



*Leabharlann
Náisiúnta
na hÉireann*

National Library
of Ireland

Collection Development Policy





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Foreword

The mission of the National Library of Ireland is to *‘collect, protect and make available the recorded memory of Ireland, caring for more than 10 million items including books, manuscripts, newspapers, photographs, prints, maps, drawings, ephemera, music and digital media.’*

The Library’s holdings constitute the most outstanding collection of Irish documentary material in the world. They offer an unparalleled record of Ireland’s history and heritage.

Our collections include books, serials, newspapers, manuscripts, maps, photographs, official publications, prints, drawings, ephemera, digitised and born-digital collections.

Our collections are at the centre of everything we do. In our Strategy 2022-2026, we commit to collecting *“representatively and inclusively to capture the diversity of Irish experience”*. In so doing, we will:

- *invest in enhancing expertise and capacity to enable us to proactively collect the evolving breadth of contemporary materials*
- *expand the range of formats we collect and develop holistic processes for acquiring contemporary materials regardless of format*
- *continue to collect the nation’s published and historical record, adding e-legal deposit materials, and the entire Irish web domain if legislation allows.¹*

A particular concern for the Library is to ensure that we may collect, as comprehensively as possible, the record of contemporary Ireland. This record is largely online and highly ephemeral. We cannot collect, preserve or make available a wide-ranging record of contemporary Ireland without the support of Government. In particular, urgent attention must be given to introducing legislative provision under digital legal deposit for web archiving at scale. Without this, there is a growing and irretrievable gap in the record of Ireland’s history, heritage and recorded knowledge.

The Library is immensely grateful to the many donors who have so generously presented material to us, over many decades, for addition to the national collections in our care. These donations of collections and items, documenting past and contemporary Ireland, and the Irish experience worldwide are now part of Ireland’s present and future, available to researchers now and for generations to come.

The Library is part of a community of memory institutions in Ireland and we greatly value our colleagues in libraries, archives and museums throughout Ireland for their support. We are all aware that comprehensiveness in collecting and preserving the contemporary record of Ireland is a function of a collective national approach to this exciting, if daunting, challenge.

The Diversity and Inclusion Policy of the National Library of Ireland 2018-2021 expressly sets out, for the first time, the Library’s commitment to creating a more diverse and inclusive record of Ireland. We committed also to reviewing our collections policy through the lens of diversity and inclusion. We acknowledge that some communities are underrepresented in the Library’s collections and we will strive to collect inclusively so that the Library’s collections are as representative as possible of the diverse Irish experience.

We are grateful to the users of our collections, past, present and future, who choose to engage with our collections in a variety of ways, online and in person, and to the visitors to our exhibitions and to all places where our collections may be found. Our visitors and users bring relevance to everything we do. The content of our collections is transformed through use and engagement, through research and scholarship, imagination and inspiration.

This document sets out the principles guiding the Library's collection development decisions. It is supported by a series of guidelines for each of the curatorial divisions or collection areas in the Library. The guidelines set out more fully the considerations governing curatorial decisions to purchase material for the collections, and those taken into account when accepting or declining donations.

As the Library's capacity to collect across all formats in all collection areas increases over the coming years, our current format-defined approach to collection development will become more format-neutral. For this reason, and so that we may fully reflect the dynamic and diverse information environment in which we carry out our work we are committed to reviewing the guidelines on a biennial basis.

We are very grateful to those who responded to our call for comments on the draft policy. We noted in particular your concerns about the importance of inclusivity in our collecting activity, about the critical need for legislative enablement in the area of web-archiving, and about the National Library's key role as one of Ireland's national collecting institutions.

We depend upon your ongoing support as we work to ensure that the collections, in the Library's care, continue to grow and reflect the diversity of the Irish experience, and as we continue to connect the collections with all our users, in all the ways they wish to engage, now and in the future.

Introduction

The National Library of Ireland is the library of record for Ireland, mandated to develop and preserve a national collection relating to Ireland.

The Library was established in 1877, its founding legislation the *Dublin Science and Art Museum Act* of that year. The new National Library had, upon its establishment, two foundation collections. The first of these was the greater part of the library of the Royal Dublin Society, which had been collecting since 1731. The second was the library of the eminent collector Dr Jasper Robert Joly, and consisted of 25,000 volumes of monographs and serials, as well as prints, drawings, maps, sheet music and manuscripts.

The Library's collections expanded very rapidly. As a national library it has attracted many substantial donations, an expression it has been said of 'practical patriotism'.

Following the establishment of Saorstát Éireann in 1922, the Library became the national library of a newly independent state. Since 1927, the Library has had legal deposit right for all material published in the State.

In 1943, the Office of Arms in Dublin Castle, dating from 1552, was transferred from British to Irish administration. The archives of the Office of Arms including registers of grants of arms, pedigrees and other genealogical material became part of the Library's collections and the heraldic authority for Ireland, now the Office of the Chief Herald, was assigned to the Library.

The Library's Department of Manuscripts was established in 1948. In 1998, the Library's photographic collections were moved to the purpose-built National Photographic Archive in Dublin's Temple Bar. The Library commenced archiving the web in 2011, and established its Digital Collections department in 2015.

Context

Legislative

Since 2005, the Library has operated under the Statutory remit afforded it by the National Cultural Institutions Act 1997 (“the Act”) and under the governance of the Board of the National Library of Ireland (“the Board”). The mandate of the Board is set out in section 12(1) of the Act, as follows:

“The principal functions of the Board of the Library shall be to conserve, restore, maintain and enlarge the library material in the collection of the Library for the benefit of the public and to establish and maintain a record of library material (including material relating to the Irish language) in relation to Ireland and to contribute to the provision of access by members of the public to material relating to other countries.”²

Section 12(2) of the Act lists the range of powers of the Board to enable it to perform its functions.

Other legislation which has a direct or indirect influence on the Library’s collecting activities includes:

- **The Copyright and Related Rights Act, 2000 and the Copyright and Other Intellectual Property Law Provision Act, 2019 (‘the Copyright Acts’)**
See below ‘Legal Deposit’.
- **The Heritage Fund Act, 2001**
The Library is a National Cultural Institution and the Director of the Library is a member of the Council of National Cultural Institutions as provided for in section 9 of the Heritage Fund Act.
- **The Taxes Consolidation Act, 1997**
Section 1003 of the Taxes Consolidation Act, 1997 provides for tax relief in lieu of donations of heritage items to the National Cultural Institutions. It is through these provisions that the Library has been able to acquire some of our most important literary collections.
- **The Data Protection Act, 2018**
Section 61 of the Data Protection Act 2018 sets out the restriction upon the exercise of data subjects’ rights for the purposes of archiving in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes.
- **The Freedom of Information Acts**
- **Equal Status Acts, 2000-2015**
The Library policy documents to which direct reference is made in this document or which have direct impact upon collection development activity, are as follows:
 - NLI Strategic Plan 2022-2026
 - Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2018-2021
 - Risk Management Policy
 - NLI Preservation Policy (currently at draft stage).

How we collect

The Library acquires collection material in a number of ways:



1. Purchase



2. Donation



3. The Legal Deposit Provisions of The Copyright Act



4. Selective web archiving

Collecting activity is managed across three Library collection areas:

1 Digital

2 Published

3 Special

Purchase

- The Library's acquisition budget, allocated annually by the Board, is used to purchase material through auctions or by direct purchase. On occasion the Library has had recourse to special funding, for key acquisitions, from the Minister under whose aegis the Library operates. The National Library of Ireland Trust has also made funds available, whenever appropriate.

Donation

- Donations from individuals and organisations throughout the NLI's history have been integral to the development of the Library's rich collections. We continue to accept donations from legal owners and when a clear provenance can be established. Usually copyright and other rights in the material will be assigned to the Library at the time of acquisition. Where this is not possible with modern material, copyright and other rights will be agreed upon at the time of donation. We work closely with donors to advise on how to organise, describe and document their archival collections prior to transfer to the NLI.
- Tax relief may be available to donors if the material they wish to donate meets the criteria for 'heritage donation' under Section 1003 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997.
- The Library also purchases material with the aid of donor funds.

Legal deposit

- Legal Deposit is the statutory obligation on publishers and distributors to deposit at least one copy of every publication, free of charge, in designated legal deposit libraries.
- Since 1927, when the Library was first granted the privilege (in respect of publications issued within the State) legal deposit has been the primary mechanism through which the modern Irish book, newspaper and serials collections have been built.
- Effective operation of legal deposit guarantees to citizens and researchers, within the country and abroad, permanent access to a research collection of the country's published material. In common with other national libraries, the Library exercises its legal deposit privilege with the aim of ensuring the continuing preservation of and access to a key aspect of the nation's intellectual and cultural heritage over time. Frequently the Library holds the only copy of a particular item which is readily available to the public.
- In Ireland, legal deposit requirements are covered in Section 198 of the Copyright and Related Rights Act, 2000. This obliges all publishers in the State to supply one copy of each publication to the Library (and certain other libraries in Ireland and the UK) within one month of publication. This includes all printed publications such as books, newspapers, serials, pamphlets, maps and sheet music.
- Planning for the extension of legal deposit in accordance with the provisions of section 199 of the 2000 Act is a stated objective of the Library.

Scope of our Collections

The Library is mandated to “conserve, restore, maintain and enlarge [its]... collection...for the benefit of the public and to establish and maintain a record of library material (including material relating to the Irish language) in relation to Ireland and to contribute to the provision of access by members of the public to material relating to other countries”.³

Our collecting focus is Ireland, meaning the island of Ireland and the Irish experience elsewhere. We collect material relating to places, personalities, individuals, groups, organisations, events, activities, experiences or themes of significant national or international relevance to Ireland, or the experience of living in Ireland.

In this regard we aim to fulfil the functions of a national library defined by the International Federation of Library Associations, which include: ‘the collection via legal deposit of the national imprint (both print and electronic) ...; the preservation and promotion of the national cultural heritage’.

In contributing to the provision of access to material relating to other countries, the Library is committed to providing access to general and reference resources not readily available elsewhere in Ireland.

The Collection Development Guidelines, which are supplementary to this document, set out in greater detail the scope of the Library’s collecting activity in Digital Collections, Published Collections and Special Collections and, in expressly acknowledging that the Library cannot collect everything, we set out in the Guidelines our objectives regarding the comprehensiveness of our collecting activity or whether it must be selective or more broadly representative. We believe that clarity in this regard on the part of the National Library will support and drive the further development of a national collecting and preservation strategy for libraries and archives.

Who uses the Library’s collections?

The community the Library serves is broad and includes a wide range of users amongst whom are academic researchers, local and family historians, adult learners, undergraduate and post-graduate students, primary and secondary-level pupils, film and documentary makers, journalists, researchers including those from emerging disciplines, and recreational users.

Who are our stakeholders?

We have identified our key stakeholders, given the importance of their role to collection development. Categories include creators, donors, publishers, and users who choose to engage with our collections in a variety of ways.

The following list is not exhaustive and stakeholders may belong to more than one category:

- Users of the Library’s collections, both online and in person (see above ‘Who uses the Library’s collections?’)
- Donors
- Content creators (e.g. writers, journalists, photographers)

- Publishers – commercial and non-commercial, Open Access and free websites
- Communities including those connected by locality/local heritage, ethnic minorities, age: youth or seniors; new Irish; families; voluntary, Irish Language communities inside and outside the Gaeltacht
- National Library of Ireland Board, Committees and staff
- Cultural Heritage, Library & Archives sector
- Government and public sector in particular the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, the Department of Education, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, and the Department of Foreign Affairs.
- Exhibition visitors
- Diaspora

The role of stakeholders

Our stakeholders are central to the development and to the re-use of our collections. We greatly value the expert information and unique perspectives on collection development, description and usage that stakeholders provide.

We will actively engage with stakeholders on the following key issues:

- The involvement of new communities in the choices the Library makes in relation to collection development is necessary to ensure that we continue to fulfil our role ‘remembering our past and capturing our present’⁴
- The importance of preserving Government and public sector websites and their publications to ensure long-term public access to the published record of the Government and public sector agencies
- The legislative environment as it impacts on the development of the national collection: the absence of legal provision for web-archiving significantly impairs the long-term survival of Irish digital heritage as it prevents the collection and preservation at scale of Irish websites and, specifically, the .ie domain
- That collecting contemporary material, the Library will have regard to the legitimate, but sometimes conflicting, rights and interests of stakeholders, including employers, communities, individuals, and users, past, present and future
- The opportunities presented by the collection of digital material to build new partnerships with our users, in particular to enable them to explore digital collections at scale.

NLI's general selection criteria

The Library's general selection criteria fall under the following headings:



1. Irish interest



2. Heritage value



3. Subject of interest

Irish interest

An item is considered to be of Irish interest if it satisfies any one of the following criteria:

- it was created or published in Ireland
- it was created or published in another country by an Irish citizen or a temporary or permanent Irish resident or an Irish expatriate
- it was created or published abroad but relates to Ireland
- it documents the experience of an Irish citizen or community abroad.

In considering, for example, the acquisition of books of Irish interest the following will be deemed to fulfil the Irish-interest criteria:

- items published or printed in Ireland
- items in the Irish language
- items published elsewhere by an Irish author (whether the author was born in Ireland, or is a member of the Irish diaspora)
- items published elsewhere by authors who were or are temporary residents of Ireland, with such items to be decided on a case-by-case basis
- items published elsewhere of which the subject matter is wholly or substantially Irish
- items notable for design, illustration, or binding by Irish artists and designers
- items with a significant Irish provenance.

Heritage value

An item is considered of to be of heritage value if it is of a rarity and significance such that it may be considered of national importance.

Subject of interest

Subject of interest criteria are satisfied if the item or collection in question satisfies one of the following criteria:

- it relates to places, personalities, individuals, groups, organisations, events, activities, experiences or themes of significant national or international relevance to the island of Ireland
- it documents significant aspects of the history, social or cultural life of the island of Ireland
- it reflects or relates to current research trends in the area of Irish studies.

Additional Considerations

In making any acquisition decision, account must be taken of the associated access, storage and preservation challenges and costs. Factors which influence selection decisions may include:

- preservation, conservation, storage, access and cataloguing requirements
- the collecting policies of other Irish libraries and archives.

Collection development principles

Collecting activity in the National Library of Ireland is founded upon the following Collection Development Principles.

- 1 Our Mission is to “*collect, protect and make accessible the recorded memory of Ireland.*”⁵
- 2 In collecting the recorded memory of Ireland we consider all of the following to be of interest: material created or published in Ireland, material created or published in another country by Irish citizens, temporary or permanent Irish residents or Irish expatriates, material created or published abroad but relating to Ireland or documenting the experience abroad of Irish citizens, temporary or permanent Irish residents, and their communities.
- 3 The Library is committed to playing its part in the development and preservation of the Irish language and will continue to collect and preserve the living Irish language. Through its mandate, the Library will develop its unparalleled record of the Irish language including the diverse digital forms in which it is written and recorded today.
- 4 Digital publications know no national borders. We recognise that in the digital world material containing content related to or of Ireland may be found online and originate in geographical locations outside Ireland.
- 5 We will work to ensure that our collections are representative of Ireland in all its diversity: in line with the commitments set out in the National Library of Ireland Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2018-2021 we will ‘*create a more diverse and inclusive story of Ireland, so that new voices are collected and shared with the world, and so that everyone will feel welcome in the National Library of Ireland.*’⁶
- 6 We will collect material reflecting multiple perspectives on contemporary events and issues relating to Ireland.
- 7 We will collect legally, ethically and with due diligence. All acquisitions must come from a bona fide source and have documented provenance. Documentation relating to acquisitions will be retained on file.
- 8 In keeping with the Library’s role in collecting the record of Ireland, and its commitment to transparency and accountability for the benefit of all, we will endeavour at all times to ensure the integrity and authenticity of our collections at all stages of the lifecycle from pre-acquisition to access.
- 9 In managing the funds allocated to the purchase of collection material, we will exercise care and judgement, at all times acting in line with the Library’s financial procedures and governance requirements. Our collection development decisions will also take into account the indirect costs of acquisition including the costs associated with cataloguing, conservation, preservation and storage.
- 10 Our focus is upon acquiring material for our permanent collections and it is only in exceptional circumstances that we may accept material on loan.

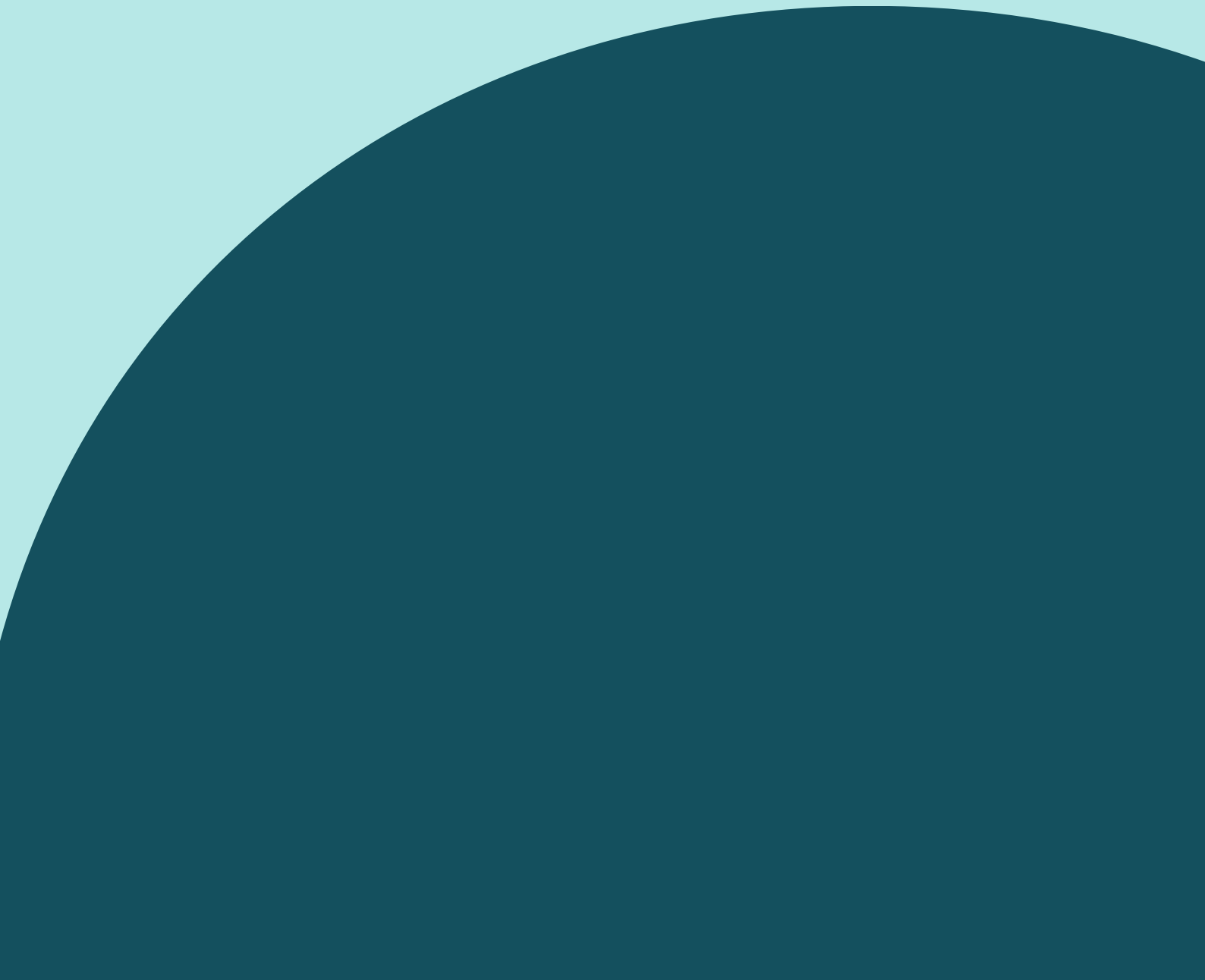
5 **Strategy 2022-2026, p.17**

6 **D&I Policy 2018-2021**

- 11 We aim for comprehensive Published Collections holdings: under the legal deposit provisions in place in the Republic of Ireland we collect print publications such as monographs, newspapers, serials and official publications; in relation to Northern Ireland we collect this material by purchase or donation; in relation to print publications of Irish interest published elsewhere, we will aim to acquire this by purchase or donation.
- 12 In developing our Special Collections holdings, we acquire on a selective basis, rare and unique materials of national importance, building upon the strengths of our existing collections and, taking due account of the collecting interests of other Irish libraries and archives, addressing weaknesses or gaps in our collections.
- 13 In collecting and preserving as comprehensively as possible the record of Ireland we recognise the need for collaboration with other Irish memory institutions; we will work towards agreeing and implementing a collaborative approach in order to best achieve this.

These Principles are further developed in the Collection Development Guidelines ('the Guidelines') which follow and which are supplementary to this Policy. The Guidelines outline more fully the process by which material is identified, appraised, selected and acquired for the permanent collections.

Collection Development Guidelines



Collection Development Guidelines

- (i) These guidelines are prepared at a time of acute and accelerating change in the ways life and society is recorded and documented. For this reason, some of the things we say here are transitory, subject to ongoing review as we endeavour to both respond to the challenges and seize the opportunities offered by our ever-changing information environment. Underpinning everything in these guidelines are the principles set out in the policy document, not least our commitment to collecting so that we may enable the broadest possible interpretations of life and society in contemporary Ireland.
- (ii) All of our collecting activity is subject to the Collection Development Principles and Selection Criteria set out in the policy document. Across all collection areas, our priority is to collect material relevant to Ireland's changing demographic, and to broaden our collections to be more representative and inclusive. In so doing, we endeavour to identify and acquire material documenting under-represented communities and with the support of the Library's Diversity and Inclusion Committee, to engage with a range of people, communities and organisations to build these representative and inclusive collections.
- (iii) In this document we set out the considerations governing our current collecting activity across the three curatorial divisions within the National Library of Ireland. These divisions are administrative. Their titles belie the impact of change across all aspects of collection development in the Library and mask the institutional collaboration which is essential to ensure that we collect efficiently and effectively, in line with the Collection Development Policy.
- (iv) Much of our work over the coming years will require us to appraise and acquire digital or partly born-digital material. While we develop our capacity in this area, we welcome contact from the creators and owners of hybrid and digital archives. As our skills and resources develop, we will be in a position to embed digital collection development objectives and activity across all collection areas.
- (v) We expect that the nature of digital collections will evolve to include emerging formats, many of which will not have a physical equivalent and this will require changes in how the National Library of Ireland acquires content.
- (vi) We are committed to regular review of these guidelines in view of the rapid rate of change in the fields of digital preservation and of technology, and the further development of in-house digital collecting expertise and protocols. The first of these reviews will take place in 2023.

- (vii) For ease of reference, we have grouped the guidelines under the three curatorial areas, as follows:

1. Digital Collections

1.1 Scope

- 1.1.1 Gaps
- 1.1.2 Legislative impediments to collecting Irish websites
- 1.1.3 Technological and other impediments

1.2 Collection areas

- 1.2.1 Web Archive
- 1.2.2 Born-digital Pilots
- 1.2.3 Digitisation

2. Published Collections

2.1 Scope

2.2 Collection areas

- 2.2.1 Printed Books
- 2.2.2 Newspapers
- 2.2.3 Serials
- 2.2.4 Official Publications
- 2.2.5 E-legal deposit
- 2.2.6 E-publications

3. Special Collections

3.1 Scope

3.2 Collection areas

- 3.2.1 Manuscripts and archives
- 3.2.2 Rare and antiquarian books
- 3.2.3 Photographs
- 3.2.4 Prints and Drawings
- 3.2.5 Ephemera
- 3.2.6 Maps
- 3.2.7 Music

1. Digital Collections

1.1 Scope

The digital collections in scope for the purposes of this document are as follows:

- (i) the National Library of Ireland Web Archive
- (ii) the digital only pilot projects underway in the Library since 2017
- (iii) digitised collections.

Of relevance are the following types of digital content: photographs, organisational files, literary drafts, videos, web sites, online publications, social media, and digitised content.

As we revise these guidelines, e-publications such as e-books, digital newspapers and e-journals as well as unique unpublished born-digital collections will be incorporated.

In applying the selection criteria set out in the Policy, Digital Collections will also consider factors such as long-term digital preservation requirements, emerging formats, and consideration of new forms of access to digital material, including the increased scope for access offered by digitisation. In particular, there is a need to consider digital preservation requirements as a fundamental aspect of Collection Development in relation to born digital and digitised collections.

The following do not fall within the remit of the Digital Collections guidelines:

- the collection of digital formats that fall under the collecting remit of other Irish collecting institutions, for example in the case of Ireland's moving image heritage, the Irish Film Archive
- collections comprised wholly of certain types of research data, for example large research databases
- the Library's holdings of offline digital items, still in their original format and requiring migration for long term digital preservation.

1.1.1 Gaps in the collection

Gaps in our Digital Collections holdings include the following:

- Ireland's contemporary history, heritage and creative and community knowledge as recorded on the Web arising from the absence of enabling legislation. This gap is irretrievable and growing as websites change or disappear.

Gaps in Digital Collections holdings will be addressed as follows:

- By continuing to urge the introduction of legislative provision to enable the Library to carry out web archiving at scale for public benefit
- By fulfilling our commitment to ensure that the Library's collections are representative of Ireland in all its diversity
- By exploring potential partnerships to expand the digitisation programme, always ensuring value for money and high quality outputs.

1.1.2 Legislative impediment to collecting Irish websites

Unlike many national libraries worldwide, the National Library of Ireland is not legally mandated to carry out top-level domain (TLD) web archiving. This is a significant gap in our legislative remit.

1.1.3 Technological and other impediments

Limitations in the current state-of-the-art in web crawling technologies can impact our ability to successfully archive some types of website. We cannot comprehensively collect social media due to technical and other challenges presented by the various platforms.

1.2 Collection Areas

1.2.1 The Irish Web Archive

How we collect

Web archiving is the collection of a website by the use of a web crawler. This archived website is stored in Web Archive File Format (WARC format) to ensure that it remains accessible in the future. Websites are collected and preserved in two main ways: (a) websites are selected on the basis of theme or event; (b) large scale archiving on the basis of a country's TLD. As noted at 1.1.2 above the Library is not permitted to carry out TLD archiving and therefore collects on a selective basis. The selection is carried out by web archivists, subject specialists in the Library, collaborative partners and on the advice of a wide range of stakeholders.

What we collect

The National Library of Ireland collects and preserves select websites and select Twitter and YouTube accounts. As a dynamic and growing collection, it captures the online life of Ireland and includes collections reflecting Irish literature and politics. It is particularly strong in its holdings of material relating to elections and referenda, society and culture.

In selecting material for the Irish Web Archive, special consideration is given to the Irish language, popular culture, and the Irish diaspora. We also collect and preserve the websites of central and local Government and Government agencies, including their online publications. Web archiving activity is also responsive to events and trends, archiving websites as soon as possible.

As the Irish Web Archive has developed, collections have expanded and become more diverse. It is a living, vibrant collection with material continuously archived and made openly available.

Further development of the Irish Web Archive

A significant record of Ireland's creative, literary and documentary heritage is documented online and the web is a vital primary source for contemporary researchers as well as researchers in the future. Web archiving ensures that this material remains accessible after it has disappeared from the live web.

It is common practice in national libraries to use both selective and domain archiving to deliver a national web archive that is as comprehensive as possible.⁷ Because the National Library of Ireland is prohibited by law from adopting this approach, Ireland's online memory is increasingly compromised.

1.2.2 The National library of Ireland Born-digital Pilots

What we collect

The Born-digital pilot projects are designed to target multi-format collections containing unique visual and textual material. The collections include digital manuscripts, photographs, videos, and digital records of organisations. Born-digital collecting activities will be scaled up on completion of the pilot projects especially as it is likely that the majority of collections will be of a hybrid nature, both physical and digital in form.

7 Milligan, p.165 Ref other collecting policies and texts in Bibliography were necessary

Development of Born-digital pilots

The Library commenced its pilot project in 2017 to cover the full collection management lifecycle from acquisition to online delivery of a small number of complex Born-digital collections. The pilot project approach offers us the best opportunity to design and trial the new workflows required to collect unique and unpublished Born-digital material.

This project is founded upon the Library's 2016-2021 Strategy and the objective set out there to implement new approaches to collecting Born-digital content for Ireland. It responds directly to the challenge of collecting, preserving and making available unique Irish digital content which is growing at an unprecedented rate, and which is in huge danger of loss.

A component of the pilot project is focussed upon the drafting of substantial documentation underpinning the Library's Born-digital collecting practice. This is firstly because of the importance of documenting new digital collecting practice and secondly because that policy should be informed by practice at local level as well as international best practice, taking into account intellectual property and other relevant rights and protections.

Collaboration plays a fundamental role in the development of the National Library's Born-digital pilots. We view collaboration as a necessary element of Born-digital collection development, and the long-term digital preservation of our collections, and, as a national cultural institution, we will seek to share our experience and learning.

1.2.3 Digitisation

Background

The National Library of Ireland has been engaged in a programme of creating surrogate images of its collections for many years. Initially, this was through the medium of film photography and microfilm but more recently, has been in digital form. The creation of digital images of original physical objects brings technical challenges in both the physical and digital domains.

Process and standards

In digitising our collections, we use equipment that creates images that meet established standards in the Cultural Heritage sector and in industry. By following developments closely in other institutions and in the imaging industry, and by engaging with external experts, we aim to ensure that the standard of images produced at the Library is of a high quality and usable in the long term.

In the main, in-house recommendations inform the selection of material for digitisation. These recommendations reflect considerations of rarity, vulnerability, and demand. On occasion, Library users contact digitisation services staff to recommend material for digitisation. Expansion of the Library's digitisation capacity through commercial and academic partnerships will expand the criteria for selection and facilitate a complementary approach that combines on-demand and bespoke digitisation with large-scale digitisation by format or collection.

Published Collections

2.1 Scope

The Published Collections Department is responsible for developing and managing the Library's collections of printed books, newspapers and serials, official publications, printed maps and music from acquisition, through all collection management processes including accessioning and cataloguing, processing, preservation and storage. These responsibilities include ensuring the security of the national collection and its availability to researchers and users through the Library's reading rooms and online.

These Guidelines document current collecting activity in Published Collections. They set out the considerations governing our decisions to purchase material offered to the Library, and to accept or decline donations.

In acknowledging that we cannot collect everything, the Guidelines set out the Published Collections objectives regarding the comprehensiveness of our collecting activity, and whether it must be selective or more broadly representative.

While we are not actively collecting e-legal deposit publications the National Library is committed to working with Irish publishers and other relevant stakeholders to ensure that we are fulfilling our remit as a legal deposit library and to ensure this material is added to the national collection thereby avoiding the creation of gaps.

Gaps in the collection

While our aim is to collect comprehensively, gaps in the publishing record occur especially in relation to the output of infrequent and 'once-off' publishers, freesheet titles, student newspapers and certain local publications, especially those published for club or parish celebrations and anniversaries; free magazines, school magazines, society newsletters; and multicultural publications.

Gaps in the Published Collections holdings will be addressed as follows:

- through cooperation with public libraries, to ensure we are alerted to and collect new local publications including local histories, society and club newsletters, and free newspapers which consist primarily of advertising, product and real estate information
- by identifying publishers and alerting them to their legal deposit obligations
- through continuing the purchase of surrogate copies of newspapers held elsewhere
- through engaging with other Irish Legal Deposit libraries to exchange information about new publications
- through working with underrepresented communities and with the Library's D & I committee to build our collections to ensure they are representative and inclusive
- through contact with Irish communities overseas, the Library aims to identify and collect all titles of Irish interest published outside Ireland
- through purchase and donation in order to fill gaps in our historical holdings
- through accepting donations where they fill a gap in the collections or replace material in poor condition
- through regular publicity about the NLI's collecting objectives, and through direct contact with relevant organisations.

2.2 Collection Areas

Information on collection areas is presented by format under the following headings:

- 2.2.1 Printed Books
- 2.2.2 Newspapers
- 2.2.3 Serials
- 2.2.4 Official Publications
- 2.2.5 E-Legal Deposit
- 2.2.6 E-Publications

For the purposes of legal deposit, “Publication” in relation to a book means “the issue of copies to the public”. This definition applies to all of the material acquired by Published Collections i.e. copies of all material acquired by Published Collections have been created for issue to the general public or to a subset of same.

2.2.1 Printed Books

Books published in the State

Since 1927, the Library has had legal deposit right for all material published in the State. Since then, legal deposit has been the primary mechanism through which the modern Irish book collections have been built. The Library aims to collect the national imprint in print format, aiming for a comprehensive collection of Irish published material.

The Library receives the vast majority of its print publications under legal deposit privilege of the Copyright Acts, in line with the following provisions:

- Section 198 of The Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000.
The National Library of Ireland is named as one of the libraries entitled to a copy of every book first published in the State. This is described as “*a copy of the whole book with all maps and illustrations belonging to that book and... finished in the same manner as the copy in that form which is superior in quality to any other copy in that form of the book available*”. In practice, the superior copy is the hardback edition.
- For the purposes of Section 198, “book” includes every part or division of a book, pamphlet, sheet of letterpress, sheet of music, map, plan, chart or table separately published”.
- Legal deposit does not apply to any second or subsequent edition of a book unless the “edition contains additions or alterations either in the letterpress or in the maps, plans, prints or other engravings”.
- Section 199 of the 2000 Act extends the legal deposit provisions to other “material” as follows: “material” includes any engraving, photograph, play script, cinematograph film, microfilm, video recording, sound recording, record, diskette, magnetic tape, compact disc, or other thing which has been published and on or in which information is written, recorded, stored or reproduced.

The Library aims to collect the national imprint in print format, aiming for a comprehensive collection of Irish published material i.e. to acquire a copy of every Irish publication.

Books published in Northern Ireland

The Library aims for comprehensiveness in relation to books published in Northern Ireland and we acquire books published in Northern Ireland by purchase or donation.

Books published outside Ireland

The Library acquires material of Irish interest published outside Ireland through purchase or donation on a selective basis.

Limited Editions

The library collects limited book editions and artists' books on a selective basis in order to reflect Ireland's literary, artistic and book-making culture.

Reference resources

We maintain a collection of reference books for use in our reading rooms, including those not readily available elsewhere in Ireland. In addition, we subscribe to selected electronic resources to provide readers with access to a variety of digital content. Many of these electronic resources contain thousands of full-text books, journals, newspapers, official publications and archives of direct Irish interest, which support research in our collections.

General points

General points to note are as follows:

- The Library does not collect duplicates. Exceptions to this arise if we consider it necessary to acquire additional copies of a work to serve a particular need (such as reference use in our reading rooms).
- We will only collect second or subsequent editions of a book if it "contains additions or alterations either in the letterpress or in the maps, plans, prints or other engravings".
- The Library's preference is to collect hardback editions where available.
- Purchases are subject to budget and acquisitions staff decide how best to allocate these resources, noting that priority is given to books of which the subject is wholly or substantially Irish.
- Donations offered to the Library that do not fall within our Collection Development remit are declined, and an alternative collecting institution may be suggested.
- We reserve the right to decline books that are not published.

2.2.2 Newspapers

The National Library holds the largest collection of Irish newspapers in the country, dating from the late 17th century to the present day. The collection also includes a large number of Irish diaspora titles including many US titles dating back to the 18th century. The Library is often the sole holder of a newspaper in the State.

The National Library is the only library in the State committed to collecting and preserving all Irish newspapers. To aid in the preservation of the original printed copy the Library has microfilmed much of its own print holdings and, to fill gaps in its historic holdings, acquires microfilm copies of newspapers held elsewhere.

Newspapers published in the State

Since 1927, the collection of newspapers published in the State has been acquired under legal deposit. These include national daily, regional weekly and biweekly, Sunday titles and those targeted at a multicultural readership. All variant size editions of national newspapers and all variant content editions of regional titles published in the State are collected. The newspaper collection aims to be as diverse as possible and collects Irish multicultural titles.

Newspapers published in Northern Ireland

The Library purchases, or receives, by donation, all newspapers published in Northern Ireland.

Newspapers of Irish interest published elsewhere

We purchase select titles published outside Ireland if they have particular Irish relevance.

2.2.3 Serials

The Library holds an extensive serial collection dating back to the 18th century. The National Library is the only library in the State committed to collecting and preserving all of Ireland's serial publications. These include magazines, newsletters, annual reports, yearbooks, directories, and journals.

Categories of serial titles held and which the Library continues to collect include:

- literary magazines
- scholarly journals in all disciplines
- current affairs magazines
- celebrity and lifestyle magazines
- religious magazines
- pastime magazines
- publishers and booksellers' catalogues
- auction catalogues
- annual reports e.g. semi-State organisations, financial institutions
- reports of major listed companies
- Registers of Electors (not including draft registers).

Serials published in the State

Serials published within the State are collected under legal deposit privilege of the Copyright Act 2000, which in Section 198 makes very specific provision for serial publications as follows:

'[in] the case of an encyclopaedia, newspaper, review, magazine or work published in a series of numbers or parts, the written demand may include all numbers or parts of the work which may be subsequently published'.

Serials published in Northern Ireland

Serials published in Northern Ireland are purchased.

Serials published outside Ireland

Serials published outside Ireland which are of Irish interest, and those with an Irish editor, are purchased.

2.2.4 Official Publications

The Library has comprehensive collections of the publications of the State from 1922 onwards, of the pre-1800 Irish Parliament and of the official publications of the United Kingdom from 1800 to 1979. In addition, the Library holds a large, though not exhaustive, collection of Northern Ireland official publications from 1920 onwards.

Official publications of the Irish State

Since 1927 the Library has received Irish Government publications (national and local) under legal deposit and, where they are produced, will continue to collect print versions of Irish official publications. The Library will consult with Government departments and agencies to ensure that the current collection is complete and that papers and reports which are published in digital form only are acquired.

Northern Ireland official publications

The Library ceased collecting Northern Ireland official publications in print format in 2012. Northern Ireland Official Publications are accessible through Official Publications Online, a web based subscription service from TSO (The Stationery Office, UK).

International organisations of which Irish is a member

The Library no longer collects print material from international organisations. Most of the organisations for which Ireland was a depository body provide online access to their publications.

2.2.5 e-Legal Deposit

The Copyright and Other Intellectual Property Law Provisions Act 2019 gives all Irish copyright libraries the right to claim books in either printed or electronic form, or both. Arising from this, the National Library is committed to working with Irish publishers and other relevant stakeholders to comprehensively acquire all Irish published material and ensure the effective implementation of e-legal deposit, through the establishment of agreed best practice guidelines to support both the successful and timely deposit of e-publications and the secure and efficient access for Library users.

2.2.6 e-Publications

The Library is committed to establishing a method of collecting e-publications of Irish interest produced outside the State and to developing our capacity in this area to enable us to acquire this material, add it to our collections and provide access.

Special Collections

3.1 Scope

The Special Collections Department is responsible for developing and managing the Library's visual and manuscript collections and its collection of antiquarian and rare books, from appraisal and acquisition through all collection management processes including accessioning and cataloguing.

Many Special Collections acquisitions are multi-format while many others comprise at least two formats. For example, a collection of papers of a landed estate, such as the Inchiquin Papers or the Westport House papers, may include material in all of the Special Collections formats while a collection of photographs may be accompanied by manuscript records relating to the subjects.

Past practice saw these acquisitions broken up into format-based Library or artificial collections. For example, deeds were removed from estate collections to form a discrete Deeds series while albums of photographs and drawings were similarly assigned to their 'format' area. While this is no longer our practice, many acquisitions fall naturally into and are assigned to one of the following Special Collections areas: manuscripts, prints, drawings, photographs, ephemera, music, or maps.

In general, the following material falls outside the scope of these Guidelines:

- Manuscript material of specific local interest
- Material of specific interest to another Irish research library or archives
- Large collections of deeds dated post-1708
- Collections of photocopies and random news-cuttings
- Duplicated materials already held in the Library's collections
- Photographs containing cellulose nitrate, or nitrate or acetate negatives, or other hazardous materials
- Objects and artefacts, unless an intrinsic part of a collection
- Material on loan, noting that collections offered on permanent loan may be considered.

Pending the completion of the Library's Born-digital pilots (see 1.2.2 above), Special Collections acquisitions are physical or paper-based, with some limited collecting of offline digital objects.

Special Collections material is acquired, on a selective basis, by donation and purchase.

The following subject areas are amongst key gaps in our Special Collections:

- history of the women's movement in Ireland
- literary and personal papers of Irish women writers
- the experience of disability in Ireland
- minority religious and ethnic groups in Ireland
- immigrant communities
- the experience of the Irish overseas.

Other format-specific gaps in our Special Collections holdings are noted by collection area in section 3.2 below.

We aim to proactively collect in areas identified as gaps in our Special Collections holdings.

3.2 Collection areas

Information on collection areas is presented by format under the following headings:

- 3.2.1 Manuscripts and archives
- 3.2.2 Rare and Antiquarian books
- 3.2.3 Photographs
- 3.2.4 Prints and Drawings
- 3.2.5 Ephemera
- 3.2.6 Maps
- 3.2.7 Music

3.2.1 Manuscripts and archives

The NLI holds the world's most important collection of unique manuscript items and archival collections relating to Ireland and Irish people. Particular strengths of this collection are as follows:

- Collections relating to Irish national politics from the 18th century onwards including the papers of individual political figures and those of political organisations and parties
- Collections relating to the politics of Northern Ireland especially for the period of the Troubles and later
- Literary and personal papers of Irish authors, poets and playwrights including holdings of the papers James Joyce, William Butler Yeats and Seamus Heaney
- Collections documenting the social, economic and labour history of Ireland including trade union archives
- Archives of select national institutions, organisations and societies
- Landed estates' archives comprising family and estate papers range from the complete archives of some of the largest estates such as the Ormonde, Inchiquin and Westport estates to papers documenting, either fully or in part, hundreds of significantly smaller properties
- Archives of the Office of the Chief Herald comprising heraldic and genealogical material
- Gaelic manuscripts, dating from the medieval period to modern times
- The Irish Queer Archive, documenting LGBTQ+ lives, experience and activism in Ireland from the 1960s to the present
- Archives of Irish-language bodies, publishers and authors including the early papers of Conradh na Gaeilge.

We will continue to develop our holdings in all of these areas.

3.2.2 Rare and Antiquarian Books

The NLI has collected rare and antiquarian material of Irish interest since its foundation in 1877 as part of its aim to comprehensively collect the Irish published record.

While collecting activity in this area is focussed upon filling gaps in our collection, duplicate works may be acquired. This is on a selective basis and most often because of an item's provenance or the quality of its binding.

3.2.3 Photographs

The Library holds the world's largest Irish-related photographic collection, covering the period from the beginning of photography in the mid-1800s to the early 21st century. The collection, which includes examples of early Irish photography as well as topographical images of Ireland, images of major political events and sport as well as of the landed gentry, comprises studio collections, photographs and albums by amateur photographers, and photojournalism.

Gaps in our photographic collections include the following:

- Images of working class life and society in the 19th and early 20th century Ireland
- Images of minorities in contemporary Ireland.

Where possible we will acquire material that addresses these gaps while also seeking to augment our existing collections.

3.2.4 Prints and Drawings

Comprising original artworks including portraits, designs, drawings and sketchbooks, as well as prints including etchings and engravings, lithographs and limited editions, the Prints and Drawings collection is a visual record of people, places and events in Irish history.

Key gaps in our collections include the following:

- Works by contemporary women artists and illustrators
- Works by contemporary children's book illustrators
- Works by or documenting minority communities
- Works documenting the Famine
- Topographical drawings of places outside Dublin.

Where possible we will acquire material which addresses these gaps while also seeking to augment our existing collections.

3.2.5 Ephemera

The Ephemera collection includes posters and proclamations, leaflets and theatre programmes documenting national events, elections and protests, as well as entertainment. It is a varied but rich resource for understanding the social, cultural, religious and political history of a country and its people.

While aspects of the following are documented in our collections we are keen to further develop our holdings of:

- 20th-century Irish political ephemera
- Ephemera documenting the involvement of women and minorities in Irish life
- Ephemera recording the experience of the Irish abroad.

3.2.6 Maps

The Printed and Manuscripts Map collection covers the cartographic heritage of the island of Ireland from earliest times and contains the largest collection globally of early printed and manuscript maps relating to the history of Ireland up to the 20th century.

Manuscript maps and surveys are added to the collection on a selective basis.

3.2.7 Music

The Music collections comprise 18th and 19th century printed music scores relating to Ireland and covering a range of genres as well as archival collections of organisations such as the Music Association of Ireland, composers and musicians.

While aspects of the following are documented in our collections we are keen to develop our holdings of:

- Irish classical music, both contemporary and prior to 1950
- The archives of music festivals and competitions
- The personal papers of Irish musicians.

Additions are made to the Music collections on a selective basis.



*Leabharlann
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na hÉireann*

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