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**From:** Adam Lindsay  
**Sent:** Saturday, 4 July 2020 11:09 AM  
**To:** Committee Social Issues  
**Subject:** RE: Inquiry into the State Records Act 1998 and the Policy Paper on its review - Post-hearing responses - 1 June 2020

Dear Rhia,

I hope you are well.

Please find attached 3 files.

- 1) The corrections to my transcript for your consideration.
- 2) My responses to the Supplementary Questions received following Hearing One.
- 3) A one page document I submit to the Committee for consideration. This is the case for the creation of a new Cultural Institution distilled to one page. It is presented without the defensiveness that often comes from other formats and hopefully helps the Committee to understand the point of view being advanced in the Proposals.

Thank you and have a great weekend.

Adam

**Adam Lindsay | Executive Director**

State Archives and Records Authority of New South Wales  
and  
Sydney Living Museums

## A New Cultural Institution

We are proposing to **create** a new Executive Agency that will illuminate the history of NSW by protecting the evidence and sharing the stories of our past to inform and shape our understanding of the present.

This new Cultural Institution will have the **responsibility and capacity** to improve, increase and diversify the way that people access and engage with the State's history – both Colonial and pre-Colonial – and will prioritise the **inclusion of First Nations voices** in the telling of our history

The foundation for this **new** Cultural Institution is the collections, assets, staff, infrastructure, expertise and capacity of the existing Sydney Living Museums (SLM) and NSW State Archives and Records Authority (SARA).

Together, SLM and SARA believe that the **places and records of our past can enrich our lives**, create a deeper understanding of who we are through preserving and making accessible the memory of the State.

The NSW State Archives Collection is among the most **culturally significant** archival collections in the world and Sydney Living Museums holds a portfolio of some of the country's most **significant sites and properties**.

As one, a solid basis is created for a **forward looking and innovative** Institution that signals a commitment to the protection of the cultural assets of the State, while growing the public collection that records our history in line with contemporary technologies, philosophies, accessibility and the public interest.

Where SLM lacks considerable collections and archives, SARA holds an extensive and **globally significant** archival collection that tells **unique stories** of our past.

Where SARA lacks space to engage people, SLM holds historically important properties ideal for **interpretation, programming and exhibitions**.

Where SLM has the existing expertise and infrastructure to support **education, marketing and digital content production**, SARA has the expertise and infrastructure to support **collections and archives management, digitisation, research and policy** making.

The new Cultural Institution will **embrace storytelling in an inclusive way**, acknowledging multiple perspectives and broadening the possibilities for people in NSW of diverse ages, backgrounds, interests, education and skill levels to engage with our past. The Institution will have an increased capacity for **regional outreach** and connection through an expanded touring program and regional partnerships. It will be able to develop **education** programming and resources which provide more relevant and in depth access to the State Archives Collection and its significant properties than ever before.

The **increased remit and weight** of the new Cultural Institution will **enhance the public profile for history** that both SLM and SARA have been unable to garner in the past. This increased cultural cachet will have huge benefits in the space of fundraising, philanthropy, corporate sponsorship and overall competitive strength when appealing to government for funding, all of which comes from being a more substantial organisation.

The creation of the new Cultural Institution will be a prime opportunity to develop a publically **recognised Australian History brand** which will ultimately lead to greater audience engagement with the stories of our past. This is essential for the people of NSW to garner value from the collections, assets and expertise of this institution and something that SLM and SARA have struggled to achieve independently of one another.

As an Executive Agency, the new Institution will have greater **flexibility and agility** to employ the best people to protect, research and make our past accessible. The increased capacity and remit will also afford the existing staff of SLM and SARA more expansive development opportunities and career prospects.

As a halo benefit, SLM and SARA have been able to establish a series of administrative and financial efficiencies through their twelve months of partnership. The creation of this Institution will remove legal and administrative fences that exist between SLM and SARA's individual governing legislations and status as separate reporting entities, leading to greater efficiencies and allowing **important Government resourcing** to be diverted back into activities that really matter. It is the intent to be as efficient as possible so that all possible revenue can be devoted to presenting history with contemporary relevance.

This is a Cultural Institution that will create a more engaging and accessible **future for our past**.