

15 March 2016

Senator the Hon Mitch Fifield
Minister for the Arts
PO Box 6100, Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister,

I write as the Chair of the History Council of Victoria, the peak body for the history sector in Victoria. Our vision is to connect people with history, inspiring them to engage with the evidence of the past.

We are therefore deeply concerned at the impact of the 'efficiency dividend' on the national collecting organisations and in particular on the National Library's Trove platform.

Our Board met on 10 March and endorsed the Statement of Support for Trove that has been issued by peak bodies in the GLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Museums and Archives) sector. I enclose a copy for your own awareness.

I write now to point out that the national collecting organisations provide excellent and highly regarded resources for historians and communities, both within Australia and overseas. Reduced funding represents a backward step for research infrastructure in an innovative nation.

Since it was launched in 2009, Trove has become firmly established as an indispensable tool for all levels of the Australian community. In 2011 the platform won the Australian Government's Excellence in eGovernment Award, and in 2012, it won the Australia and New Zealand Internet Award for Innovation. As a collection of many collections, Trove has revolutionised the way we locate vital historical resources about Australia and Australians.

On behalf of the History Council of Victoria, I urge you to take all possible action to ensure that the national collecting organisations and Trove are not jeopardised, but are appropriately and fully funded.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[signed]

(Dr) Liz Rushen
CHAIR



GLAM PEAK BODIES STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR TROVE

2 March, 2016: At their 25 February 2016 meeting at the Melbourne Museum, the GLAM Peak Bodies agreed to put their combined weight behind Trove as an essential component of the national research infrastructure.

Developed and implemented by the National Library of Australia, Trove is seen by the GLAM Peak Bodies as a platform that provides a robust national portal to the cultural riches of our galleries, libraries, archives, museums, historical societies. It supports digital collections from diverse organisations across Australia and is the nation's gateway to books, photographs, newspapers, maps, historical documents and ephemera.

The GLAM Peak Bodies acknowledge the vision and leadership of the National Library of Australia in collating one of the largest digital cultural collections in the world and a model that has led the way internationally. For researchers in the humanities and social sciences especially, it is a unique and highly valued resource. It equally enjoys strong community support throughout urban and regional Australia.

Since its release in 2010, Trove content has increased exponentially. There are now 471 million items in the digital collection, with more than 20 million unique users each year. This demonstrates the enormous appetite for cultural content to support education, research, industry, community and especially the arts and creative industries.

A consequence of the 2015 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook Statement is that libraries, museums, archives, historical societies and smaller institutions across Australia will be unable to add their digital collections to Trove without paying. This will hamper the development of our world leading portal and will be a major obstacle to exposing the collections of smaller and regional institutions. Without additional funding, Trove will not fulfil its promise as the discovery site for all Australian cultural content.

The GLAM Peak Bodies urge the Australian Government to recognise Trove's role as the national platform for digital cultural collections from across the GLAM sector and to fund it accordingly.

- Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA)
- The Australian Society of Archivists (ASA)
- Council of Australasian Archives and Records Authorities (CAARA)
- Council of Australasian Art Museum Directors (CAAMD)
- Council of Australasian Museum Directors (CAMD)
- Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL)
- Federation of Australian Historical Societies (FAHS)
- International Council of Museums (ICOM)
- Museums Australia (MA)
- National and State Libraries Australasia (NSLA)
- University Art Museums Australia (UAMA)