

Role Description

Manager, First Nations Community Access to Archives



Department/Agency	Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport/Museums of History NSW
Division/Branch/Unit	Archives / First Nations Community Access to Archives
Role number	50073680
Classification/Grade/Band	Clerk Grade 11/12
Senior executive work level standards	Not Applicable
OSCA Code	TBC
PCAT Code	TBC
Date of Approval	6 October 2026
Agency Website	http://www.mhnsw.au

Agency overview

Museums of History NSW brings together a portfolio of iconic museums, rich collections and heritage sites, the nation's oldest archive collection, vital recordkeeping services and expert staff.

We bring history to life by sharing the stories of our places and collections. Through the State Archives Collection, we manage NSW's official documentary heritage, supporting government transparency and the public's right to access information.

These two roles do not just sit side by side – they inform and enrich each other. By preserving and making accessible our places, collections and archives, we create opportunities for people to explore the past and better understand their own place in the world. By supporting lifelong learning and inviting people to come together, we promote civic literacy, empathy, wellbeing and belonging.

We believe that history belongs to everyone. This is the promise and the purpose of MHNSW.

Museums of History NSW is a state cultural institution, established under the Museums of History NSW Act 2022. It is an agency of the NSW Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport (DCITHS).

Project overview

MHNSW, in partnership with the Aboriginal Languages Trust (ALT), have developed the First Nations Community Access to Archives project, to enhance First Nations access to important archival documents that could unlock information about their Languages and Cultures. Under this initiative MHNSW and the ALT aim to provide a Culturally-safe avenue for Aboriginal people to access materials from the State Archives Collection and to engage with Communities about repatriation of their information.

The initial 'Search and Discovery' phase of the project involves searching the State Archives Collection for materials relating to First Nations people and their Languages. Other phases involve preserving and providing access to

materials, engaging with Aboriginal Communities and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the materials as well as developing a workforce strategy for First Nations archives workers in NSW.

The initiative is led by a First Nations team who are provided with on the job training in working with State archives and digitisation, and access to various support systems including Cultural mentors.

As the State Archives Collection is from the early period of colonisation in Australia, materials may contain wording and images that are culturally insensitive and distressing to First Nations people. The collection is likely to contain information about historical events including Frontier Wars, Stolen Generations, land dispossession and laws and policies affecting First Nations Communities.

Primary purpose of the role

Contribute to the revitalisation of First Nations Languages in NSW by engaging with First Nations communities to facilitate and support access to materials pertaining to their Languages and Cultures. Lead and manage the First Nations Community Access to Archives project and project team to research and surface records in the NSW State Archives Collection relating to First Nations Peoples and make those records accessible and discoverable via a digitisation project. Engage with multiple stakeholders and lead Community outreach initiatives to connect First Nations Communities to records.

Key accountabilities

- Lead the development and delivery of the First Nations Community Access to Archives project. This will involve a number of project phases from resurfacing collection materials for review, digitisation and First Nations Community engagement and outreach.
- Lead a First Nations project team; including developing a comprehensive training and development plan, with the goal of expanding the First Nations archives workforce in NSW.
- Develop and implement a plan for Aboriginal Community engagement, taking into account the complexities of working with multiple Communities at varying stages of their Language revitalisation journeys, each with their own experiences with archival institutions and protocols for engagement.
- Develop and implement a Cultural safety plan for First Nations Peoples who will engage with the collection, including project team and Community members, that acknowledges the traumatic and distressing nature of the collection materials and seeks to support healing through the uncovering and repatriation of the materials.
- Lead and oversee all aspects of the project's implementation, including meeting milestones, preparing business cases and project plans, establishing appropriate governance, identifying, allocating and managing resources, monitoring and evaluation, risk management and meeting reporting requirements, to ensure project outcomes are achieved on time, on budget, to quality standards and in line with the Agency's project management methodology.
- Manage internal government stakeholder relationships through effective communication, negotiation and issues management to ensure stakeholders are engaged throughout the project and project deliverables are met.
- Provide expert advice and information to internal government stakeholders on emerging project issues and present recommendations to support project delivery in line with established plans, budgets, timeframes, policy objectives and other project priorities.
- Oversee research and formulate recommendations to support evidence-based project planning and decision making.

Key challenges

- Managing complex and sensitive consultations and negotiations with diverse stakeholders, within agreed timelines, given their varying expectations, viewpoints and interests.
- Achieving multiple project objectives, given limited resources and tight deadlines, and the need to identify project interdependencies and balance competing demands and priorities.

- Managing Culturally sensitive historic materials regarding colonisation and how the project team and others interact with them.

Key relationships

Internal

Who	Why
Executive Director Records, Archives and Collections	- Receive advice and report on progress towards business objectives and discuss future directions - Provide expert advice and contribute to decision making - Identify emerging issues/risks and their implications and propose solutions
Manager, First Nations employment and Engagement	Receive advice and collaborate on project objectives and deliverables
Manager, Access Services and Manager, Collection Services	Regular contact to ensure integration and access is maximised; seek/give guidance and advice as required.
Manager, Policy & Research – Aboriginal Languages Trust	Receive advice and collaborate on project objectives and deliverables, as per MHNSW agreement with the ALT
Project Team	- Guide, support, coach and mentor team members - Lead discussions and decisions regarding key projects and deliverables
Direct Reports	- Lead, direct, manage and support performance and development - Guide, support, coach and mentor
Stakeholders	- Provide expert advice on a range of project related issues and strategies - Optimise engagement to achieve defined outcomes - Manage expectations and resolve issues

External

Who	Why
First Nations Communities and Organisations	- Understand the unique engagement needs and protocols of each group - Consult, in a Culturally appropriate way to support Communities - Manage expectations and resolve issues
Vendors/Service Providers and Consultants	- Communicate needs, facilitate routine business transactions and resolve issues - Negotiate and approve contracts and service agreements - Manage contracts and monitor the provision of service to ensure compliance with contract and service agreements

Role dimensions

Decision making

You will:

- Have autonomy and make decisions that are under your direct control.
- Refers to the Executive Director decisions that require significant change to program outcomes or timeframes or are likely to escalate.
- Be fully accountable for leading and directing this project of strategic significance to the organisation and provide relevant authoritative advice.
- Exercise critical or managerial judgement and initiative of the highest order.

Reporting line

You will report to the Executive Director Records, Archives and Collections

Direct reports

The following roles report directly to the Manager, First Nations Community Access to Archives Project:

- Senior Advisor, First Nations Community Access to Archives
- Senior Archives Advisor, First Nations Community Access to Archives
- Administrative Assistant, First Nations Community Access to Archives

Budget/Expenditure

As per Financial Delegations

Key knowledge and experience

- n/a

Essential requirements

- This position is identified for applicants of Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander descent.
- Demonstrated ability to liaise, proactively engage and work collaboratively with Aboriginal Communities and relevant agencies in ensuring Culturally responsive services.
- Experience leading a project team.
- Extensive knowledge and experience in delivering projects.
- Willingness to work across MHNSW sites and ability to travel to multiple locations.

Capabilities for the role

The [NSW public sector capability framework](#) describes the capabilities (knowledge, skills and abilities) needed to perform a role. There are four main groups of capabilities: personal attributes, relationships, results and business enablers, with a fifth people management group of capabilities for roles with managerial responsibilities. These groups, combined with capabilities drawn from occupation-specific capability sets where relevant, work together to provide an understanding of the capabilities needed for the role.

The capabilities are separated into **focus capabilities** and **complementary capabilities**.

Focus capabilities

Focus capabilities are the capabilities considered the most important for effective performance of the role. These capabilities will be assessed at recruitment.

The focus capabilities for this role are shown below with a brief explanation of what each capability covers and the indicators describing the types of behaviours expected at each level.

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
	Display Resilience and Courage Be open and honest, prepared to express your views, and willing to accept and commit to change	• Respond constructively when in high pressure and unpredictable situations • Give frank, honest advice in response to contrary views	Advanced

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
Personal Attributes		- Be open to criticism of your ideas and respond in a thoughtful and considered way - Welcome new challenges and persist in raising and working through novel and difficult issues - Develop effective strategies and be decisive when dealing with emotionally charged situations and difficult issues - Support and lead change and overcome discomfort when things are complicated, uncertain or unclear	
 Relationships	Communicate Effectively Communicate clearly, pay attention to others and respond with understanding and respect	- Present with credibility, engage diverse audiences and test whether they understand you - Translate technical and complex information clearly and concisely for different audiences - Create opportunities for others to contribute to discussion and debate - Set an example by promoting information sharing across your organisation - Manage complex communications that involve understanding and responding to multiple and divergent viewpoints - Explore creative ways to share information and communicate with diverse audiences - Leverage insights from people with lived experience to shape communication and engagement strategies - Write clearly, concisely and persuasively in a range of styles and formats	Advanced
 Relationships	Influence and Negotiate Gain consensus and commitment from others, and resolve issues and conflicts	- Negotiate from an informed and credible position - Lead and facilitate productive discussions with staff and stakeholders - Encourage others to share and debate ideas to help reach a consensus - Recognise diverse perspectives and the need for compromise when negotiating mutually agreed outcomes - Influence others with a fair and thoughtful approach and sound arguments - Be sensitive and show understanding when resolving conflicts and differences - Manage challenging relationships with internal and external stakeholders - Anticipate and minimise conflict	Adept
	Deliver Results Achieve results by using resources efficiently and committing to quality outcomes	Use your own and others' expertise to achieve outcomes, and take responsibility for delivering intended outcomes	Adept

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
Results		• Ensure staff understand expected goals and acknowledge staff success in achieving these • Identify the resources people need and ensure goals are achieved within budget and on time • Use business data to evaluate outcomes and inform continuous improvement • Identify priorities that need to change and ensure the way resources are allocated meets new business needs • Ensure you budget for and clearly state the financial impacts of new priorities	
 Results	Think and Solve Problems Think, analyse and consider the broader context to develop practical solutions	• Undertake objective, critical analysis to reach accurate conclusions that recognise and manage contextual issues • Work through issues, weigh up alternatives and identify the most effective solutions in collaboration with others • Consider the wider business context when thinking about options to resolve issues • Explore a range of possibilities and creative alternatives to improve systems, processes and business practices • Put systems and processes in place that are supported by high-quality research and analysis • Look for opportunities to design innovative solutions to meet customers' needs and service demands • Evaluate the performance and effectiveness of services, policies and programs against clear criteria	Advanced
 Business Enablers	Project Management Understand and use effective ways to plan, coordinate and control projects	• Prepare and review project scope and business cases for projects with multiple interdependencies • Use key subject matter experts' knowledge to inform project plans and directions • Design and implement effective stakeholder communication strategies for all project stages • Monitor project completion and implement effective and rigorous project evaluation methodologies to inform future planning • Develop strategies to correct projects if they vary from their plans • Manage transitions between project stages and ensure any changes to projects are consistent with organisational goals • Participate in governance processes, such as project steering groups	Advanced

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
 People Management	Optimise Business Outcomes Manage people and resources effectively to achieve public value	- Initiate and develop longer-term goals and plans to guide the team's work in line with organisational objectives - Consider impacts of industry trends when planning and allocating resources to achieve business outcomes - When planning resources, implement processes that encourage the attraction and retention of people with diverse cultures, backgrounds and experiences - Ensure team members base their decisions on a sound understanding of public sector business and risk management principles - Monitor performance against standards and keep others informed about progress and performance outcomes	Adept

Complementary capabilities

Complementary capabilities are also identified from the Capability Framework and relevant occupation-specific capability sets. They are important to identify performance required for the role and development opportunities.

Note: capabilities listed as 'not essential' for this role are not relevant for recruitment purposes, however, may be relevant for future career development.

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
 Personal Attributes	Act with Integrity	Be ethical and professional, and uphold and promote the public sector values	Adept
 Personal Attributes	Manage Self	Be persistent, self-reflect and commit to learning	Adept
 Personal Attributes	Value Diversity and Inclusion	Be inclusive and respect diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives	Intermediate

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
 Relationships	Commit to Customer Service	Provide customer-focused services in line with public sector and organisational objectives	Adept
 Relationships	Work Collaboratively	Collaborate with others and value their contribution	Adept
 Results	Plan and Prioritise	Plan to achieve priority outcomes and respond flexibly to changing circumstances	Adept
 Results	Demonstrate Accountability	Be proactive and responsible for your actions, and follow legislation, policy and guidelines	Adept
 Business Enablers	Finance	Understand and apply financial processes to achieve value for money and minimise financial risk	Adept
 Business Enablers	Technology	Understand and use available technology to maximise efficiencies and effectiveness	Intermediate
 Business Enablers	Procurement and Contract Management	Understand and use procurement processes to ensure effective purchasing and contract performance	Adept

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
 People Management	Manage and Develop People	Engage with and motivate staff, and develop their capability and potential	Adept
 People Management	Inspire Direction and Purpose	Communicate goals, priorities and vision, and recognise achievements	Intermediate
 People Management	Manage Reform and Change	Support and champion change, and help others to engage with change	Intermediate