189 See for example: Mr David Fricker, Director-General, National Archives of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 26.

190 Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Director-General, National Library of Australia, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 22 June 2018, p. 26.

191 Meredith Hinchcliffe, Carolyn Forster OAM and Sandy Forbes, *Submission 56*, p. 6.

192 See for example: Questacon Advisory Council, *Submission 29*, p. 3; Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, *Submission 37*, p. [5]; National Capital Attractions Associations, *Submission 55*, p. 5.

Committee comment

Budgets and the efficiency dividend

- 5.101 The Committee acknowledges concerns that Canberra's national institutions have been subject to budgetary pressures over a significant period, although evidence points to some relief from this in recent years as a result of additional funding for some institutions. This has been made possible as a result of sound budget and economic management.
- 5.102 The Committee notes that successive governments have sought to curtail government spending as part of exercising responsible fiscal management over a number of years, including through the imposition of the efficiency dividend. This has been legitimate and necessary to ensure a strong economy, a balanced budget and an accountable public sector. It is clear to the Committee, however, that the efficiency dividend has had a disproportionate and cumulative impact, on smaller agencies in particular, that has hampered the ability of many national institutions to deliver a full range of services, including to the public.
- 5.103 The Committee notes calls by various inquiry participants that national institutions should be exempt from the efficiency dividend or even that the measure should be removed altogether. It is apparent that the efficiency dividend can be a burden on core business practices rather than a driver of innovation.
- 5.104 The Committee believes that the recommendations of the 2008 report of the JCPAA for managing the impact of the efficiency dividend on small agencies should be revisited by the Government. In particular, the recommendation of the JCPAA for an exemption from the efficiency dividend on the first \$50 million of Budget appropriations for agencies with expenditure of less than \$150 million, would seem to the Committee to be a moderate option that would significantly relieve the disproportionate burden of budget pressures on Canberra's national institutions.¹⁹³

193 The Committee notes that special consideration may need to be given to how such a policy could be applied to institutions whose corporate arrangements within larger agencies may otherwise exclude them, such as Questacon.

Recommendation 14

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government revisit the recommendations of Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit Report 413, *The Efficiency Dividend: Size does matter*, with a view to adopting measures to offset the disproportionate impact of the efficiency dividend on small agencies including Canberra's national institutions. This may include setting a threshold amount for institutions' annual expenditure below which the efficiency dividend would be excluded or reduced.

Staffing national institutions

- 5.105 Evidence to the Committee's inquiry provided it with an insight into the impact that ongoing budgetary restraint has had on institutions' dedicated and highly skilled workforce. The Committee is very concerned to learn of the impacts that staffing reductions have had on the workloads, mental and physical health, and safety of staff at national institutions. While the Committee understands that budgetary pressures are a factor for all Commonwealth entities, the well-being of the workforce should always be a priority, including in staffing and related decisions made by and for national institutions.
- 5.106 While acknowledging evidence from the AWM that recent small budgetary increases have allowed it to restore staffing levels under the ASL cap, the Committee is concerned about the ongoing impact of the cap on Canberra's national institutions. In the Committee's view, consideration should be given to how it disproportionately impacts smaller agencies, such as national institutions.
- 5.107 The Committee notes evidence pointing to institutions' increased use of temporary labour hire arrangements as a mechanism to sidestep ASL cap requirements. In the Committee's view, the practice has only added to the training, cost and administrative burden upon institutions. Temporary labour hire also means that institutions are unable to permanently retain the corporate skills and knowledge developed by temporary staff.
- 5.108 It is also possible that in some cases, institutions' use of volunteers has supplemented the work of paid staff. The Committee commends the invaluable contribution made by the thousands of volunteers who support Canberra's national institutions in various ways.
- 5.109 In considering staffing requirements into the future, the Committee agrees with a number of inquiry participants that the Australian Government must develop a flexible approach to the application of the ASL cap,

particularly for national institutions, to ensure that the policy does not force institutions to seek more costly alternatives.

Recommendation 15

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government reassess the Average Staffing Level caps on Canberra's national institutions, to reduce the cost and skills-retention impacts these are presently having, and avoid the need for institutions to undertake less efficient temporary labour hire arrangements.

Facilities

- 5.110 The Commonwealth is the custodian of a significant property portfolio in Canberra which encompasses a diverse range of buildings including some of the nation's most iconic landmarks. Maintenance of the facilities housing national institutions is an important aspect of the work of institutions on behalf of the Commonwealth and people of Australia. As part of the inquiry, the Committee was fortunate to have the opportunity to visit a number of national institutions, speak with staff and examine a number of public buildings and storage facilities.
- 5.111 National institutions' facilities are almost all public assets and many are of national significance. In the Committee's view, the Australian Government has an important responsibility to ensure that these buildings are maintained for their heritage value, the institutions which they house, and their status as valuable and in some cases irreplaceable assets of the Commonwealth.
- 5.112 It is of concern to the Committee that individual national institutions have insufficient resources and capacity to properly maintain their facilities and ensure necessary capital works, and that in some cases the need to do so is diverting attention and resources from the fulfilment of their core functions. In the Committee's view, the Australian Government should consider whether efficiencies could be gained through a more strategic and efficient approach to national institutions' facility maintenance. This might be done through existing mechanisms such as the NMA's Cultural and Corporate Shared Services Centre.

Recommendation 16

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government consider the adoption of a strategic and coordinated approach to the management and maintenance of national institutions' buildings and facilities.

- 5.113 The Committee is pleased to note a range of commitments to capital works and building improvements that demonstrate the Australian Government's commitment to meeting the longer term maintenance needs of some national institutions' facilities, including at the NPG.
- 5.114 The Committee emphasises that if they are not already, national institutions must be proactive in drawing facilities issues to the attention of the Australian Government and ensuring that appropriate steps are taken and funding sought to manage maintenance requirements at the earliest opportunity. Where necessary, the assistance of DoF should be sought to lodge new policy proposals for major capital works.

Collection storage

- 5.115 During its inquiry, the Committee was struck by the significant and very real challenges faced by several national institutions in relation to finding and managing sufficient and appropriate storage space for their collections. The Committee saw invaluable and impressive items of all kinds, held in conditions that varied from state-of-the-art, to dangerously inadequate. Overall, it was apparent to the Committee that the current approach to collection storage is piecemeal and inadequate. The Committee also recognises that storing the collections is a problem that will only grow in future if viable long-term solutions are not pursued now.
- 5.116 The Committee considers that there is merit in the proposal for national institutions to collaborate, with Australian Government support, to build a shared collection storage facility, taking into account the needs of each participating institution now and into the future. Such a facility would not only provide for economic efficiencies, but could offer security of tenure and the ability to ensure fit-for-purpose storage conditions for the various items held in the collections. While this would undoubtedly involve a significant initial financial outlay, the Committee believes that it would ultimately be not just cost-effective, but a warranted investment in preserving the irreplaceable treasures of Australia's national story.

Recommendation 17

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government coordinate and support the development of a permanent shared collection storage facility for Canberra's national institutions, to replace the current piecemeal and inadequate arrangements and create maximum efficiency. This should be developed and implemented in close consultation with relevant institutions to ensure it is fit-for-purpose to meet their current and future needs.

- 5.117 The Committee notes the specific outcomes of the ANAO's 2018 audit of the AWM and NGA relating to collection management, and is particularly concerned that both agencies – and potentially other national institutions too – need clear and robust processes for assessing and accounting for the whole-of-life costs of their collections. Such assessments need to form part of strategies for managing institutions' existing collections, and also consideration of potential new donations and acquisitions.
- 5.118 The Committee urges national institutions to ensure that their plans and budgets include clear and documented processes to account for the whole-of-life costs of collections and acquisitions. The Committee invites DoF to support institutions as required to achieve this, and encourages the ANAO to actively monitor and engage with institutions on this matter in its future audits, including the proposed follow-up audit proposed in its *Draft Annual Audit Work Program 2019–20* and recommended in chapter 4.

Recommendation 18

The Committee recommends that Canberra's national institutions ensure that their plans and budgets include clear and documented processes to account for the whole-of-life costs of collections and acquisitions. Assessments of whole-of-life costs need to form part of strategies for managing institutions' existing collections, and also consideration of potential new donations and acquisitions.

Exhibition space

- 5.119 The Committee acknowledges the evidence provided by a number of national institutions about the insufficiency of space to exhibit their collections. In this regard the Committee also recognises that only a limited number of Canberra's national institutions have the capacity to host significant exhibitions, including increasingly popular 'blockbuster' exhibitions that draw large numbers of visitors and provide institutions

with a significant profile boost. The Committee welcomes the Government's recent announcement of significant support for expanding exhibition facilities at the AWM, and hopes that similar proposals for expansion by other institutions, such as the NMA and NFSA, will also receive positive consideration, having regard to the significant potential benefits to the national capital including expanded tourism and conference hosting opportunities.

- 5.120 The Committee is also interested in seeing progress made towards a shared exhibition space located on national land in Canberra. The Committee notes reservations expressed by some national institutions about the challenges of establishing such a facility, but considers that resourcing and cultural challenges can be overcome. Indeed, the Committee remains concerned that the arguments it heard against a shared exhibition facility demonstrated a continued 'silo' mentality among at least some national institutions. The Committee considers that cooperation in a shared facility would present a valuable opportunity for national institutions to break down their silos, and strengthen their shared vision and approach.
- 5.121 The benefits of a shared exhibition facility include the ability for use by individual institutions that require a temporary increase in exhibition space, or to conduct multi-institution joint exhibitions. It would also allow national institutions located outside the central national area to benefit from the existing tourism drawcards in the area, and for touring exhibitions from interstate and overseas to visit Canberra and be held in a dedicated space.

Recommendation 19

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government, in conjunction with national institutions, develop a new shared exhibition space on suitable national land in Canberra.

Parking

- 5.122 The availability of adequate parking facilities at Canberra's national institutions is a key determinant of the visitor experience. The Committee notes that the absence of appropriate parking facilities within the Parliamentary Zone may have discouraged potential visitors to some national institutions. While the Committee was assured that this was not a regular occurrence, it does highlight a concern for national institutions as they seek to build a positive reputation and increase visitor numbers.
- 5.123 The Committee understands that the availability of parking within the Parliamentary Zone may be at a premium, particularly at peak visit times. The Committee is encouraged by the commitment of key stakeholders including the NCA to work with national institutions to manage and better coordinate this issue. The Committee is also encouraged by the announcement during the inquiry of a trial shuttle service to ferry visitors between key national institutions in the Parliamentary Zone and on Acton Peninsula. It looks forward to an update on the success of this service in due course.
- 5.124 With regard to the revenue generated from paid parking on national land, the Committee notes the views of some that the revenue collected should be channelled back to national institutions. In this respect, the Committee is conscious that long-term Australian Government funding to Canberra's national institutions continues to be significant, and that this report recommends a number of measures to relieve budget pressures and further strengthen Government support for the institutions. Moreover, the Committee notes that the amounts to be gained by redistributing parking revenue to individual institutions would be modest, while the implementation of such a scheme would be complex, and importantly, may also result in disproportionate benefit to the largest and best-located institutions. As such, the Committee does not consider that redistributing the revenue from paid parking is an initiative worth pursuing.

Digitisation

- 5.125 The Committee notes the concerns raised by several national institutions about the need for resources and planning to digitise physical and analogue items in their collections, and acknowledges the particular urgency of this task for those institutions holding analogue audio-visual materials. The Committee believes that, rather than each relevant institution struggling to address this challenge in isolation, there is a strong case for a clear and coherent whole-of-government strategy, developed and implemented with Australian Government support, to get this work done by 2025.

Recommendation 20

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government acknowledge the need for the digitisation of analogue audio-visual items in the collections of the institutions, to ensure that all such material is digitally preserved by 2025, and develop a clear and coherent whole of government strategy across institutions to get this done.

Collaboration between national institutions

- 5.126 Throughout the inquiry, the Committee was pleased to see some examples of Canberra's national institutions collaborating effectively in a range of ways. The possibility for more formal and wide-ranging collaboration, including through a possible new consultative structure, was discussed in chapters 3 and 4. The Committee reiterates its view that national institutions must work together to develop and articulate a shared strategic vision of their importance in telling Australia's story. To that end, pursuing cooperative and joint efforts to share resources and maximise efficiencies, where appropriate, is both sensible and necessary
- 5.127 While the Committee understands that there have been some past concerns with respect to the NMA's Cultural and Corporate Shared Services Centre, the Committee considers that there are clear benefits to national institutions in pursuing the project. In particular, the Committee is cognisant that a well-managed shared services program could allow national institutions to focus fewer resources on meeting basic organisational support needs, and more on the management of collections and strengthening public engagement. As such, the Committee believes that more national institutions should consider participating in the Centre, and all involved should be committed to constructive cooperation to overcome genuine obstacles to greater resource sharing. The Committee also agrees with submitters that participation in resource sharing should not compromise institutions' existing funding and resource arrangements, or ability to fulfil their individual functions.

Developing non-government sources of income

- 5.128 The Committee welcomed the evidence it received demonstrating a great deal of good work being done by Canberra's national institutions to develop partnerships with corporations and philanthropists, and to maximise other possibilities for raising revenue, such as through merchandising and events. The Committee also applauds the efforts of community groups, such as the 'friends' of various national institutions, to raise funds for them.
- 5.129 While there are some very positive aspects to the development of corporate and philanthropic partnerships, the Committee noted suggestions that the narratives of some exhibitions held by national institutions could be influenced by major donors or benefactors. The Committee believes that all parties involved in the procurement of non-government funding, or other donations, should exercise an awareness of the potential public perception of such transactions. Institutions should ensure that they have clear and consistently applied policies for engagement with private donors, and maximum public transparency about their sources of income. As such, the Committee considers that national institutions might wish to develop clear policy guidance material to assist in managing engagement with private entities.
- 5.130 With regard to the development of in-house commercial opportunities, institutions should be proud of the fact that not only have their efforts resulted in the production of additional revenue but that many activities have sought to do social good, enhance the visitor experience or showcase the best of the national capital.
- 5.131 The Committee believes that the Australian Government should encourage all national institutions to capitalise on available opportunities to generate revenue and, where necessary, invest additional resources to assist institutions to leverage these ideas. The Committee sees some link between these issues and its discussion and recommendations in chapter 3 relating to marketing and public engagement.
- 5.132 One potential opportunity considered during the inquiry was the imposition of new admission fees at national institutions. In the Committee's assessment, while it is possible that such fees may generate revenue for institutions, there is a significant risk that they would instead cause a decline in visitor numbers. The Committee therefore agrees that admission fees should not be charged for public entry to the core exhibitions of those national institutions that are presently free. The Committee does, on the other hand, support continued case-by-case consideration of entry fees for special events, tours and exhibitions, for

which admission fees are already commonplace, and do not seem to act as a deterrent to visitors.

Ben Morton MP

Chair

29 March 2019



Appendix A - Submissions

- 1 Department of Communications and the Arts
- 1.1 Supplementary to submission 1
- 2 Mr Phil Creaser
- 3 Mr Henry Burmester
- 4 The Ian Potter Foundation
- 5 Walter Burley Griffin Society Inc (Canberra Chapter)
- 6 Australian Library and Information Association
- 7 Botanic Gardens Australia New Zealand Inc
- 8 Hon Professor Michael Gore AO, Australian National Centre for Public Awareness of Science
- 9 Mr Neil Hermes
- 9.1 Supplementary to submission 9
- 10 Australian Academy of Science
- 11 NGA Voluntary Guides Association
- 12 CPSU
- 12.1 Supplementary to submission 12
- 13 Friends of the National Film and Sound Archive
- 14 Honest History
- 15 Australian National Botanic Gardens

- 15.1 Supplementary to submission 15
- 16 Friends of the Australian national Botanic Gardens
- 17 National Centre for Australian Children's Literature Inc
- Attachment 1*
- 18 Mr Brendon Kelson
- 19 Mr Jose Robertson
- 20 Dr David Marshall
- 21 Mr Peter Jones and Ms Susan Taylor
- 22 Professor Francis Bongiorno
- Heritage, Museums and Conservation program in the Faculty of Arts and
- 23 Design, University of Canberra
- 24 Dr Andrew Pike
- 25 Ms Lexi Sekules
- 26 National Capital Educational Tourism Project
- 26.1 Supplementary to submission 26
- 27 Confidential
- 28 National Film and Sound Archive of Australia
- 29 Questacon Advisory Council
- 30 Mr Max Bourke AM
- 31 Childers Group
- 32 Australian War Memorial
- 32.1 Supplementary to submission 32
- 33 Australian Science Teachers Association
- 34 GLAM Peak
- 35 Australian Historical Association
- 36 National Rock Garden Trust Inc
- Attachment 1*
- 37 Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House
- 37.1 Supplementary to submission 37

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- 38 Science & Technology Australia
- 39 Museums Galleries Australia
Attachment 1
- 40 Name Withheld
- 41 National Library of Australia
- 41.1 Supplementary to submission 41
- 42 ACT Combined Community Councils
- 43 Council of Australasian Museum Directors
- 44 Australian Academy of the Humanities
- 45 Lake Burley Griffin Guardians
- 46 Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material Inc
- 47 National Gallery of Australia
- 48 Cultural Facilities Corporation
- 49 Science Space
- 50 Australasian Science and Technology Engagement Network
- 51 Australian Society of Archivists Inc
- 52 Hon Zed Seselija
- 53 Ms Marianne Albury-Colless
- 54 National Archives of Australia
Attachment 1
- 54.1 Supplementary to submission 54
- 54.2 Supplementary to submission 54
- 55 National Capital Attractions Association
- 56 Meredith Hinchliffe, Carolyn Forster OAM and Sandy Forbes
- 57 Medical Association for Prevention of War (Australia)
- 58 Canberra Business Chamber
- 59 National Museum of Australia
- 59.1 Supplementary to submission 59
- 60 Shane Rattenbury MLA and Caroline Le Couteur MLA

61	Mr David Thurrowgood
62	Mr Paul Knobel
63	National Capital Authority
63.1	Supplementary to submission 63
64	ANU School of Art & Design
65	National Association for the Visual Arts
66	Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
67	Department of Industry, Innovation and Science
67.1	Supplementary to submission 67
68	Australian National University
69	ACT Government
69.1	Supplementary to submission 69
70	Ms Julia Landford
71	Mr Doug Rogan
72	Weston Creek Community Council
73	Raytheon Australia
74	Name Withheld
75	Mr Luke Gosling OAM MP
76	Department of Parliamentary Services
76.1	Supplementary to submission 76
77	Mr Noel Langdon
78	Department of Finance
79	Australian Electoral Commission
80	Department of Education and Training
81	High Court of Australia
82	Friends of Grasslands
83	Sport Australia



Appendix B – Public hearings

Friday, 22 June 2018 – Canberra, ACT

ACT Government

- Ms Kareena Arthy, Deputy Director-General
- Mr Gordon Ramsay MLA, Minister for the Arts and Community Events

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies

- Mr Craig Ritchie, Chief Executive Officer

Australian War Memorial

- Ms Anne Bennie, Assistant Director, Branch Head Public Programs
- Major General (Retired) Brian Dawson, Assistant Director, Branch Head National Collection
- Mr Brendan Nelson, Director
- Ms Leanne Patterson, Assistant Director, Branch Head Corporate Services

Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation

- Ms Hazel Bennett, Chief Operating Officer
- Ms Mary Mulcahy, Director, Education and Outreach

Department of Communications and the Arts

- Dr Stephen Arnott PSM, First Assistant Secretary, Arts Division
- Ms Ann Campton, Assistant Secretary, Collections and Cultural Heritage, Arts Division

Department of Industry, Innovation and Science

- Mrs Rebecca Manen, Acting General Manager, Science Policy Branch

National Archives of Australia

- Mr David Fricker, Director-General
- Ms Phyllis Williams, Regional Manager, North

National Film and Sound Archive of Australia

- Ms Denise Cardew-Hall, Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer
- Ms Meg Labrum, General Manager, Collections and Access
- Mr Jan Müller, Chief Executive Officer

National Gallery of Australia

- Ms Kirsten Paisley, Deputy Director
- Mr Gerard Vaughan AM, Director
- Mr Adam Worrall, Assistant Director, Exhibition and Collection Services

National Library of Australia

- Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Director-General
- Ms Lyn Cook, Chief Financial Officer and Director, Finance Branch
- Ms Cathy Pilgrim, Assistant Director-General, Executive Support and Public Programs Division

National Museum of Australia

- Dr Mathew Trinca, Director

National Portrait Gallery of Australia

- Mr Trent Birkett, Chief Operating Officer
- Mr Angus Trumble, Gallery Director

Questacon

- Ms Kate Driver, Acting Director

Thursday, 16 August 2018 – Canberra, ACT*Australian National Botanic Gardens*

- Dr Judy West, Executive Director

Parks Australia

- Mr Sebastian Lang, Acting Assistant Secretary, Parks Island and Biodiversity Science Branch

Friday, 24 August 2018 – Canberra, ACT*Australian Electrical Commission*

- Mr Jeff Pope, Deputy Electoral Commissioner
- Mr Tom Rogers, Electoral Commissioner

Community and Public Sector Union

- Ms Kassandra O’Hare, Section Secretary for the National Cultural Institutions
- Mrs Beth Vincent-Pietsch, Deputy Secretary

Department of Education and Training

- Mrs Margaret Leggett, Branch Manager, Curriculum Branch
- Mrs Catherine Orchard, Director, Curriculum Policy and Humanities Team

Department of Social Services

- Ms Sharon Bailey, Acting Group Manager Settlement Services Group
- Ms Sarah Guise, Acting Branch Manager, Settlement Policy Branch
- Mr Leo Kennedy, Branch Manager, Settlement Support Branch

Department of Finance

- Mr Brad Cook, Assistant Secretary, Governance and APS Transformation
- Ms Lorraine Holcroft, Assistant Secretary, Commercial and Government Services
- Mr Ian Nicholas, Assistant Secretary, Governance and APS Transformation

High Court of Australia

- Ms Philippa Lynch, Chief Executive and Principal Registrar
- Mr Ben Wickham, Senior Executive and Deputy Registrar

Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House

- Mr Andrew Harper, Deputy Director
- Ms Daryl Karp, Director

National Capital Attractions Association

- Dr Naomi Dale, President

National Capital Authority

- Ms Sally Barnes, Chief Executive Officer
- Mr Andrew Smith, Chief Planner

National Capital Educational Tourism Project

- Mr Garry Watson, Project Leader

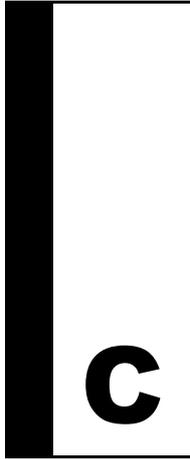
Thursday, 20 September 2018 – Canberra, ACT*Department of Parliamentary Services*

- Mr Luke Hickey, Assistant Secretary, Parliamentary Experience Branch
- Ms Cate Saunders, Chief Operating Officer
- Mr Rob Stefanic, Secretary

Thursday, 6 December 2018 – Canberra, ACT

Sport Australia

- Mr Peter Dunlop, Chief Financial Officer
- Ms Renee O’Callaghan, Acting General Manager
- Mrs Kate Palmer, Chief Executive Officer



Appendix C - Exhibits

- 1 Questacon, Year in Review 2016 - The Future Begins with a Dream (*relates to Submission 29*)
- 2 Questacon, Year in Review 2017 - Creativity, Imagination and Enterprise (*relates to Submission 29*)
- 3 Questacon, Program Sheets - Maker project (*relates to Submission 29*)
- 4 New Zealand Media and Entertainment (NZME) article - ACT Government (*relates to Submission 69.1*)
- 5 Singapore Airlines Malaysia landing page ACT Government (*relates to Submission 69.1*)
- 6 Wanderlust UK article - ACT Government (*relates to Submission 69.1*)
- 7 2017 Canberra Landmarks Lonely Planet video - ACT Government (*relates to Submission 69.1*)
- 8 Singapore Airlines Malaysia promotional video - ACT Government (*relates to Submission 69.1*)