

Community Heritage Grants



COMMUNITY HERITAGE GRANTS

Are You Ready for a Significance Assessment?

A significance assessment helps explain the meaning and value of a collection and provides further information for its management and interpretation. This appraisal by an external consultant, using industry recognised significance criteria, tailored to the needs of the organisation, is designed to assist your staff/members to prioritise collection items and interpret your collection and should form a sound basis for future collection management activities.

There are a number of things to consider before applying for a significance assessment grant to ensure the assessor has what is required to make a determination and provide useful recommendations. To assist in making this decision, we strongly recommend reading the following publication to understand the significance assessment process:

[Significance 2.0 - A Guide to Assessing the Significance of Collections \(2009\) - 2nd revised edition \(online version\)](#)

We also recommend that new applicants view the online webinars on significance assessment produced by the CHG Program Team. There are presentations from curators and museum practitioners and three case studies from past CHG organisations, reflecting on their experiences undertaking significance assessments.

Go to [Trove Learning Hub](#) - log in as a Guest and go to Browse Courses - Community Heritage Grants – Community Heritage Grants 2022.

We have also prepared this questionnaire, to help your organisation in planning your next steps:

Are You Ready for a Significance Assessment?

Consider the following questions. If these statements do not apply to your organisation, you may not be ready and/or not competitive in applying for CHG funding.

Statements relating to your organisation:

- is a non-profit, incorporated organisation
- has a sustainable group of staff / members that are committed and engaged in caring for the collection
- has staff / members available to support a significance assessor throughout the assessment, including preliminary discussions, answering questions, site visits, preparation of the report
- has a collection management framework including agreed policies or guidelines such as Collection Policy, Conservation/Preservation Policy, Interpretation Policy, acquisition procedures.
- has links with other cultural heritage groups or professional associations
- members / staff have undertaken collection management training or would be keen to do so.

Statements relating to your collection:

- collection items are accessible to members of the public, whether on permanent/temporary physical or online display or via appointment OR the organisation has plans to provide access
- collection items are housed and stored safely with easy access for members/staff and would be accessible to an assessor during the site visit
- staff / members have reasonable knowledge of what items, estimated number of items and type of material is in the collection
- all / the majority of collection items have basic catalogue records, with description, age and available provenance. The records are documented via a working catalogue system, this could include a physical card catalogue, a basic spreadsheet, or a collections management system. Selected members / staff know how to use the system.
- organisation has held exhibitions/displays of collection items or published books, reports and articles on collection items or parts of the collection.
- members appreciate the purpose of significance in a heritage context and what a significance assessment entails and how it can be used
- members are familiar with the *Significance 2.0* publication and understand the key concepts. (The CHG program has also produced online webinars on significance assessment that members are encouraged to view.)
- based on an understanding of significance criteria, members could identify items of likely national significance in the collection. The organisation may already have statements of significance for key collection items.