



Profile and policy regarding the acquisition of private archives

The National Archives of the Netherlands (*Nationaal Archief*) is the archive depository of the Dutch government for archives of central institutions of central government, and archives of the administrative agencies of the province of Zuid-Holland. The core of the National Archives' collection comprises state archives. In addition, the National Archives manage private archival material from companies, institutions, families and individual persons.

Acquisition profile for private archival material

The National Archives acquire new private archives in as far as these relate to national politics and government, and moreover constitute a substantial addition to the archives of central government or the province of Zuid-Holland. The private archives should contain important information on the government's decision-making and activities, information which cannot, or not adequately, be found in the archives of the government institutions themselves.

Additions to previously acquired private archives that do not meet the above criterion, may be included by way of exception.

When a presented private archive is of obvious interest, but does not meet the above criterion, the National Archives will refer the depositor where possible to another relevant institute for records management.

Acquisition profile for photographic material

Besides archival material, the National Archives acquire photographs, in particular journalistic-documentary photo collections. To be considered for acquisition, the photographic material must document significant historical events and developments and form an addition to the existing archive and photo collections of the National Archives / Spaarnestad Photo Archive. The restriction stated under the heading archival material (i.e. that it must relate to politics and government) does not apply to the acquisition of photographic material.

Additional selection criteria

Besides the above substantive criteria, the National Archives apply additional practical guidelines to assess whether archival and photographic material qualifies for acquisition.

Original

In principle only original documents qualify for acquisition, unless only copies or extracts are available and/or the acquisition of authentic items is impossible.

Added value

If an archive, by virtue of its context, is irreplaceable because of its historical, cultural, symbolic or emotional significance and constitutes an addition to the collection of the National Archives, it will be considered for acquisition. Duplications will not be included unless the material condition of the archival items in the collection of the National Archives gives rise to do so.

Carriers

In principle, the National Archives acquire and manage only two-dimensional documents such as paper, parchment, photographs and digital documents. In the case of three-dimensional objects, such as paintings, scale-models, paraphernalia and museum works, the National Archives refer the depositors where possible to other heritage institutions, unless an object forms an inseparable part of an archival item. Book and magazine collections are generally referred to the National Library (*Koninklijke Bibliotheek*).

Coherence

If an archive or collection is incomplete and/or lacks coherence, it may not be acquired on those grounds.

Good, well-structured and accessible condition

The size of an archive, the extent of structure, the material condition of an archive or archival item, the costs necessary to bring it into a good, well-structured and accessible condition and the contribution of the archiver to the costs for processing are all taken into consideration in the decision to acquire an archive.

Public access

The National Archives is a publicly accessible archive depository and aims to make all archives accessible to researchers. It may be appropriate to restrict public access to certain archival items, for example to protect the privacy of living persons or the national interest. The National Archives will advise the depositor on this. An archive may not be acquired if public access is too limited.

Copyright photographic material

The National Archives preferably acquire photographic material that is royalty-free or of which the copyright will be transferred.

Origin

Archives of which it is unclear whether the depositor is the legal owner, will not be acquired.

Payment

In principle, the National Archives do not pay for the acquisition of an archive.

Contact

Do you have a digital or paper archive that meets the above criteria? Then contact the Collections department of the National Archives on +31 (0)70 - 331 41 40 or by email NADienstpostbusVerwerven@nationaalarchief.nl.

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