

# MAAS Research Policy and Framework

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# Table of Contents

Policy Summary .....	1
1. Purpose .....	4
2. Policy Statement .....	4
3. Scope .....	4
4. Research .....	4
5. Research Framework .....	5
6. Research objectives .....	5
7. Roles and Responsibilities.....	5
8. Risk Management .....	6
9. Related Museum plans, policies and/or procedures .....	6
10. Relevant legislation and external context.....	6
11. Acknowledgement.....	6
12. Responsible Officer .....	6
13. Responsible Department & Unit.....	7
14. File No .....	7
15. Amendment history .....	7

<b>POLICY SUMMARY</b>	
<b>POLICY DETAILS</b>	<p>Title: <i>MAAS Research Policy and Framework</i>  Date: 2 August 2018  Review Date: July 2020</p>
<b>KEY MESSAGES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documents how MAAS fulfils its public, contractual and statutory obligation of research.</li> <li>• Underpins museum-based research across core functions of MAAS including learning, curatorial practice, conservation, collection management, publication, audience and digital practice.</li> <li>• It aims to foster a culture that enables research and innovation to engage our diverse communities, advance our research partnership opportunities, to develop new knowledge, products and practices and to generally enhance our professional industry reputation.</li> <li>• Our research strategies will enhance and compliment key research projects including ARC Linkage grants, university, industry and corporate partnership projects and the research of specialist centres such as the Centre for Fashion and the Centre for STEAM.</li> <li>• Supports research in the applied arts and sciences that produces new knowledge that benefits society and enhances the visitor experience</li> <li>• Encourages research that is transdisciplinary, drawing on the strengths of collaboration between the arts and sciences, technology enablers and our expert knowledge communities.</li> </ul>
<b>SCOPE</b>	<p>Applies to all MAAS employees (on-going, temporary, casual) volunteers, interns, research fellows, partnership researchers and contracted consultants</p>
<b>USE</b>	<p>This policy and framework provides the structure for all research undertaken within MAAS.</p>
<b>COMPLIANCE</b>	<p>This policy is associated with the following legislation:  <i>Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research</i>  <i>International Council of Museums (ICOM) Code of Ethics for Museums</i>  <i>Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences Act 1945</i>  <i>Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences Regulation 2017</i></p> <p>The <i>Research Policy and Framework</i> will encompass additional strategic and implementation plans including, amongst others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>MAAS Research Strategy</i></li> <li>• <i>MAAS Research Plan</i></li> <li>• <i>MAAS Research Library Policy</i></li> <li>• <i>MAAS Archives Policy</i></li> <li>• <i>Code of Good Practice in Research</i></li> </ul>
<b>POLICY OWNER</b>	<p>Curatorial, Collections &amp; Exhibitions</p> <p>This policy is for publication on the MAAS website</p>

## 1. Purpose

The *MAAS Research Policy and Framework* supports the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS) to achieve its objectives by documenting how MAAS fulfils its public, contractual and statutory obligation of research. MAAS recognises research as significant to our organisational culture and duty of care for the collection. This policy underpins museum-based research across core functions of MAAS including learning, curatorial practice, conservation, collection management, publication, audience and digital practice. MAAS aims to engage its diverse audiences in life-long learning through developing various knowledge exchange platforms in partnership with the university, industry and corporate sector, expert specialists and the wider society. This policy and framework provides the structure for all research undertaken within MAAS.

## 2. Policy Statement

MAAS has a statutory obligation under the *Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences Act 1945* and the *Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences Regulation 2017* to maintain and administrate research. A *Research Policy and Framework* will enable MAAS to activate research across the organisation to inform and meet the vision, values and success measures of the MAAS Strategic Plan. It will foster a culture that enables research and innovation to engage our diverse communities, advance our research partnership opportunities, to develop new knowledge, products and practices and to generally enhance our professional industry reputation.

This policy and framework should be read in conjunction with the *MAAS Code of Conduct*, the *MAAS Code of Good Practice in Research*, the *Code of Ethics and Conduct for NSW government sector employees* and it aligns with the *International Council of Museums (ICOM) Code of Ethics for Museums*, the *Museums Australia Code of Ethics* and the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*.

## 3. Scope

The *MAAS Research Policy and Framework* guides all research activities undertaken by MAAS and applies to all MAAS employees (on-going, temporary, casual) volunteers, interns, research fellows, partnership researchers and contracted consultants who undertake research for MAAS or using MAAS research facilities, collections and research holdings. All references to 'employees' within this policy should therefore be read to include voluntary roles, as well as all paid employees including contracted and casual roles.

## 4. Research

The Australian Research Council (ARC) defines research as: 'the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies and understandings. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative.' (ARC, 2018)<sup>1</sup>

This definition is used to guide our understanding of research at MAAS and may include:

- Scholarship: the analysis, synthesis and interpretation of ideas and information.
- Pure research: work undertaken to acquire new knowledge without a specific application in view.
- Strategic research: work which is carried out to discover new knowledge which might provide for an envisioned future application.
- Action research: the development of new knowledge through engagement in practice.

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[http://www.arc.gov.au/sites/default/files/filedepot/Public/ARC/Research%20Impact/Glossary\\_for\\_research\\_impact.pdf](http://www.arc.gov.au/sites/default/files/filedepot/Public/ARC/Research%20Impact/Glossary_for_research_impact.pdf)

- Research and development: activities related to innovation and entrepreneurship, development and activation of products and processes.
- Transdisciplinary research: the development of new knowledge, practices and products through combining different disciplines and cultural paradigms
- Indigenous research as informed by the *MAAS Reconciliation Action Plan* and the *MAAS Australian Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property Protocol*.
- Audience insights and engagement research: ensuring robust audience insight is generated through monitoring, evaluation and research (primarily market, marketing and social research) and made accessible across MAAS. Importantly, this insight will be both about audiences themselves as well as insight about exceptional museum/audience experience.

## 5. Research Framework

This policy and framework will enable MAAS to identify areas of future research and investigation to undertake a rigorous program of discipline specific and transdisciplinary research across disciplines, cultures and communities. Our research strategies will enhance and compliment key research projects including ARC Linkage grants, university, industry and corporate partnership projects and the research of specialist centres such as the Centre for Fashion and the Centre for STEAM. Central to the success of the Museum's research efforts is a vibrant and supportive research culture enabling MAAS researchers to partner with those in community, corporate and academic organisations to develop innovative approaches to researching material culture and the museum context.

The *Research Policy and Framework* will encompass additional strategic and implementation plans including, amongst others:

- *MAAS Research Strategy*
- *MAAS Research Plan*
- *MAAS Research Library Policy*
- *MAAS Archives Policy*
- *Code of Good Practice in Research*

## 6. Research objectives

To enhance the reputation of MAAS for museum research in Australia and beyond through our objectives of:

- Research in the applied arts and sciences that produces new knowledge that benefits society and enhances the visitor experience
- Research that is transdisciplinary, drawing on the strengths of collaboration between the arts and sciences, technology enablers and our expert knowledge communities
- Outcomes from research collaborations with university, industry, corporate and community organisations
- A culture of deep research inquiry and curiosity about the material and contemporary world and the museum context. This includes researching the role of future museums, what they are and how we should respond to changing audience needs and ways of engaging

MAAS collection-based research is developed in alignment with the MAAS Strategic Collections policy framework and the *MAAS Collection Development Policy* in which the strategic collection disciplines are outlined.

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities

Research Manager:

Responsible for the co-ordination of MAAS-wide research activities in collaboration with specialist experts across the organisation. Ensures that research services are managed in accordance with this policy, related

legislation, policies, strategies, plans and procedures and accepted best practice standards. Reports to the Director of Curatorial, Collections & Exhibitions.

Employees:

All employees are individually responsible for adhering to this policy and framework when engaging in research

Approvals:

Research proposals are prepared by the relevant employee and presented for consideration and endorsement by the Research Advisory Committee.

## **8. Risk Management**

MAAS will manage and mitigate risks relating to research activities through ensuring that research strategies and policies are in keeping with legislative and statutory requirements and can be implemented in relation to other key policies and activities. Risk management will be undertaken in alignment with the *MAAS Risk Management Framework and Policy*.

## **9. Related Museum plans, policies and/or procedures**

- *Archives Policy*
- *Australian Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Cultural Property Protocol*
- *Code of Conduct*
- *Code of Good Practice in Research 2018*
- *Collection Development Policy*
- *Conservation Policy*
- *Disability Inclusion Action Plan*
- *MAAS Intellectual Property Policy*
- *MAAS Records and Information Management Policy*
- *MAAS Research Library Policy*
- *MAAS Risk Management Framework and Policy*
- *MAAS Strategic Collections policy framework*
- *MAAS Strategic Plan 2017-2022*
- *Publishing Strategy*
- *Privacy Management Plan*
- *Reconciliation Action Plan*
- *Third Party Copyright Policy*

## **10. Relevant legislation and external context**

This policy is associated with the following legislation:

*Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*

*International Council of Museums (ICOM) Code of Ethics for Museums*

*Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences Act 1945*

*Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences Regulation 2017*

## **11. Acknowledgement**

This policy has been developed using external museum and gallery research policies including:

*V & A Research Handbook 2015*

## **12. Responsible Officer**

Research Manager

### 13. Responsible Department & Unit

Curatorial, Collections & Exhibitions

### 14. File No

*n/a*

### 15. Amendment history

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date issued</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>By</b>
1	27/09/18	<i>For public distribution</i>	<i>Research Manager</i>