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Title	Ethical and legal considerations for collection development, exhibition and research at Museums Victoria <i>Full length paper (20 min plus question time)</i>
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Ethical and legal considerations for collection development, exhibition and research at Museums Victoria

With 17 million collection items in our care Museums Victoria is the largest museum in Australia.

Nevertheless we recognise the public benefit derived from lending and borrowing between collecting institutions and actively participate in the global loans network in order to complement and enhance the potential for learning and enjoyment for our audiences.

Museums Victoria undertook an extensive review of its policies and procedures in order to apply for approval for protection under the Australian Government's *Protection of Cultural Objects on Loan Scheme* (PCOL Scheme), established to administer the Commonwealth *Protection of Cultural Objects on Loan Act 2013* (PCOL Act). The scheme provides (with some limits) legal protection – immunity from seizure – for Australian and foreign cultural items on loan from overseas lenders for temporary public exhibition in Australia.

The Ministry for the Arts also released the *Australian Best Practice Guide to Collecting Cultural Material* in 2015. The guide is not a mandatory code. It outlines principles and standards to consider when acquiring collection items and in part for inward and outward loans.

In 2016-17 Museums Victoria used the Act and its regulation along with the Guide to substantially update and formalise previous formal and informal policies and practices, in order to demonstrate its commitment to due diligence endeavours to verify the accuracy of information before acquiring, deaccessioning, borrowing or lending items.

This paper outlines the steps we took and what we've learned since receiving approval as a registered borrower under the PCOL Scheme.