



Bendigo Regional Archives Centre Community Collections Strategy

Purpose

The Bendigo Regional Archives Centre (BRAC) is seeking the services of a suitably qualified consultant(s) to develop a Community Collections Strategy and Action Plan.

The purpose of this project is to provide the BRAC Committee of Management with a report that will:

- Provide guidelines for the collection of historical paper records from private individuals, businesses and community organisations.
- Identify potential areas of specialty for BRAC in line with our mission and goals.
- Identify records within the Bendigo Regional Archives Centre Catchment Area appropriate for transfer into the BRAC collection.
- Improve and share collection knowledge within the Greater Bendigo Region to support better referral and access to Bendigo's historical records.

The primary tasks of the project are to:

- Develop a strategy for accepting historical paper records from private individuals, businesses and community organisations based on the BRAC Collections and Acquisitions Policy.
- Survey Collecting organisations within the Greater Bendigo Region and determine their collection and acquisition policies and collection strengths.
- Identify key collections in private hands, businesses or community organisations and non-archival repositories for which there are opportunities for potential transfer into the BRAC collection.
- Identify circumstances that could put collections at risk and records that are in immediate threat or high risk for priority acceptance.

Background

Bendigo Regional Archives Centre (BRAC) has been established to deliver a variety of key outcomes to the community in terms of social, economic and tourism benefits. These include the following;

- Generate public value by connecting individuals and communities to their cultural heritage through access to the BRAC collection.
- Develop stronger connections and a shared understanding within the community through access to collections of social and cultural diversity and significance.
- Establish BRAC as a hub for research and a preferred place for the care of documentary heritage in the Goldfields region.
- Provide a sustainable and collaborative framework for the local storage and access to records of local government agencies in the Bendigo region.

A number of expectations emerged from community stakeholder consultations and workshops leading up to the establishment of BRAC which included:

Archival Storage

- For state and local government public records
- For other records important to Bendigo
- To ensure preservation, conservation and access to records
- Provision of *Best Practice* archival storage

Ease of Access to stored records

- Cost efficient storage and access to meet specific needs of contributing bodies

A Research Centre/Hub

- A 'one stop shop' to meet the needs of visitors to the region, University students, schools, local Historical & Genealogical groups and private researchers.
- A base for professional or commercial research

As part of our strategy to ensure that records of our community are preserved and made accessible within the region, a key initiative is to undertake a Collections Survey.

The survey will include collections within the BRAC Collections Catchment Area; it will identify collections in private hands, businesses or community organisations and non-archival repositories, for priority areas of pursuing or seeking opportunities for acquisition. The survey will also identify other collecting organisations within the region and determine collection policies for potential collaboration.

Survey Approach

The Consultant is required to design and implement a consultation process to determine the approach and project plan for the delivery of this project. BRAC does not have a fixed view of the method to be used and a range of options may be acceptable (e.g. direct meetings, surveys or workshops).

- Compile and analyse prior research and documentation held by BRAC and stakeholders
- Identify main collecting organisations within the region and determine collection policies and strengths to improve information sharing and referrals
- Identify key collections in private hands, businesses or community organisations and non-archival repositories that meet BRAC's Collection and Acquisition policy and for which there are opportunities for potential inclusion in the BRAC collection
- Identify records that are in immediate threat or high risk (this could include being damaged, destroyed or lost to the region/community).

The Collections Survey will inform the Final Report which is expected to provide:

- a summary of findings
- identification of potential private, business or community organisation collections for acquisition
- a risk assessment and/or issues and a prioritisation matrix
- an action plan with recommendations for acquisition process.

Consultancy Skills and Experience

The successful delivery of this project will require the following skills, knowledge and experience:

- Awareness of cultural institutions and/or collecting organisations
- A broad understanding of the needs of historic or archival collections
- Experience in community engagement and stakeholder consultation
- Excellent research and analysis skills
- Experience in project planning and strategic report writing

Budget

Up to \$10,000

Timeframes

Project to begin in early August 2014 and be completed by Friday 7 November 2014.

Work plan

- Project commencement meeting to discuss proposed approach, methodologies and project delivery with Project Control Group (PCG) prior to project start
- Submission of developed Project Plan for approval by the PCG
- Review and assessment of background material
- Undertake independent research and consultation with collecting organisations - including areas of key collection strengths and collection policies/priorities and detailed list of consultation contacts (such as other heritage centres, historical societies or institutions)
- Produce a Final Report

Management Arrangements

A Project Control Group comprising representatives from the Bendigo Regional Archives Centre has been established to meet with the Consultant at key stages of the project to both review proposed plans and advise on the needs of the project.

Vivien Newton, Manager Bendigo Library will be the Project Manager and primary contact for any information regarding the project. The members of the working party are available by appointment for the initial compilation of resource information, and thereafter at progress meetings or by arrangement.

The following key meetings are envisaged:

- Initial meeting to discuss proposed approach and methodology with the Project Control Group (PCG)
- Early Progress Report meeting/workshop between consultant and PCG to allow early identification of any potential issues and to ensure maximum value from the project is achieved;
- Submission of draft report for feedback
- Submission of Final Report

Key dates:

- 1. Request for Quote advertised by 20 June 2014**
- 2. Applications received by COB Fri 11 July 2014**
- 3. Consultant selected by Fri 25 July 2014**
- 4. Project to begin as close to Mon 4 August 2014 as possible**
- 5. Project completed by Fri 7 Nov 2014**

Bendigo Regional Archives Centre is situated within the Bendigo Library,
251-259 Hargreaves Street, Bendigo, 3550.

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