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Building Our Museums Sector

Arts and Museums Minister Marion Scrymgour today announced the Government would develop a ten year plan for the museum sector.

Ms Scrymgour said the plan, Building Our Museum Sector, would be developed over the next twelve months and include periods of public and industry consultation.

“We believe the time is right to set the direction for the industry for the next ten years with the Territory’s growing population and the increasing importance of tourism,” Ms Scrymgour said.

“Also, our two major collections – at MAGNT at Bullocky Point and Araluen in Alice Springs – were both established 20-25 years ago.

“While we’ve had recent additions to the sector with the construction of Nyinkka Nyunyu in Tennant Creek, Wave Hill Walk Off Museum at Kalkarindji and planning work on the Katherine Cultural centre – there are issues with storage space.

“Some important parts of our collections – including Papunya Tula Art – can’t be shown because of lack of space.

“We also need to address the issue of skeletal remains and secret-sacred objects with more objects likely to be in the care of Government in the future as they are returned from interstate and international collections.”

Ms Scrymgour said a range of issues and proposals would be looked at as part of the process of developing the plan, including:

- A Territory repository to solve storage problems;
- A dedicated gallery of Aboriginal art;
- Better display of the Territory’s important south east Asian art;
• Expansion of natural history displays, possibly involving other institutions such as George Brown Botanical Gardens; and
• Better displaying our social histories, for example discussions about the World War 2 Museum will continue.

“I place the utmost importance on Government supporting our museums and galleries – and will also look at other potential funding sources including the philanthropic and private sectors.”

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