



THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP
Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

MEDIA RELEASE

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National collecting institutions to re-open

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, today announced Australia's National Collecting Institutions will be able to re-open to the public starting 30 May under strict guidelines to protect the public and those who work in the buildings.

The National Collecting Institutions attracted more than 4.5 million onsite visitors in 2018-19 and comprise institutions including the National Gallery of Australia, the National Museum of Australia, the National Portrait Gallery, the National Library of Australia, the National Film and Sound Archives, Bundanon and the Australian National Maritime Museum.

“After a challenging period, the reopening of the nation’s premier cultural institutions is an important step in the re-emergence of Australia’s cultural and creative economy,” Minister Fletcher said.

“As the Prime Minister has made clear: now is the time to focus on bringing back the Australian way of life in a safe way.”

Minister Fletcher said that reopening museums, galleries and libraries would be discussed at today’s Videoconference Meeting of Cultural Ministers. He said he would encourage state and territory governments to take similar decisions in relation to the museums, galleries and libraries for which they are responsible.

Over past weeks, the National Collecting Institutions have reached current and new audiences through the use of social media and digitally accessible content, making possible virtual tours and curator-led features of collection objects. While this form of engagement has been welcome, Australians will soon be able to visit our National Collecting Institutions in person to once again experience the objects and artworks that are so central to the telling of Australia’s story.

“Like many Australians, I am looking forward to once again being able to visit our wonderful national institutions,” Minister Fletcher said.

“The reopening of Australia’s National Collecting Institutions is possible because of work by the Morrison Government to fast-track the development and implementation of special safety protocols designed for public gallery, library and museum spaces.”

Special arrangements will be in place to keep people safe, including timed entry and one way flow through gallery spaces, and visitors may be asked to provide their contact information to allow public health tracing there will also be increased signage throughout buildings and more frequent cleaning of touch areas.

The decision to reopen follows the National Cabinet's 3 Step Framework for a COVIDSafe Australia and health advice to allow public access to our galleries, libraries, archives and museums to resume with visitor access arrangements in place in place to ensure social distancing requirements are carefully managed.

“These measures are important and will help give visitors confidence that their health and safety is a priority,” Minister Fletcher said.

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