

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS - COMMUNITY HERITAGE GRANTS 2023

Timeline for 2023 Round	
Date	Stage
Tuesday 7 March	2023 Round opens
Friday 5 May	Final Project Report (acquittal) due for 2022 Round organisations wanting to re-apply in the 2023 Round.
Monday 8 May	Applications close for significance assessments and from new applicants that have not received CHG grants (ie those requiring assessment for national significance)
Thursday 1 June	Applications close for repeat/previous recipients wishing to undertake PNAs, collection management activities, for organisations that have completed a previous CHG stage in the past five years (ie since 2018) Applications also close for training projects .

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Where do we find information about applying?

All applicants should visit the [Community Heritage Grants website](#) and read the CHG [Guidelines](#) (PDF, 359kb). Together these resources provide a good introduction to the program and all the information you will need.

Which application form should we use?

The **new applicants** form is for:

- organisations that haven't received CHG funding before (even if they've applied unsuccessfully);
- *or* organisations that haven't had CHG funding for more than five years (ie since 2018);
- *or* for *all* organisations applying for Significance Assessments.

The **repeat recipients** form is for those that have recently received a CHG grant (since 2018) and are reapplying. It is a streamlined application form, with reduced information requirements.

We also have a streamlined application form specifically for **training projects**.

I have a 2022 grant, can I apply for the 2023 Round too?

Yes you can, but to be eligible for the 2023 Round, you need to have completed the project and submitted your final Final Project Report (FPR) acquittal via Smartygrants by **Friday 5 May 2023**.

The FPR template has been posted onto Smartygrants for all CHG 2022 Round grantees. A reminder that if grantees are completing the FPR at this time, there is no need to complete the Progress Report.

If you have any questions about your acquittal please contact us via chg@nla.gov.au

What are the three stages of CHG support?

The program has three stages to assist organisations over successive rounds/years:

1. **Significance Assessment** - CHG provides funding to employ a heritage consultant to visit your organisation and complete a significance assessment on the collection. The independent consultant will then prepare a report which articulates the history and significance of the collection, including identifying key collection items. It will also make recommendations for further action.
2. **Preservation Needs Assessment** - funding to employ an accredited Conservator to visit and complete an assessment of the preservation needs of the collection including assessing the

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storage conditions and other factors affecting its preservation. Again, you will receive a report with prioritised recommendations for housing, storage, collection care and conservation.

3. Funding to assist with projects related to collection management arising from the priority recommendations made in the earlier Significance and Preservation Needs Assessment reports.

Organisations can apply for funding for cataloguing software at any stage, to help document the history of the collection material and assist with assessments and collection care.

Can we submit multiple applications in the same Round?

CHG funding is limited to \$20,000 per annual grant Round for each eligible organisation (not-for-profit, incorporated organisations that own or manage a collection of nationally significant material that is publicly accessible) as per page 5 of the CHG [Guidelines](#) (PDF, 359kb).

CHG grants are structured in a three-stage process. We strongly recommend that applicants follow this sequence and only apply for one stage in each round. It will often take groups 3-6 (or more) years to complete all stages, so the journey requires a degree of long term commitment and continuity.

While you can and encouraged to apply multiple times to complete the three stage process, it is unusual for the Expert Assessment Panel to approve funding for multiple grants for a single organisation in the same round (even if they are for separate collections).

This practise is based on two key selection criteria. Firstly project feasibility – the Panel considers the capacity of the organisation, which are usually small, community based, volunteer managed groups, to successfully undertake and complete the project within 12 months.

The second criteria is funding equity. Community Heritage Grants is a competitive grant program with limited funds to distribute among the many eligible organisations who apply each round. We are committed to ensuring that limited funds are distributed widely across as many organisations as possible and across all states and territories.

On this basis, we therefore recommend organisations prioritise the projects they would like to undertake and apply across several Rounds to achieve them.

The one exception is training projects. The Panel is open to considering training projects in addition to another application. Ideally the training project would complement the other activity. If applying for multiple projects, please ensure that the maximum funding request for all projects is within the \$20,000 funding limit.

What training projects does CHG support?

Community Heritage Grants welcomes applications to support the costs associated with an external expert provider conduct training for your staff and volunteers on topics related to the care and management of collections.

We especially welcome applications from organisations working in partnership with others to extend the outreach and outcomes of the training. Professional organisations are eligible to apply for training projects too, even if they do not have their own collection, although they should include information about the people and collections that will benefit.

See page 6 of the CHG [Guidelines](#) (PDF, 359kb) for more information and suggestions on applying for training projects.

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Can CHG cover the catering and travel costs for training projects?

Catering and general hospitality costs for training projects are eligible as well as the cost of the trainer's travel if it is necessary. Please obtain quotes to include in your application.

How do we apply for a Significance Assessment?

Please use the "new" application form. The following is essential reading when applying for a Significance Assessment:

1. CHG [Guidelines](#) (PDF, 359kb) provide all eligibility and other information you will need. Key areas - ineligible costs on page 6, program selection criteria on page 8, and guidance on Significance Assessments on page 11.
2. We've produced a short guide to assist organisations to understand what preparation is required before being ready for a Significance Assessment [Significance assessment questionnaire for new applicants](#) (PDF, 189kb).
3. In your application refer specifically to the significance criteria and the assessment process within [Significance – A Guide to Assessing the Significance of Cultural Heritage Objects and Collections](#) (PDF, 3.7mb).

As this is a large document, a shorter guide is available which summarises the significance criteria: [Guide to addressing significance criteria in your application](#) (PDF, 171kb). This also highlights some common mistakes we have observed in previous applications.

4. Applicants are required to identify a potential assessor and include a quote in your application. CHG website has more information on locating a suitable significance assessor: <https://www.nla.gov.au/about/fellowships-scholarships-and-grants/community-heritage-grants/recruiting-appropriate-assessor>

You are encouraged to read some brief summaries of recently completed CHG projects to gauge how other organisations have undertaken similar projects, and which consultants they were involved :

- [2021 project summaries](#) (PDF, 1,100 KB)
- [2020 project summaries](#) (PDF, 2,317kb)
- [2019 project summaries](#) (PDF, 775kb)
- [2018 project summaries](#) (PDF, 623kb)
- [2017 project summaries](#) (PDF, 939kb)

Applications from new recipients close on **Monday 8 May 2023**. Please get in touch via chg@nla.gov.au if you have any questions.

We have a very large and/or multiple collections but can only apply for the standard assessment fee of \$5,500. What do we do?

We appreciate the difficulty of managing and funding work for large or complex collections, and those spread across multiple locations.

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Consultancy costs for Significance and Preservation Needs Assessments are funded at the standard rate of \$5,500 (excluding GST). This is based on costs for an assessment of a small to medium sized collection and entailing a site visit (2 days) and the preparation of a written report (4-5 days).

If your organisation has a larger collection, multiple collections, or collections over multiple locations that doesn't fit the standard sized collection, you may need to prioritise parts of or a specific collection for the assessment and reapply in subsequent funding rounds for the remaining collection. Alternatively, your organisation could consider providing additional funds for the consultant to undertake a larger assessment for the entire collection.

If your nominated consultant is travelling to assess your collection, your organisation should also apply for funding to cover travel, accommodation, and travel allowance.

More information about how the CHG funding supports these assessments, including can be found at: <https://www.nla.gov.au/about/fellowships-scholarships-and-grants/community-heritage-grants>.

Do we need to follow the three stage progress?

- Can we apply for conservation or digitisation funding without a Significance or Preservation Needs Assessment?
- We have at risk collection material and can't wait for a Significance or Preservation Needs Assessment - can applying for conservation immediately?

Although digitisation, conservation, or the purchase of housing and storage for collection material are all eligible activities under the Community Heritage Grants program, it is unlikely that these will be supported without having been recommended in earlier Significance and Preservation Needs Assessment reports.

Keep in mind that the program is designed to assist collecting groups to help care for their collections and build their capacity by firstly undertaking a Significance Assessment, to document the national significance of the collection, followed by a Preservation Needs Assessment to provide recommendations on how to best care for the collection material.

The third and final stage is funding for collection management activities, which includes conservation treatment and improving housing and storage of collection items in accordance with the expert recommendations arising from these assessments. This can include digitising archival records to for conservation and access purposes.

Exceptions

While the three stages are the foundation of the program, there are limited circumstances, where groups may apply for conservation treatment or digitisation funding, without completing the Significance or Preservation Needs Assessment. For example, if collection items are a high risk of loss or deterioration and require urgent conservation treatment. On a similar basis, digitisation of fragile, at risk documents or audio-visual material, may facilitate preservation and continued access to these collection items.

If you are considering these options, you will need to submit a strong case, backed by professional advice from conservators, that the material is at risk and must be conserved or digitised urgently.

You will also need to:

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- a) use the “new” application form;
- b) demonstrate that this at risk material is nationally significant (using the significance criteria within [Significance – A Guide to Assessing the Significance of Cultural Heritage Objects and Collections](#) (PDF, 3.7mb); and
- c) explain why this material cannot wait to progress through the usual three CHG stages.

What types of collections or collection formats does CHG support?

CHG funding can potentially support any format or type of existing collection material which is nationally significant - except built heritage (such as historic houses, buildings, monuments).

In the past we have supported nationally significant collections that include fossils, clothing and textiles, vehicles, machinery, archival records, photographs, sound recordings, scientific specimens, weapons, musical instruments, published and unpublished items and even household objects.

CHG funding cannot be used to acquire or record new collection items, prepare exhibitions or undertake publishing projects.

You can read more about the diverse collections that have received CHG support on our website at:

<https://www.nla.gov.au/about/fellowships-scholarships-and-grants/community-heritage-grants/previous-grant-recipients>

Does CHG fund costs associated with heritage buildings?

CHG is unable to assist with this type of activity. The funding is limited in scope to supporting collections, rather than funding works for built heritage (such as historic houses, buildings, monuments).

The Community Heritage Grant (CHG) program is focused on providing collection management assistance to eligible organisations that own or manage a collection of nationally significant material, that is publicly accessible. The program’s aims and eligible activities are detailed in the Community Heritage Grants [Guidelines](#) (PDF, 359kb).

There are other grant programs that may be able to assist with building works or building maintenance and some suggestions are listed on our website:

<https://www.nla.gov.au/about/fellowships-scholarships-and-grants/community-heritage-grants/other-resources>

We aren’t applying for a Significance Assessment, why do we still need to fill in the application form section on the national significance of our collection?

Yes, you do need to complete the National Significance of your collection section too: even though you are not applying for a Significance Assessment, to be eligible you need to establish that you hold a collection of nationally significant material, as per page 5 of the [CHG Guidelines](#) (PDF, 359kb).

Please complete this section to demonstrate how your collection holds national significance so that your application can progress through the assessment process to be considered for a grant. Refer to the significance criteria outlined in [Significance 2.0 – A Guide to Assessing the Significance of Cultural Heritage Objects and Collections](#) and on the CHG website.

If you have had a Significance Assessment, statement of significance, or other related report created for your collection (or parts of it) in the past it would be helpful to include it with your application.

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How do we catalogue our collection to prepare for an assessment or other projects?

One of the most useful activities organisations can undertake is basic cataloguing of the collection. You can start with just an excel spreadsheet, but whatever descriptive information and provenance you can capture will assist with preparing for a Significance Assessment and help your assessor to understand the depth, scope, provenance, and location of your collection.

The CHG program has produced two training webinars on collection documentation introducing archival and collection management. Click onto the Trove Learning Hub at <https://tcslearning.learnbook.com.au/login/index.php> and login as a Guest at the lower left to explore. Go to “Courses - Community Heritage Grants”.

- **Managing collections for small archives** by Melissa Thomas, Assistant Director, References Services-Description, National Archives of Australia
- **Applying sound documentation principles and practices to your collection** by Lisa McConnell, Collection Documentation Registrar, National Museum of Australia

There are also useful resources page on the CHG website: <https://www.nla.gov.au/about-us/fellowships-scholarships-and-grants/community-heritage-grants/preparing-assessment>

It is important to read the Significance 2.0 document and resources located at <https://www.nla.gov.au/about-us/fellowships-scholarships-and-grants/community-heritage-grants/significance-assessments>

Can we apply for funding for collection management software?

Yes, you can apply for the one-off costs of purchasing or subscribing to collection management software prior to, or at any stage of the CHG staged process, but will still need to provide preliminary information about the significance of your collection (see the significance criteria heading within [Significance – A Guide to Assessing the Significance of Cultural Heritage Objects and Collections](#) (PDF, 3.7mb). (Unless you are a repeat recipient who has completed the previous CHG stage in the last five years.)

Note that computer hardware and equipment costs are not eligible for CHG funding.

In the application, please explain why the software your organisation has chosen is best for your needs, and how your organisation will maintain the software into the future. For example, will your organisation commit to support the software, continue the subscription and invest in staff and volunteer training to maximise the investment.

This is important information as the CHG Assessment Panel will consider whether your chosen software will provide long term benefit to your organisation and collection and therefore represents good value for money.

See page 11 of the [Guidelines](#) (PDF, 359kb) for other issues that should be addressed:

- the number of items in the collection and how they are currently registered or catalogued;
- details of requested software purchase or subscription including number of users, storage size, collection formats, connectivity;
- why this CMS is most suitable for the collection and organisation, including comparison with other systems;
- how ongoing expenses that are not eligible for CHG funding (computer hardware, recurrent subscription costs, future upgrades and technical assistance) will be covered by the organisation; and

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- how staff will be trained, a training plan and consideration of long-term training support options.

Museums and Galleries of NSW have produced an useful overview of [CMS](#) that is recommended reading.

We have a previous a Significance/Preservation Needs Assessment, however it's over five years old. Is it still valid and can we use it to apply for the next stage?

It depends whether your collection has grown or changed since the report was completed, or in the case of a PNA, whether your collection storage and housing has altered.

The SA/PNA report may still be valid if your collection or storage areas have not changed significantly. However please demonstrate that the recommendations are still relevant in your application.

Our Significance/Preservation Needs Assessment was not completed through the CHG program. Is it still valid or do we need to apply for another?

Any recently completed, independent Significance Assessment produced in accordance with [Significance 2.0 \(PDF 3.6 MB\)](#) is valid, as would be a recent Preservation Needs Assessment report recently produced by a qualified Conservator.

However, such reports should cover the content scope outlined in the standard templates – see CHG website: <https://www.nla.gov.au/about-us/fellowships-scholarships-and-grants/community-heritage-grants/preparing-assessment>

In these cases, we ask that applicants use the new Applicants form and submit by first closing date, **Monday 8 May**, as the collection would still be new to the program and would be assessed for the significance of the collection, as well as for project feasibility.

Does CHG cover the travel costs for our assessor?

Yes, travel and accommodation are eligible costs that you can apply for in addition to the standard assessment fee of \$5,500 if your assessor needs to travel and a local assessor is not available.

However, this support is primarily for organisations, usually in rural or regional areas, who are unable to recruit an assessor from their local area, or organisations with a highly specialised collection who require an assessor with specialised skills not be available in the local area.

Travel costs are usually not awarded to organisations in large metropolitan cities for a standard SA or PNA report where an appropriate assessor could be recruited.

Where can we get more information about planning a digitisation project?

- GLAM Peak's [Digital Access to Collections](#)
- [Digital NZ's Make it Digital Guides](#)
- [Public Records Office Victoria's Just Digitise It Training Guide](#)
- State Library of New South Wales' [Digital practice: Guidelines for digitising images in NSW public libraries](#)
- [Digitisation of Heritage Materials - Training Materials](#) including the DOHM Training Manual.
- The Association for Recorded Sound Collections (ARSC) [Guide](#) to Audio Preservation.

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- Most major state and territory museums, art galleries, archives, and state libraries also offer conservation and preservation advice, and there is also further information on digital preservation and reformatting available from the [National Library](#) and the [National Film and Sound Archive](#) which you may find helpful.
- The State Library of Queensland's information on general collection preservation: <https://www.slq.qld.gov.au/how-do-i/preserve-your-collections>

What sort of digitisation can we apply for? Can we apply to digitise our oral history collections as well as photographs?

CHG can support organisations to work with external providers to preserve their collections and increase accessibility through digitisation of collections ranging from archives, books, paper records, objects, textiles, paintings, photographs, films and sound recordings.

Remember that CHG cannot fund the digitisation and filming of newspapers or magazines, the purchase of computer hardware or digitisation equipment, or the development of websites or software - see page 6 of the CHG [Guidelines](#) (PDF, 359kb).

Applications for Digitisation of **original materials** for preservation, access purposes and the ongoing planning of the collection's maintenance should include a Digitisation Plan that addresses:

- Conservation/condition checking of original materials must occur prior to digitisation
- Arrangements for scanning, back-up procedures, and access to the digitised items in local systems, as well as discovery in larger systems like Trove
- Ongoing management of digital copies (describing the file formats to be used for the preservation and access files, and the metadata that will be included)
- compliance with relevant Australian copyright law. The copyright for materials must be owned by your organisation or you must have permission to duplicate the materials from the rightful copyright owner. When recording oral history you need to obtain specific permissions from the person being recorded, and agree upon what circumstances material featuring them is made public, shared, or digitised. There are also ethical considerations and of course, people's wishes may change over time. This is a complex area of copyright law - these online resources provide further guidance:
 - <https://oralhistoryaustralia.org.au/resources/links/>
 - <https://www.nla.gov.au/using-library/copyright-library-collections/rights-and-oral-history-and-folklore-collection>
 - <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5a28b78d692ebe8cccef0034/t/5eb28a527cc82c67c628563e/1588759124312/Understanding+Copyright.pdf>
- how the content will be accessed, including permissions from the copyright owners, or Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) owners in any grant application.

Digitising **audio-visual and born digital material** (for long term digital preservation) is more involved and complex than digitising hardcopy materials, and in these cases, its particularly important to seek specialist advice from a provider.

Audio-visual and Born-digital projects digitisation may require the reformatting of original material including copying tapes or producing microfilm, digital or photographic print copies. Reformatting may also include projects that migrate digital data from older carriers (such as floppy disks, magnetic media etc.) or digital file format migration.

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If you are applying for funding for copying of audio-visual materials or digital data from physical digital carriers (eg. floppy discs), please provide a Digitisation Plan that details:

- How the project will enable easier access to the collection
- What is proposed for the original tapes or other carriers, after digitisation or reformatting
- What technical standards will be used to copy and encode the video or audio material into a file, specifically the technical standards that will be used for the resultant digital files
- How will the new digital content be accessed (onsite, online, loan DVDs) and preserved, including backup copies
- Any disaster planning arrangements.

How do we access the CHG video and webinar content?

There are training resources, case studies from past recipients and other helpful sources of information on the online (via the Trove Partner Learning Hub) at the following link:

<https://tcslearning.learnbook.com.au/course/index.php?categoryid=16> Please see the “*Want to explore the site? Login as a guest*” section for access without a password to CHG content.

Can CHG fund our book/publishing project/collection research/cataloguing project/exhibition?

CHG is focused on supporting the management and preservation of existing collections of nationally significant material.

Publishing, exhibition, cataloguing and research projects not eligible activities for CHG support. Nor can we fund the cost of employing someone to undertake activities such as catalogue your collection or record oral history.

You can read more about the eligible activities you can apply for on our [website](#). See page 6 of the CHG [Guidelines](#) (PDF, 359kb) for a checklist of ineligible activities.

There are other grant programs that may be able to assist with the project you describe and some suggestions are listed on our website: <https://www.nla.gov.au/about/fellowships-scholarships-and-grants/community-heritage-grants/other-resources>

Can universities apply for CHG funding?

CHG funding is designed to assist small museums, historical societies, and community groups that manage a nationally significant collection with limited resources or support. When making final recommendations, the Expert Panel considers the comparative needs of organisations, especially those small community-based groups with no paid staff and limited financial resources.

In this context, university organisations need to present a compelling case and demonstrate that they have limited means of undertaking assessments and collection management activities without CHG support.

Does CHG support privately owned collections?

Only community-based not for profit incorporated organisations are eligible to apply to the Community Heritage Grant (CHG) program.

We are focused on providing collection management assistance eligible organisations that own or manage a collection of nationally significant material, which is accessible to the public. We cannot support privately owned collections.

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There are other grant programs that may be able to assist and some are listed on our website:

<https://www.nla.gov.au/about/fellowships-scholarships-and-grants/community-heritage-grants/other-resources>