

Curatorial & Collections realignment

Change proposal
14 July 2026

Background

Organisational context

In October 2025, MHNSW undertook a realignment of its executive structure to clarify leadership, accountabilities and strategic ownership across the organisation.

The key principles underpinning the divisional realignment were:

1	Strategic fit	Ensure alignment with the MHNSW Strategy 2025-30 and broader NSW Government priorities
2	Clear and accountable	Streamline structures to avoid duplication, simplify reporting lines and streamline decision-making authority
3	Public impact	Strengthen delivery of inclusive, engaging programs and uphold the custodianship of places, stories and collections
4	Service delivery	Improve coordination across teams, reduce fragmentation, and provide a more seamless and effective experience for both staff and audiences
5	Workforce capability	Build the skills, culture and structure needed for a flexible and future-ready workforce

Organisational context

- Following the successful realignment of functions within the executive structure, individual divisional operating models are being reviewed to ensure an appropriate structure and resourcing across the organisation to deliver MHNSW's Strategy 2025-30.
- An opportunity to improve the structure of the Curatorial & Collections division was identified in staff feedback responding to the executive realignment.
- A commitment was made to review the Divisional structure following the recruitment of the Director, Curatorial & Collections role.

A realigned structure is now being proposed, with an aim to:

- Align functional roles and duties with the key responsibilities of the division
- Clarify responsibilities across the teams and reduce duplication
- Increase assistant level roles to build resource
- Streamline reporting lines
- Ensure consistency across job titles
- Provide stronger leadership and build capability

Change management principles

The following principles underpin the approach to managing through change:

- Regular, open consultation with employees and the PSA
- Adherence to NSW public sector legislation, policy and guidelines
- Minimal disruption to the delivery of MHNSW services
- Implementation of fair, transparent and accountable processes
- Appropriate information and support mechanisms to help employees understand the process and feel supported throughout the transition

Proposed structure

Curatorial & Research

Curatorial & Research proposed changes

Overview

- The proposed realignment will separate Curatorial and Research into discrete teams led respectively by the Manager Curatorial and the Manager Research.
- Both teams will have direct day-to-day oversight and supervision from the Director, Curatorial & Collections in line with that role's key accountability to 'lead the curatorial direction of MHNSW'.
- The Head of Curatorial & Research role will be delimited due to a significant overlap with the remit of the Director Curatorial & Collections and the responsibilities in the Manager Curatorial, and Manager Research roles.
- The substantive role holder will be subsequently assigned to an equivalent role – Manager, Archives Advocacy and Partnerships.

Curatorial & Research proposed changes

Curatorial

- Proposed changes in the Curatorial team will better position the Division to meet the increased need for curatorial project support in the forward program and the MHNSW Strategy.

Proposed change	Benefit
One Assistant Curator grade 1 role previously only funded for 3 months per year will be converted to a full-time ongoing role	Increased resources to support curatorial needs across the organisation.
The reporting lines will change with Assistant Curator roles reporting to Curators rather than directly to the Manager Curatorial	Correction of flat structure, build management skills and allow the Manager Curatorial role scope to undertake curatorial project work
The First Nations Curator role has moved into the Research team and will remain there	Allows a focus on collections research, ICIP protocols and increasing MHNSW's understanding of the First Nations cultural values across our places and museum collections

Curatorial & Research proposed changes

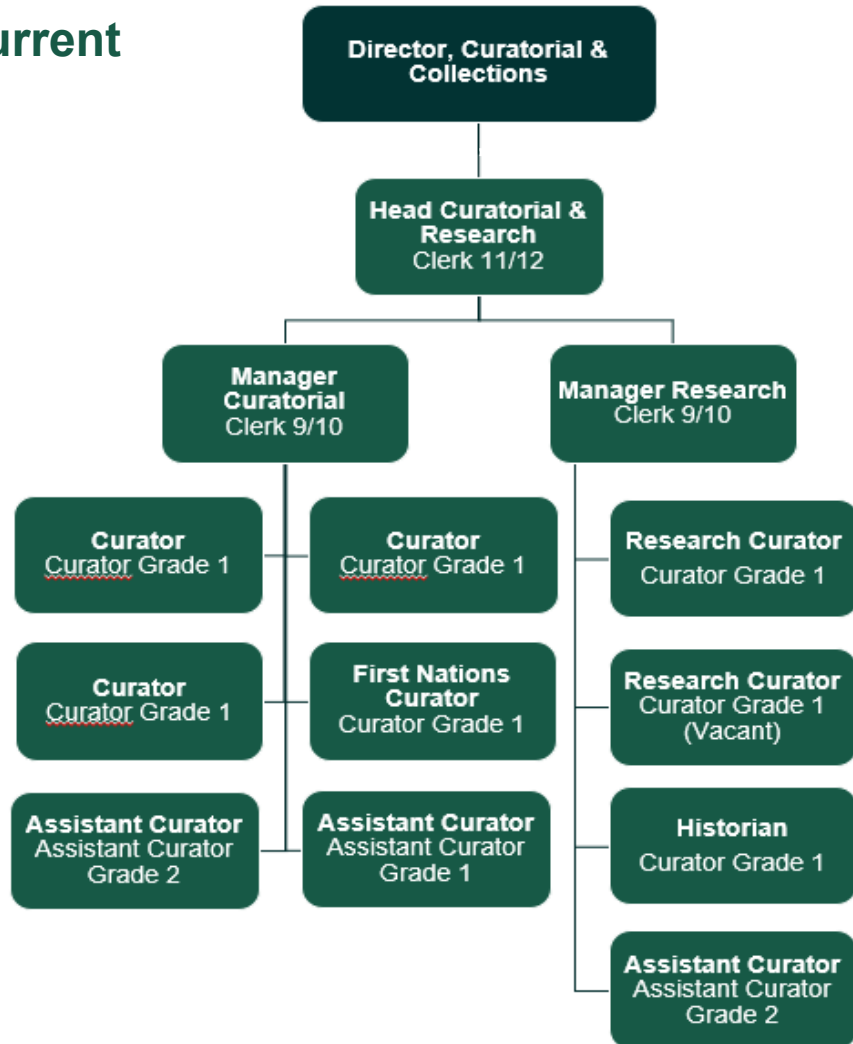
Research

A proposed stand-alone Research team will focus on supporting MHNSW research and developing partnerships and initiatives that encourage communities, academics and other external researchers to engage with MHNSW collections and places. This will result in new opportunities for collection enrichment and strengthen public outcomes.

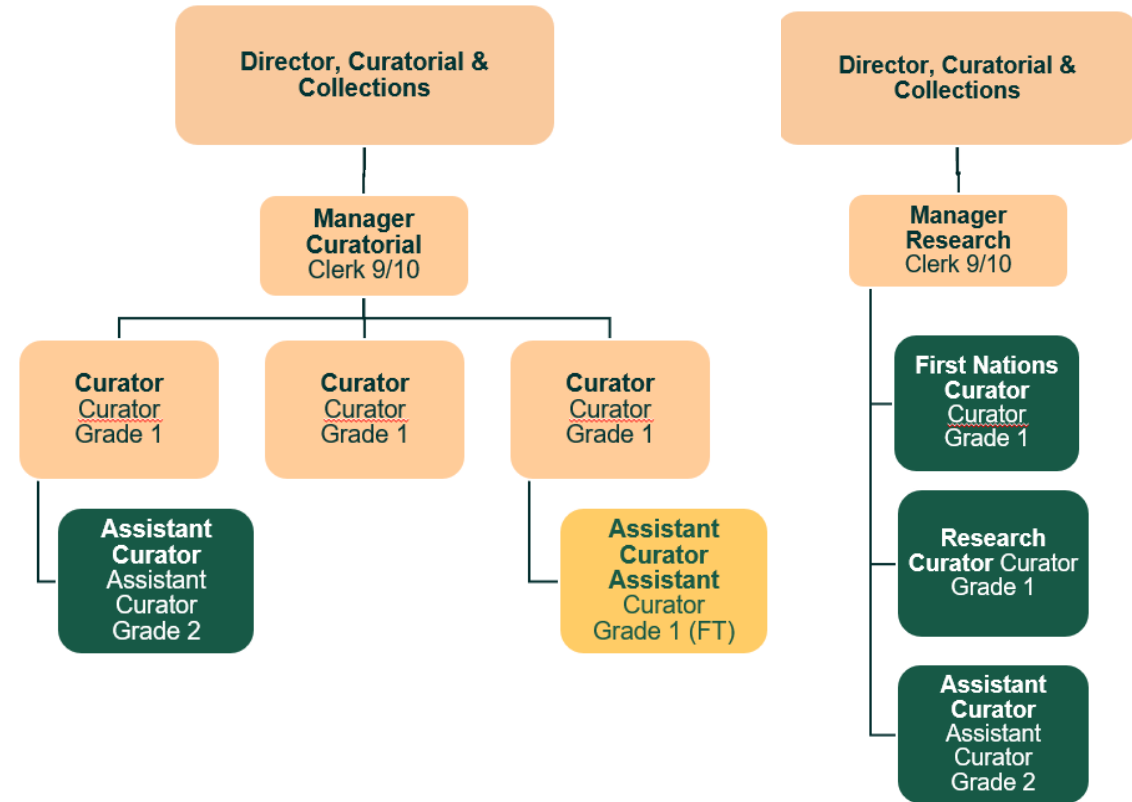
Proposed change	Benefit
• The First Nations Curator role remains in the Research team	• As mentioned above.
• The Historian role will move to the Heritage team	• Strengthened focus on the history and significance of MHNSW properties as well as MHNSW's collections.
• One vacant Research Curator Grade 1 role will be delimited and the Assistant Curator Grade 2 role will be funded ongoing	• Builds resource and capability across the team

Curatorial & Research proposed structure

Current



Proposed



- New role
- Converted from temporary to ongoing
- Amended role/ role title

Collections Care and Caroline Simpson Library

Collections Care and CSL proposed changes

- Proposed changes to the Collections Care team bring all museum collections roles into one team, reduce duplication, and provide clarity of team functions and consistency in role titles while better supporting the care of the museum collections across MHNSW's portfolio.

Proposed change	Benefit
Head of Collections Care title changes to Head of Collections and the team's name will change to the Collections team	Better reflects the range of collections functions carried out by the team.
The Senior Advisor, Caroline Simpson Library and Distributed Collections will move to the Archives and report to the Executive Director, Records, Archives and Collections as the Senior Advisor Distributed Collections	More streamlined reporting lines

Collections Care and CSL proposed changes

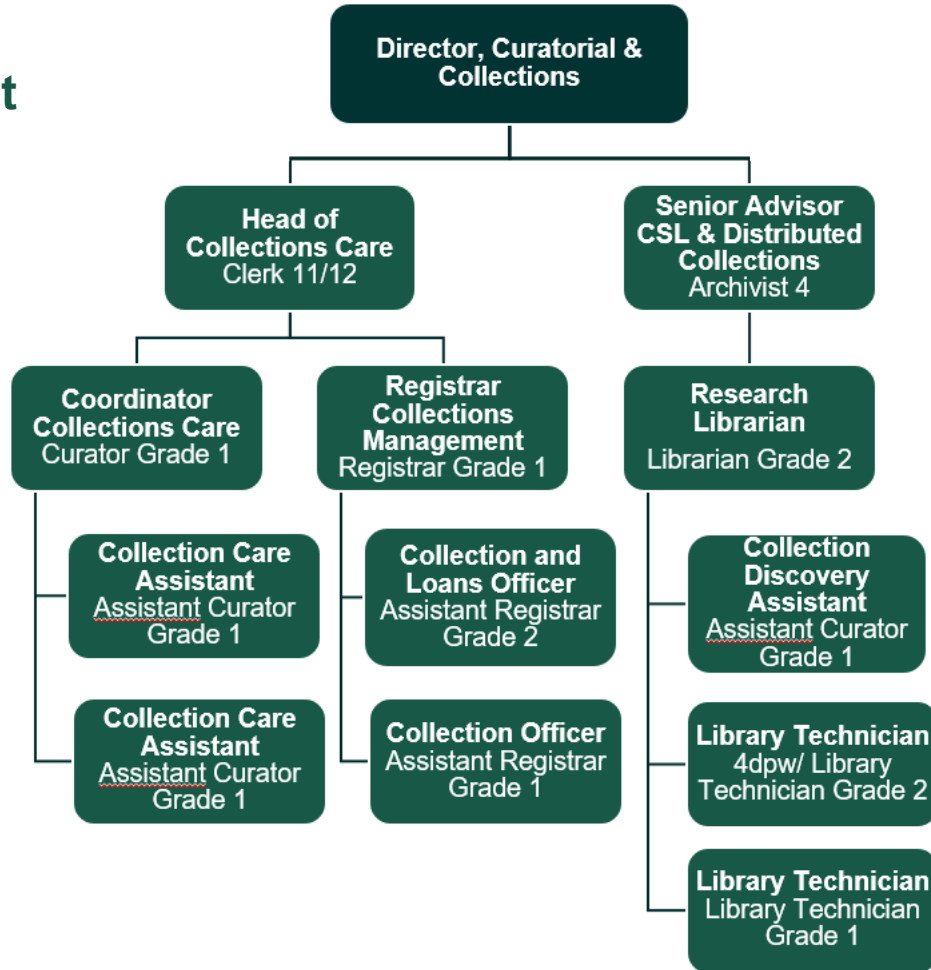
Proposed change	Benefit
A new ongoing Library Manager, Librarian Grade 3, role will be introduced which will report to the Head of Collections.	Recognises the need for a higher graded role to manage the library's staff, public and user engagement and growing collection.
The Research Librarian role will become an ongoing part time role, 2 days per week	Allows focus on more defined responsibilities in research, engagement and collection development
The Collection Discovery Assistant, Assistant Curator Grade 1 role will be delimited and new Collection Discovery Officer, Assistant Curator Grade 2 will be created. The substantive role holder will be subsequently assigned to an equivalent role.	- Increases the research and public engagement capabilities in this role - This role and the Library Manager role will continue to be supported by the Research team.

Collections Care proposed changes

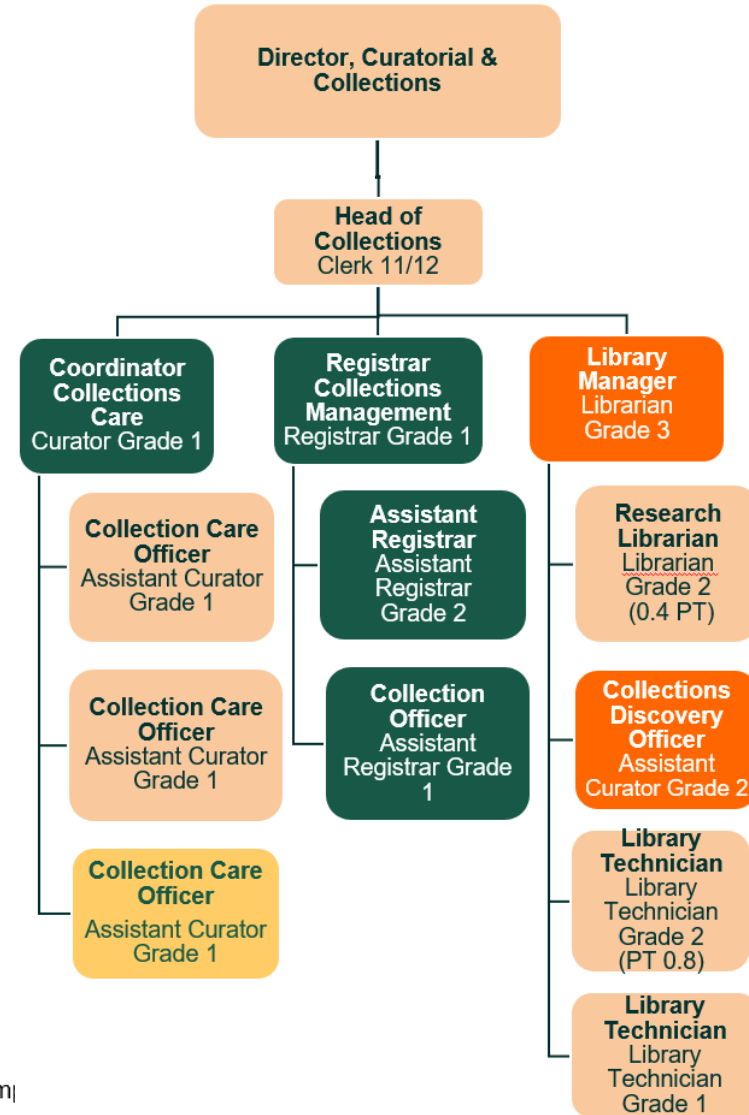
Proposed change	Benefit
The Collections Care Assistant roles (Assistant Curator Grade 1) will change role titles to Collections Care Officers	Allows consistency of role titles with the equivalent Collections Officer (Assistant Registrar Grade 1) role in the Registration stream.
A temporary Collections Care Assistant, Assistant Curator Grade 1 role will be converted to a full-time ongoing role with the role title updated to Collections Care Officer, Assistant Curator Grade 1.	- Provides needed additional resources to manage and care for museum collections, increasing the team's coverage across all museums and historic houses. - Builds expert collections care skills and capability specific to the needs of our unique portfolio

Collections Care proposed structure

Current



Proposed



- New role
- Converted from temp
- Amended role/ role title

Heritage

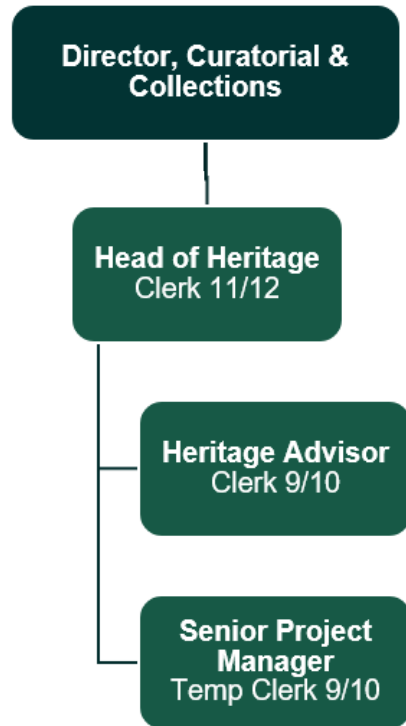
Heritage proposed changes

- The primary proposed changes to the Heritage team involve realignment of reporting lines.

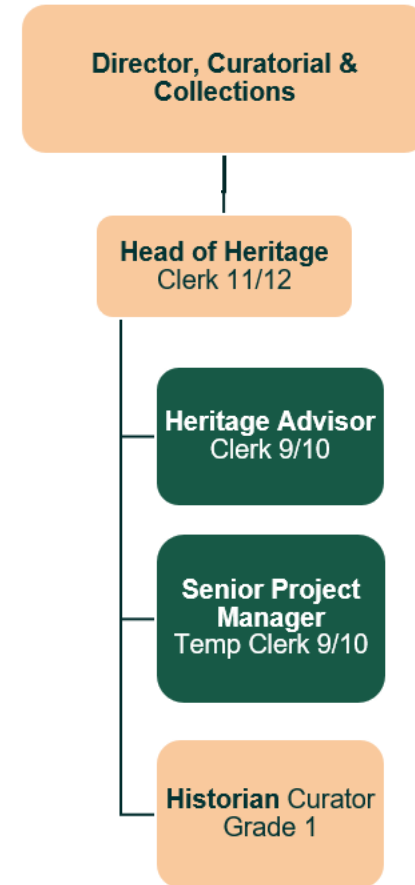
Proposed change	Benefit
• Historian role move into the Heritage Team and report to the Head of Heritage, with a modified role description (role will support heritage projects but also continue to support more general historical research)	• Strengthened focus on the history and significance of MHNSW properties as well as MHNSW's collections.
• The temporary Senior Project Manager role will continue to support the delivery of priority projects for a period of twelve months	• Increased resourcing and capability

Heritage proposed structure

Current



Proposed



-  New role
-  Converted from temporary to ongoing
-  Amended role/ role title

Regional

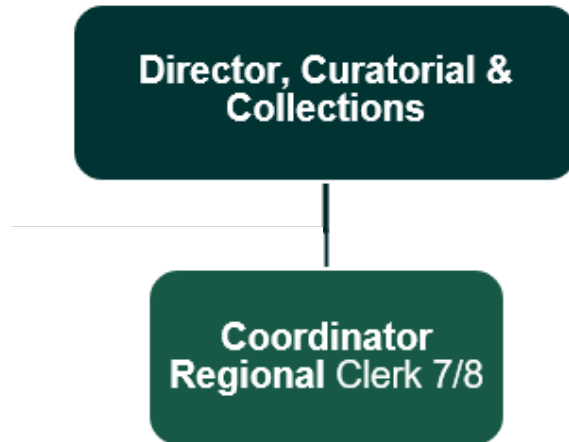
Regional proposed changes

- The proposed changes to the Regional team involves additional resourcing.

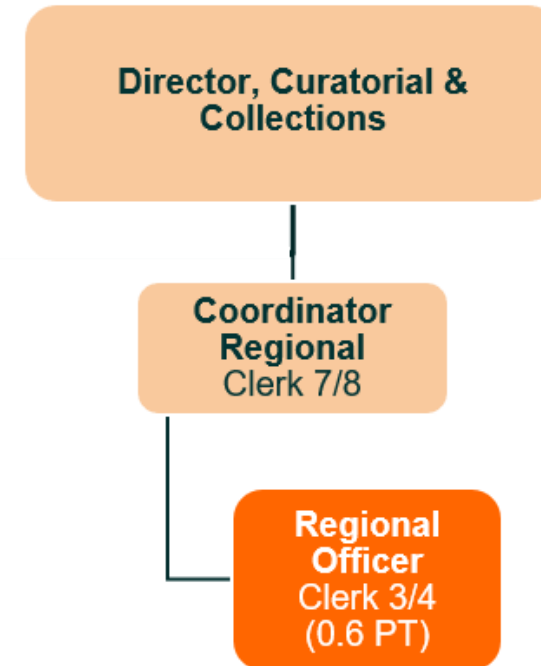
Proposed change	Benefit
• Introduction of a new ongoing part time Regional Officer, Clerk Grade 3/4 role	• Increased support for our growing regional mandate and the increased need for MHNSW engagement in regional centres through new partnerships and a demand for in-person workshops, Collections on Tour and other collaborative initiatives.
• Coordinator Regional role description amended to include a direct report	• Confirmed reporting line structure

Regional proposed structure

Current



Proposed



-  New role
-  Converted from temporary to ongoing
-  Amended role/ role title

Archives roles

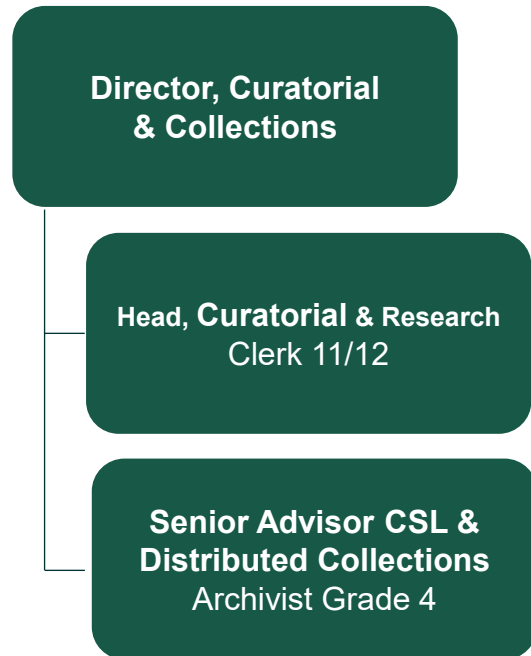
Proposed Archives roles

- It is proposed that one role will transfer from the Caroline Simpson Library team to the Archives Group and a new role will be created in the Archives Group.

Proposed change	Benefit
• The Senior Advisor Caroline Simpson Library and Distributed Collections will move to the Archives Group and report to the Executive Director, Records, Archives and Collections as the Senior Advisor Distributed Collections	• More streamlined reporting lines.
• Introduction of a new role Manager, Archives Advocacy and Partnerships Clerk Grade 11/12. This role will report to the Executive Director, Records, Archives and Collections	• Increased focus on advocacy for, and building awareness of, the NSW State Archives

Proposed Archives roles structure

Current



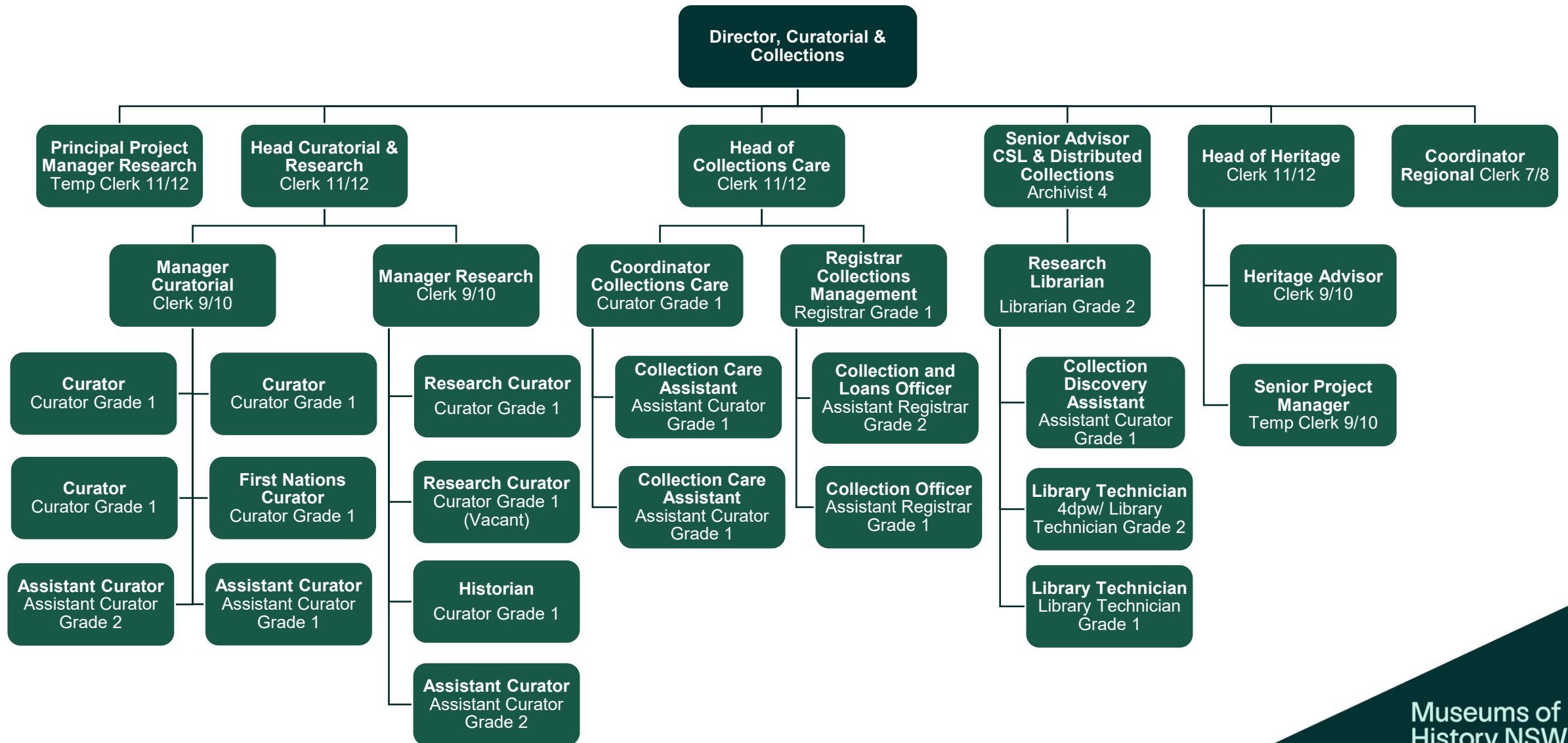
Proposed



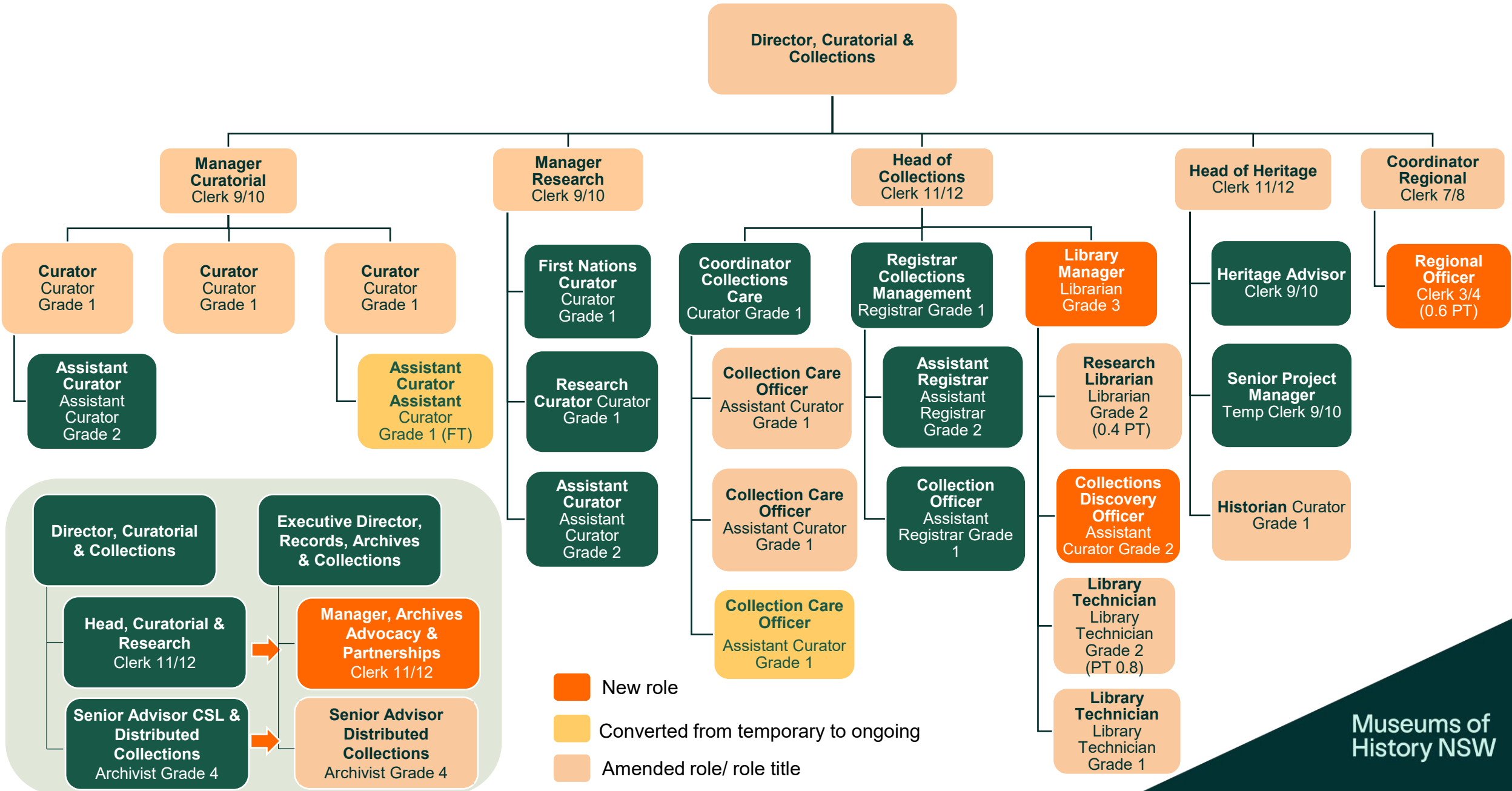
- New role
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Proposed Divisional organisational chart

Current divisional structure



Proposed divisional structure



Next steps and timeline

Next steps & timeline

Task	Due date
Change Hub on Workspace updated with version of Change Management Plan, new Divisional charts and draft role descriptions	14/07/2026
Staff consultation period	14/07 – 28/07/2026
Review of staff comments and collation of responses	14/07 – 31/07/2026
Possible adjustments after consultation	03/08 – 05/08/2026
Develop BN for approval	By 07/08/2026
Final structure and roles approved	By 12/08/2026
Final structure and outcomes of feedback presented to staff	13/08/2026
PSA advised of final realignment outcome	13/08/2026
Update final RDs and documents on Workspace	13/08/2026
Commence system implementation eg MWZ changes	w/c 17/08/2026
Develop individual recruitment plans for each process, including adverts, panels, timelines	17/08 – 28/08/2026
Internal recruitment (EOI) process commences	w/c 17/8/2026
Interviews for roles advertised via EOI	w/c 24/08/2026
EOIs completed (reference checks, BN approval)	w/c 31/08/2026
External recruitment commences	w/c 24/08/2026

Process for providing feedback

Feedback

All feedback on the proposed realignment should be submitted to humanresources@mhnsw.au

Feedback can be submitted up to **5pm, Tuesday 28 July**

General enquires

For any general queries or clarification on the proposed new structure:

- Contact Beth Hise at beth.hise@mhnsw.au
- Contact People & Culture at humanresources@mhnsw.au

Support services

Employee Assistance Program	Employee Assistance Program (EAP) facilitated by Converge International is a confidential and professional counselling service and is available to all employees
Manager Assist	All people managers have access to Manager Assist delivered by Converge International which provides coaching advice to assist with people management issues including change advice
Career Assist	All employees are eligible for 6 free sessions per year as part of the EAP program which includes a Career Assist component
P&C support	If requested, People & Culture will meet with employees during the consultation period, provide ongoing support and respond to questions or concerns

Questions

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