

The Hon, Mr Tony Burke, MP
Minister for the Arts
PO Box 6022
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

17 February 2023

Dear Minister Burke

The Art Association of Australia and New Zealand (AAANZ) emphatically supports the continued operation of Trove and urges the federal government to ensure the National Library of Australia receives sustainable, ongoing funding for this vital digital platform.

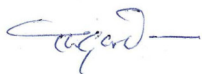
The Art Association is a national membership and peak advocacy body, representing over 450 academics, art historians, writers, curators and artists from around Australasia. I write not only on behalf of our members, who use Trove regularly in their work, but for all Australians including family historians, school students, creative writers and storytellers, who comprise Trove's users. With over 22 million visits per year, representing approximately 63,000 visits a day, Trove has been a vital research tool across a broad range of society connecting everyday Australians and professionals alike with over six billion digital items from over 900 collecting institutions around the country.

Trove is vital to ensure Australia remains a fair and egalitarian society. As a free digital platform, it plays a fundamental role connecting people with collections no matter where either are located. It ensures that people living in regional and remote areas, and those who are mobility impaired, are not disadvantaged in their access to information about the nation's past. Furthermore, many newspaper archives are locked behind paywalls whereas Trove is free to users regardless of their socio-economic background.

This is even more critical in a time where democracies are under siege from misinformation. The cultural institutions included on Trove include large and small libraries, museums, galleries, historical societies and archives, ranging from major organisations to community run museums, each a trusted repository of the records and documents they hold. Trove also plays a fundamental role in truth-telling about our nation's past by providing First Nation communities easy access to early newspapers, documents, letters, diaries and images which can support alternative accounts to official historical narratives. The new National Cultural Policy, *Revive: Australian Cultural Policy for the Next Five Years*, places First Nations perspectives as a key pillar and includes the action of supporting the telling of First Nations histories and stories. Free and easy access to records, documents, images and newspapers for First Nations historians and truth tellers through Trove contributes to the success of this action.

As a trusted source of information available to all Australians without charge, Trove is vital to ensuring Australia remains a thriving democracy. It is unconscionable that this invaluable tool could be lost. For the above reasons, I urge you to provide sustainable and ongoing funding to Trove into the future.

Yours sincerely



Dr Wendy Garden
PRESIDENT, ART ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND