**Purpose**

The Manuscripts Collection is a national collection developed to sustain in-depth research in New Zealand and Pacific studies.

The purpose of this collecting plan is to provide a foundation for the collection development activities specific to the Manuscripts Collection of the Alexander Turnbull Library, part of the National Library of New Zealand.

This collecting plan was developed in accordance with the collecting principles outlined in the National Library of New Zealand’s [Collections Policy](#).

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**Definitions**

The terms *manuscript* and *archives* may be used in different ways and may have different meanings depending on the context of the institution and/or the nature of the collections. In this collecting plan, the term *manuscript* refers to a collection of personal or family papers, *archives* refer to the records created or collected by an organisation, society, business or group. The Alexander Turnbull Library Manuscripts Collection contains both manuscripts and archives.

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**Scope of the Collection**

The Manuscripts Collection at the Alexander Turnbull Library (the Library) is one of New Zealand’s foremost collections of non-government manuscripts and archives. The Collection is built to sustain advanced research in New Zealand studies and preserve documentary heritage and tāonga in perpetuity for all New Zealanders.

The Collection occupies over 11 kilometers of shelving, 10,500 microfilms and 1.7 TB of electronic records. Approximately 150 linear meters of manuscript material and 50 microfilms are added to the collection each year. Growth in born digital materials is increasing rapidly and is expected to escalate exponentially in the future.

In keeping with the objective of building a collection relevant to all New Zealanders, emphasis is placed on appraising and acquiring original, unique and authentic primary materials of national significance. Emphasis is placed on the records of individuals and organisations recognised as making a significant or unique contribution to the national scene, and which reflect events, policies, cultural practices and social developments which have effected or influenced the lives of all New Zealanders.
In addition, records are collected of those individuals who may not be well known, but whose papers record evidence of significant national experiences, such as the effect of war, economic depression, new leisure activities, changing demographics, or the changing role of women.

The Library proactively acquires records of regional significance to the Wellington area.

Pacific Scope: The Library selectively collects manuscripts and archives relating to the Pacific Islands and Pacific Islanders, (in addition to the records of New Zealanders active in the Pacific and Pasifika people living in New Zealand). Priority is given to those countries that New Zealand has had a strong historical involvement with.

Antarctic Scope: The Library selectively collects manuscripts and archives relating to the history of Antarctica and the Sub-Antarctic Islands involving New Zealand and New Zealanders.

Exclusions

Excluded from the scope of this collection

- Records of government departments and other records covered by the Public Records Act 2005
- Collections from a community, or on a regional theme (apart from the Wellington region), which have particular relevance to their local area, where there is a suitable local collecting repository, and where they fall outside of the Library’s Collecting Plan.
- Duplicate items already held by the Alexander Turnbull Library, or in another repository or institution within New Zealand
- Copies of items (microfilm, digital scans, and photocopies) that are not inherent to the provenance of the collection, the Library is concentrating on collecting the most original version of unique materials

Also excluded from this plan is archival material collected through other streams in the Library.

Collection Strengths

Collection strengths are identified as subject areas in which the Library has good coverage to support in-depth research. Highlights in the Manuscripts Collection include:

- Records relating to nineteenth-century Māori history, including letters by Māori leaders, whakapapa books, waiata, land transaction records, and the records of Māori and Pakeha ethnographic research.
- Journals, logbooks, letters and other papers relating to early European exploration, missionary activity, immigration and settlement.
- New Zealand writers’ papers, including the world’s largest collection of Katherine Mansfield papers.
• Records of politicians, political activists, political parties and pressure groups.
• Diaries and other papers of New Zealanders serving in wars and conflict zones, including the New Zealand wars.
• Records of women’s organisations such as the National Council of Women and the Maori Women’s Welfare League.
• Records of organisations and individuals active in industrial relations, including the records of New Zealand Federation of Labour and employer groups.
• Records relating to individuals and organisations active in the provision of childcare and education.
• Records of individuals and organisations prominent in the religious practices of New Zealanders. Includes records of missionary activities, organised churches and non-institutionalised spiritual movements.

Collecting Principles
The National Library of New Zealand Collection Policy provides a suite of principles that guide all collecting across the published and unpublished collections by the National Library and Alexander Turnbull Library.

The relevant principles from the Collection Development Policy are provided below, with an explanation of how they will be realised for the Manuscripts Collection.

Principle No. 1  Developing breadth and depth in the Library’s research collections requires decisions to be informed by and responsive to, current and emerging research trends as well as the anticipated needs of future generations of New Zealanders.

Actions  Staff working closely with the Manuscripts Collection take an active role in the New Zealand and pacific studies research community. This active role enables the Library to be more informed about identifying the records of today that can be useful for researchers of tomorrow.

Priority areas will be targeted from time to time to address gaps in the Library’s collections and New Zealand’s documentary heritage, so that future researcher needs are more likely to be addressed by the Library’s collections.

The Library will be collecting an increasing amount of born digital manuscripts and archives to support future research needs of New Zealanders.

The Library welcomes and encourages dialogue with any part of the research community regarding the collection of manuscripts and archives that support an existing or identified future research need.
Principle No. 2

Active engagement with iwi, hapū and whānau helps build good collections of documentary heritage and tāonga created by Māori and relating to Māori, for the benefit of all New Zealanders.

Actions

The Library has a strong collection of records and tāonga relating to Māori, history and traditions, from 1825 to the present, including such things as whakapapa records, records of Maori organisations, collections of waiata, and ethnographic research papers.

The Library is committed to ensuring records of Māori are collected, preserved and made available to the highest possible standard, in ways that is acceptable to Māori, and are carried out in consultation with appropriate iwi and pan-awi representatives.

Principle No. 3

The Library has an important leadership role in collaborating and coordinating collection related activities across institutional and national boundaries to enable New Zealanders to connect to information important to their lives, and to support strong documentary heritage and tāonga collections for all New Zealanders.

Actions

The Library always considers the most appropriate repository for a collection prior to acquisition, which can often be another institution within New Zealand or further abroad.

Records with provenance in the Pacific Islands are not collected in competition with any recognized collecting institution of the Pacific Islands.

Potential areas for collaborative or coordinated proactive collecting will be explored with other institutions, especially when the Library’s born digital collecting capacity can be utilized, and gaps in the national documentation are identified.

Principle No. 6

The Library takes into account the cost of acquiring, storing, managing, and making accessible collection items when building its collections.

Actions

The Library’s process for approval to purchase collection items includes consideration of cost and benefit, and is followed at all times when the Crown’s acquisition budget is used to build collections.

For items that are donated to the Manuscripts Collection, the Library considers the total cost of collecting, processing, conserving, and providing access as part of the appraisal process in order to determine the value of the items managed in perpetuity as New Zealand documentary heritage.
Collecting Priorities 2016 - 2018

Introduction
The Manuscripts Collection is built to sustain advanced research in New Zealand studies and preserve heritage taonga in-perpetuity for all New Zealanders; however it is not possible to collect comprehensively all records of national significance across all aspects of New Zealand social, economic and cultural life. Therefore the Library prioritizes certain collecting areas in order to focus limited resources to either build on existing collection strengths, to fill gaps in collections, or to respond to the changing needs of researchers now and in the future. Collecting as widely as possible within the remit of the areas documented in this plan and in a collaborative/coordinated way with other New Zealand collecting institutions, are strategies employed, where possible, to mitigate collecting bias.

Priorities are grouped into three categories:

Ongoing priorities: Those areas in which the Library strives to build on its existing collection strengths

Emerging priorities: Recognised signs of an emerging research trend where the Library develops strategies to support researcher need.

Proactive priorities: Areas where there is a known gap in the Library’s collection or national documentation, where the Library proactively builds relationships and collects in order to fill these gaps.

The Library welcomes expressions of interest and donations from a range of people, communities and organisations. However, the current priorities are provided to give a guide on areas we are likely to prefer, given limited resources. Priorities include, but are not limited to, the list provided below.

Ongoing priorities

1. Maori history and traditions
   Records relating to Maori history and traditions, from arrival to the present. Such records will include whakapapa records, records of Maori organisations, collections of waiata, and ethnographic research papers.

2. Colonial and postcolonial relationships within New Zealand
   Records relating to the Maori and European discoveries of New Zealand, subsequent exploration and current relationships. Records relating to immigration and settlement of New Zealand. Records of individuals and organisations whose activities were important in, or are representative of, the history of Maori and Pakeha interaction.

3. Political parties
   Selective records of political parties. Personal papers of politicians who
were prominent in particular causes of national significance, or whose careers were of particular interest\(^1\).

4. **Military campaigns**

   *Records revealing the experience of New Zealanders in the two world wars and in other overseas military campaigns\(^2\).*

5. **Religious organisations**

   *Selective records of individuals and organisations prominent in the religious practices of New Zealanders. Includes records of missionary activities, organised churches, non-instutionalised spiritual movements, as well as records reflecting the religious activities and experiences of individual New Zealanders.*

6. **Arts**

   *Records of individuals and organisations that have national or Wellington regional significance in the history of New Zealand literature, art, performing arts and architecture.*

7. **Social and political activism**

   *Selective records of organisations and individuals active in issues of industrial relations and social activism. Included are the records of employer groups, trade unions, leaders and activists of the former organisations, as well as records of individuals which reveal experiences of work and industrial disputes. Records of pressure groups and of individuals prominent in such activities.*

8. **Domestic life**

   *Records revealing the experience of domestic life in New Zealand.*

9. **Records highlighting the role and relationships of women in New Zealand society**

10. **Sport and leisure**

    *Selective records relating to the sport and leisure activities of New Zealanders, including the records of prominent sports organisations, and sportspeople, and records reflecting the leisure and sport activities of individuals.*

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**Emerging priorities**

1. **New Zealand’s People**

   *Manuscripts and archives which contribute understanding to the full range of New Zealand’s changing cultural and ethnic demographic.*

2. **Craft and artisan industry**

   *Manuscripts and archives documenting New Zealand’s craft and artisan*
industry including, but not limited to small holder production such as wine, olive oil, cheese, craft beer, coffee. Craft industry such as bespoke furniture, woodworking, tool making, weaving, and pottery. Alternative building design and construction.

Proactive priorities

1. Pasifika communities in New Zealand
2. Science related manuscripts and archives
   In particular environment and sustainability. Records relating to the history of scientific study by New Zealanders and about New Zealand from the early voyages of discovery to the present. The emphasis is on both the history of science, and data of scientific work.

Supporting Documentation

This collecting plan is supporting by further documentation that outlines some of the appraisal criteria, and templates for documenting collecting decisions for manuscripts.

Related Collecting Plans

- Drawings, Paintings and Prints
- New Zealand and Pacific Published Collections
- Music
- Oral History and Sound
- Photographs