

National Library of Australia Community Heritage Grants: What next?

How to Prepare

Before the assessor arrives to begin the *Significance Assessment* the following steps should be taken:

- Clearly define the purpose for undertaking the *Significance Assessment*. Put together a written project brief which should include the name of your organisation, the project title, date, author of brief, contact details for the organisation. It should also include some background information about your organisation and the aims of the project.
- Consult [Significance – A Guide to Assessing the Significance of Cultural Heritage Objects and Collections](#) on the process of assessments of a whole collection so that you are familiar with the methodology and are able to respond to requests from the assessor.
- Clearly define the extent of the *Significance Assessment* to be undertaken. Will the assessment embrace the collection as a whole, a component of the collection or select objects? Consider the budget for the project. If the collection as a whole is to be assessed how will it be physically undertaken? If the collection is numerically large clearly define what an acceptable assessment percentage will be 15%, 25%, 30%?
- Physically isolate the material or clearly identify it before the assessor arrives. Arrange a suitable working space. Valuable time is lost when objects and documentation cannot be found or working space is inadequate.
- Gather together all documentation for the collection. Include the CHG application, the CHG offer letter, catalogues, details of provenance of material, and transcripts of interviews about the stories associated with the collection. Give these documents to your assessor before they visit.
- Contact people who can provide information to the assessor where necessary and make sure they are available for consultation.
- Make sure that the assessor has full access to the collection for the time that he or she is conducting the assessment.

Cost Estimate

- An average *Significance Assessment* will involve a site visit (2 - 3 days) and a written report (4 - 5 days).
- During the site visit the assessor will assess the physical condition of the collection (acceptable percentage), the veracity of its accompanying documentation and the relationship between the museum building(s) and the collection. Normally the assessor will not have time to consult the community and record comments and ideas about the collection during this period. This should be undertaken by museum/ library/archive/gallery personnel beforehand and be available to the assessor.
- The *Significance Assessment* will cost approximately \$5000 (ex gst) depending on the amount of material you are having assessed. Travel and accommodation costs will add to the professional fees if the assessor does not live locally. Ask for a written quote that details the components such as on-site visit, travel costs and report preparation. Remember that the NLA has provisions to support further funding for travel.
- If the assessor requires some funding up-front, only make a partial payment (50%). Retain the final payment (50%) until you've had a chance to read the draft report and ensure that it meets your requirements.

Source: <https://www.nla.gov.au/awards-and-grants/chg>

ART GUARDIANS have provided assessments to Museums, Art Galleries, Cultural Centres, Historical Societies, Heritage Homes, Government Archives and Public Repositories. ART GUARDIANS prepare a thorough review of collections and deliver state-of-the-art reports according to the standards set by the Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Materials (AICCM).

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