

Public Submission to the National Cultural Policy

To protect the rights of creative developers,
and to promote good governance,
transparency and accountability.

Public submission in response to the 2026 invitation
by the Australian Government for public input.

16 May 2026

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Submitted via email to: [REDACTED]

Contents

1. Preamble	3
2. Executive Summary	3
3. Public submission	4
4. Recommendations	4
5. Consultation for the National Cultural Policy is supported.....	5
6. The importance of ethics and governance.....	5
7. Good governance, in plain language:.....	5
8. Sustainable Development Goals & Cultural Policy.....	6
9. Standing & background: Dr John Goldsmith	7
10. Case Study	9
10.1 The Astrofest Astrophotography Exhibition.....	9
10.2 Major Milestones	13
10.3 Strategic business review and management issues	14
10.4 Management changes.....	15
10.5 False claims of copyright	15
10.6 John Curtin Gallery (March 2019) fails to acknowledge astrophotographers.	15
10.7 Inappropriate comments	16
10.8 Formal decision and recommendation ignored.....	17
10.9 John Curtin Gallery and the Carrolup Centre for Truth-telling.....	17
Attachment 1. Background information: National Cultural Policy.....	18
Attachment 2. Case Study who's who.....	19
Attachment 3. The Celestial Visions Statement of Values	21
Attachment 4. Information about FOI documents and "released to the world".	22

1. Preamble

This public submission for the National Cultural Policy (public consultation phase), is based on several broad objectives, principles and foundations. That:

1. culture helps people, community and humanity to grow, develop, prosper and flourish.
2. culture uplifts, enlightens and informs us.
3. excellence is pursued, not just mediocrity, or popularism.
4. culture is the expression of community.
5. culture encompasses and expresses all aspects of humanity, including emotion.
6. the constraints of excessive intellectualism are recognised and avoided.
7. every single person has a right and role to contribute to their culture, no matter who they are.
8. creative developers and authors are respected, supported and fairly remunerated.
9. their creative work is respected, acknowledged and appreciated.
10. intellectual property is respected at all times.
11. enablers and funders of creative and cultural works, support and remain accountable to their communities.
12. responsible free speech is expected.
13. good governance takes place at all times, to support publically funded culture.
14. public funding means that public interest always exists, with the right for scrutiny, transparency and accountability.

2. Executive Summary

This public submission contributes to the Australian Government 2026 public consultation phase for the National Cultural Policy. This submission promotes and advocates for the rights of creative developers, and to promote good governance, transparency and accountability in relation to publicly funded cultural activities. This submission presents cultural goals and specific recommendations are put forward, with an emphasis on good governance. The importance of ethics and governance are highlighted and an outline of good governance, in plain language, is provided. The relation between culture and the Sustainable Development Goals are noted. Some details and context regarding the standing of the author of this submission, Dr John Goldsmith, are provided. The submission includes a case study, regarding a real-world example of the management of an astrophotography exhibition.

3. Public submission

Thankyou for the opportunity to provide this public, non-confidential submission to the National Cultural Policy. This submission addresses various aspects, issues and emerging challenges, as prompted in the background information for the public consultation phase:

“Why we want your input

Australia's cultural and creative sector is vital to our national identity, social cohesion and economy. As we develop the next National Cultural Policy, we want to ensure it reflects Australia's diversity and responds to the challenges and opportunities ahead. Your views will help us identify priorities, address emerging challenges and opportunities.....”

4. Recommendations

That the National Cultural policy:

- 1. Acknowledge and asserts the rights of all creative developers, including photographers and astrophotographers, regarding intellectual property, copyright and the right to be acknowledged and attributed.*
- 2. Acknowledges the vital role of good governance and the role of Local, State and Federal Government agencies, and international funding bodies in relation to funding of cultural initiatives.*
- 3. Asserts that funders must ensure that appropriate contractual powers exist in all funding agreements, to ensure suitable and effective grant and funding management, good governance and effective administration, including any necessary powers to conduct investigations and / or audits, at any time.*
- 4. Notes that contractual and governance powers should be applied rigorously to ensure effective management and monitoring of publicly funded projects, including (but not limited to) the following:*
 - transparency*
 - accountability*
 - obligation to comply and fulfil contractual terms.*
 - compliance with all legislative obligations, Codes of Conduct, Codes of Ethics, Customer Service Charters, relevant policies and procedures*
 - that conflict of interest is declared at all times, and appropriately managed.*
- 5. Encourages the use of effective complaints processes that are based on fair, due process, transparency and accountability, including the following;*

- *defined due process is applied, and is evidence based.*
- *that innocence is assumed until demonstrated otherwise.*
- *that no unreasonable delays occur.*
- *that no relevant information is withheld.*
- *that relevant process and policy information is openly and clearly communicated.*
- *that evidence or documentary records are not concealed, deleted, destroyed or modified.*
- *that formal recommendations of Ethics and Conduct Committees should be respected and enacted.*
- *the opportunity for defence should always be provided.*
- *where miscarriages of justice or administrative errors or faults occur, those issues should be rectified, without delay.*

5. Consultation for the National Cultural Policy is supported

The consultation process for input into the National Cultural Policy is supported.

6. The importance of ethics and governance.

“Ethical decision making in government has a direct effect on trust in government, and this flows on to the effectiveness of public policy. If people don’t trust that public servants are making decisions in a balanced, fair and ethical manner, they are less likely to support policy.”

Source: Grant Hehir, Auditor General of Australia, quoted in The Ethics Centre (2020) ***The ethical advantage: the economic and social benefits of ethics to Australia*** Deloitte Access Economics: <https://ethics.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/The-Ethical-Advantage-4.pdf>

7. Good governance, in plain language:

Good governance is put into practical effect by government and administrative staff conducting themselves in the following ways:

- providing truthful, accurate information.
- acting in good faith.
- acting with integrity.
- acting with probity.
- using due process and good governance.
- acting lawfully and justly.
- complying and fulfilling Freedom of Information obligations.
- being accountable for actions and conduct.

- respecting copyright and intellectual property (e.g. by acknowledging the IP and copyright of others).
- fulfilling contractual obligations and commitments.
- not threatening or harassing individuals.
- not deceiving or deliberately misleading others.
- promptly taking corrective action if an issue occurs.
- complying with codes of conduct.
- have defined and accessible dispute resolution policies / procedures and to implement them impartially.
- being responsive and transparent regarding (formal or otherwise) complaints.
- not suppressing valid public comment or criticism.
- never making unsubstantiated or false claims against other persons.
- when appropriate to do so, providing unreserved apologies, by an authorised and identified person.

Good governance is based on due process, which must be followed. Aspects of good governance include:

- The fundamental principles of justice must be respected.
- Leaders and authority persons must take appropriate action to address and resolve issues.
- Organisations must comply with their legal, contractual and governance provisions and obligations.
- Rights and appeal processes / options must be respected.
- Processes must be fair, reasonable, accessible, effective, efficient and implemented without excessive delay.

8. Sustainable Development Goals & Cultural Policy

The Sustainable Development Goals (successors to the Millennium Development Goals) adopted by the United Nations in 2015, are summarised as:

1. **Poverty**– End poverty in all its forms everywhere
2. **Hunger**– End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture
3. **Health**– Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages
4. **Education**– Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
5. **Women**– Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
6. **Water**– Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
7. **Energy**– Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
8. **Employment & Economic Growth**– Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all
9. **Infrastructure & Innovation**– Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation, and foster innovation
10. **Inequality**– Reduce inequality within and among countries

11. **Urban Safety & Welfare**– Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
12. **Production & Consumption**– Ensure sustainable production and consumption patterns
13. **Climate Change**– Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
14. **Marine Conservation**– Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
15. **Environment preservation**– Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss
16. **Peace, security, equality**– Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
17. **Implementation**– Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development

(Refer to SDG indicators <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list/>).

Whilst all Sustainable Development Goals influence culture, the main Sustainable Development Goals that directly relate to cultural policy, include:

- SDG #4: *Education– Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.*
- SDG #5: *Women– Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.*
- SDG #8: *Employment & Economic Growth– Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.*
- SDG #16: *Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.*
- SDG #17: *Implementation– Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development.*

Source: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

9. Standing & background: Dr John Goldsmith

I am a member of **The Ethics Centre** (www.ethics.org, based in Sydney) and I am the first Australian to complete **The Change Agent** initiative via the **World Ethics Organization** (www.worldethicsorganization.org), which is based in New York, USA. I have published internationally on the subject of ethics in astrophotography (**A Vision for Ethical Astrophotography** in *Skys Up Magazine*, July 2023, at <https://explorescientificusa.com/pages/skys-up>). The Celestial Visions *Statement of Values* is provided in Attachment 3.

I highly value advanced education and I hold three degrees, Bachelor of Environmental Science (Murdoch University), Master of Science (Environmental Science) (Murdoch University) and Doctorate of Philosophy (Curtin University). My skills and activities include astrophotography and research. I've developed and managed over 40 astrophotography exhibitions, including the creation of the **Astrofest Astrophotography Exhibition** (Western Australia), which I curated 2009 - 2019. I've written and produced three books including **Visions of the Cosmos, Landscape Astrophotography from Western Australia** (2023), **The Universe Yours to Discover** (2015) and **The Universe Yours to Discover Volume 2** (2019). I featured in the documentary film, **The Borderless Sky, the Aboriginal Sky of Australia** and provided location support for the documentary **Fireball, Visitors from Darker Worlds**. I am a member of the international astrophotography network **The World at Night** (www.twanight.org). My PhD thesis **Cosmos, Culture and Landscape** (2014) was supervised by Professor Steven Tingay, deputy director of ICRAR.ORG, and I am a Doctorate Graduate of Curtin University.

My astrophotography experience is complimented by more than 15 years of **commercial environmental science consulting, government and non-government** organisational experience in **natural resource management, sustainability and environmental science**. My government experience includes sustainability, in the context of strategic planning, and I provided executive support for a **council sustainability committee**. I coordinated the development of a **certified quality system (ISO9000 series)** for a commercial environmental science consulting firm, and via my role as **Strategic Regional Natural Resource Management Facilitator** (SRNRMF), I led the development of an organisation-wide policy and procedure manual, for the **Swan Catchment Council**, Western Australia, which supported the **regional NRM strategy** and the strategic investment of approximately \$1.9 million dollars into environmental and NRM initiatives. I have participated in, and presented at, national and international conferences, and my publication record includes numerous consulting reports, refereed papers, articles, books, many public presentations, and various media engagements.

10. Case Study

10.1 The Astrofest Astrophotography Exhibition

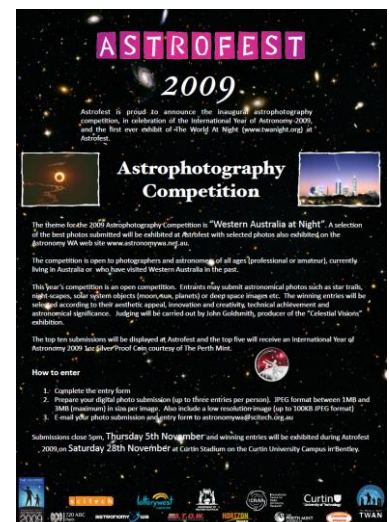
Having already developed substantial astrophotography exhibitions (including the Millenium Celestial Visions exhibition presented at Central Park Tower, Perth WA, in late 1999), Dr John Goldsmith proposed the inclusion of astrophotography in the newly developed Astrofest astronomy festival (Western Australia). “Astrofest” was purportedly a community based astronomy festival, involving many (@20) astronomy organisations in Western Australia. The Astrofest astrophotography exhibition was developed by Dr Goldsmith (www.celestialvisions.com.au) to feature, celebrate and showcase superb astronomical imaging by Western Australian astrophotographers and astro-imagers. The early phase of the exhibition was judged by Dr David Malin, Prof Peter Quinn, and Prof Andreas Wicenec. Award categories were established, to recognise outstanding efforts and achievements within the exhibition, including (1) Best Astrophoto (2) Best Timelapse Video, and (3) People’s Choice award.

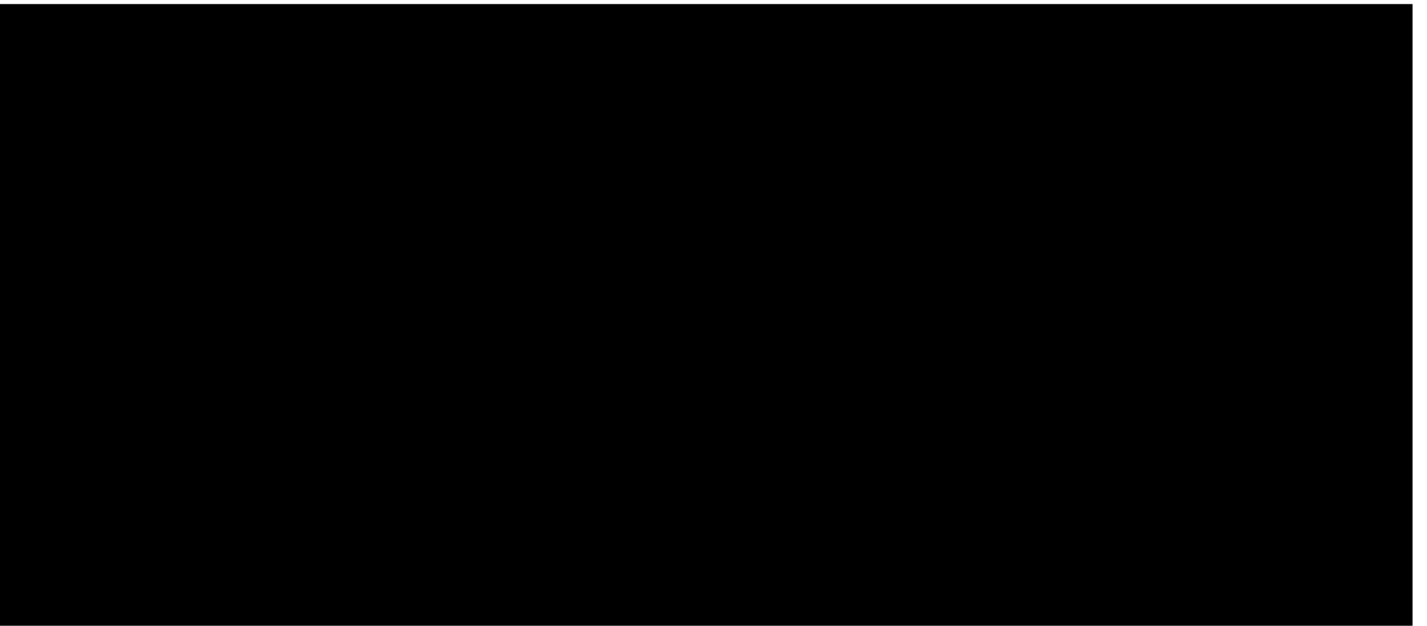
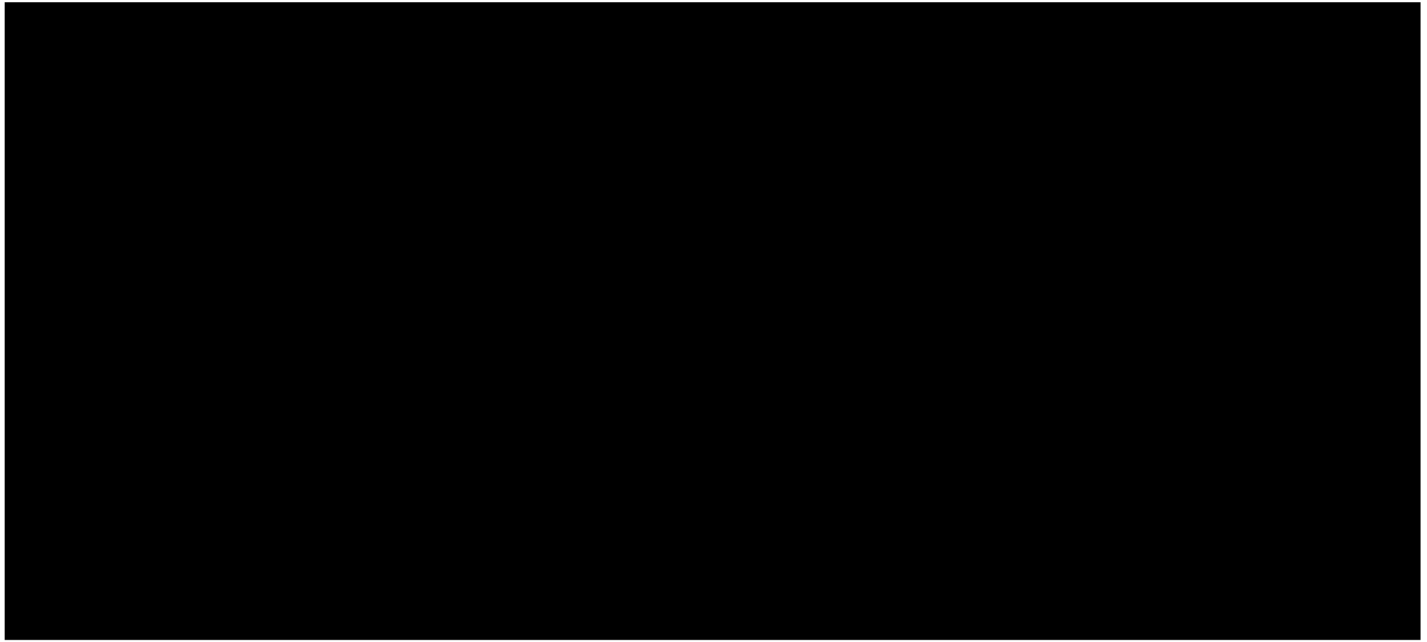
Regarding information sources: Information contained in this submission, and case study, is sourced from publicly available documents and formally released Freedom of Information documents. The FOI released documents have been redacted, via the FOI process, and personal information such as email addresses and phone numbers have been removed (redacted). The FOI documents are public documents and have been “released to the world”, as referred to in Attachment 4, from the Office of Information Commission (Western Australia).

This case study demonstrates real-world issues with cultural initiatives (in this case, an astrophotography exhibition), and it is these real-world issues that the National Cultural Policy should be mindful of. The issues, which can affect any cultural project in Australia, are wide-ranging and include copyright infringement, contract breaches, failure to honour written commitments, mismanagement, lack of adequate oversight, systemic issues within universities, related organisations and government agencies, misinformation or false information in award applications, deficient complaints processes, unjust exclusion of persons, denial of due process and other serious management issues.

The First Exhibition in 2009

Under the management of John Goldsmith/www.celestialvisions.com.au, the 2009 Astrofest festival featured not one, but three astrophotography exhibitions. They included the “Starlight” exhibition, the “Celestial Visions” exhibition and the Astrofest Astrophotography competition. These exhibitions effectively merged in subsequent years to become known as the Astrofest Astrophotography Exhibition.





The first ten years of the Astrofest Astrophotography Exhibition, at a glance.**Supporters**

International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research
Lotterywest
Curtin University
Alleycat Merchandise
WPM Group
Camera Electronic
SHOOT Photography Workshops
Pendoley Environmental
Batavia Coast Maritime Heritage Association

Judges

Dr. David Malin
Prof. Peter Quinn
Prof. Andreas Wicenec
Mr Patrick Baker (2018 - 2019)

Curator (2009 - 2019)

Dr. John Goldsmith / www.celestialvisions.com.au

Awards

Best Astrophoto
Best Astro-landscape (from 2019)
Best New Talent
Best Timelapse Video
People's Choice Award
Houtman 400+ Southern Cross Award (2019)

Related commemorations

International Year of Astronomy (2009)
International Year of Light (2015)

During 2009 – 2019 under the curatorial leadership of Dr John Goldsmith, the exhibition developed an excellent reputation, a promotion of excellence and a high standard of exhibited work, and an outstanding track record of acknowledgment of all photographers. During the first ten years of the exhibition, protection of copyright interests, consistent compliance to the exhibition terms and conditions, and correct acknowledgement of featured photographers, took place at all times by the curator, and these are major factors as to why the exhibition developed a strong and respected reputation, and was so strongly supported by the Western Australian community.

Examples of the annual exhibition catalogues follow:

1474944

2011 ASTROFEST Astrophotography Exhibition

Welcome to the Astrofest 2011 Astrophotography exhibition.

This year's exhibition showcases the exceptional talent and achievements of Western Australian astro-photographers. The 2011 exhibit presents a diverse range of images, from popular and well-known deep space images, to the lesser known and more challenging deep space objects, to extreme wide angle views of the night sky.

The astro-photographers featured in the exhibition use a range of equipment and techniques to achieve these remarkable images. Some use sophisticated telescope equipment and techniques, such as multi-spectral imaging and processing designed to reveal hidden or faint detail, others use simpler approaches such as a camera on a tripod. We also see examples of the same deep space object being photographed by different astro-photographers. This reveals the effect of different equipment and techniques on the final image.

The exhibition also features new and innovative imaging techniques, such as the 3D view of deep space objects - see if you can spot the 3D effect! Digital 'star trail' techniques are also featured. Exhibition photographs have been selected to illustrate the diversity of Western Australia's astrophotography, and to showcase technical achievement and quality, innovative techniques, aesthetic appeal & astronomical content. The inspirational images achieved by the contributors are a credit to the Western Australian astrophotography community.

ASTROFEST 2012 ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION



WELCOME TO THE ASTROFEST 2011 ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION

This year's exhibition showcases the exceptional talent and achievements of Western Australian astro-photographers. The 2012 exhibit presents a diverse range of images, from popular and well-known images, to the lesser known and more challenging deep space objects, to extreme wide angle views of the night sky.

The astro-photographers featured in the exhibition use a range of equipment and techniques to achieve these remarkable images. Some use sophisticated telescope equipment and image processing designed to reveal hidden or faint detail. Other photographers use tripod based cameras.

Astrophotographers selected for the exhibition have been grouped according to common themes: Sun and Moon, Astronomical Landscapes, Astronomical Panoramas, Star Trails and Multiple Exposures, Comet, Lovers, and Deep Space.

More than 60 astrophotographers have been selected for exhibition, showing work from 14 talented Western Australian astrophotographers.

Exhibition photographs have been selected to illustrate the diversity of Western Australia's astrophotography, and to showcase technical achievement and quality, innovative techniques, aesthetic appeal & astronomical content. The inspirational images achieved by the contributors are a credit to the Western Australian astrophotography community.

The Astrofest 2012 Astrophotography Exhibition was made possible by the Western Australian Department of Communities.

We hope you enjoy the exhibition as much as we've enjoyed putting it together.

PUBLIC ASTROFEST 2013 ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION



WELCOME TO THE ASTROFEST 2013 ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION

The 2013 Astrofest astrophotography exhibition, presented at Western Australia's biggest annual astronomy festival, is a celebration of superb, diverse and recent astronomical photography. Presented at Curtin University on the 16th of February 2013, and now in its fourth year, the 2013 astrophotography exhibition has attracted the largest number of entrants to date. This year's astrophotography and timelapse videos are presented in a digital and print exhibition, and have been selected from twenty five astrophotographers. The exhibition also includes a showing of the World At Night digital exhibition, which brings an international perspective to astronomical photography.

This year features a wide range of astrophotography, such as star trails, night-scapes, the Sun and Moon, and deep space images. The technical mastery demonstrated by many of the exhibited entries is testament to the talent and capabilities of the exhibited astrophotographers. We also see a strong theme of night landscape images, often visually creative as well as new and young astrophotographers entering the field, with considerable success. Virtually all of the images are by Western Australian residents or visitors.

Two major astronomical events that took place in 2012 are featured prominently in the 2013 exhibition, the Total Solar Eclipse (14 November 2012), which was visible in Queensland and the Northern Territory, and the Transit of Venus (6 June 2012). These events have inspired West Australian astrophotographers to travel to capture these remarkable photos.

The 2013 exhibition is made possible by the collaboration and support of the International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research, Celestial Visions and The World at Night. The exhibition reveals the awesome beauty of the Universe we live in, and provides inspirational images that evoke wonder in the mysteries and beauty of the night sky. If you enjoy the exhibition as much as we've enjoyed putting it together.

John Goldsmith
Astrofest Astrophotography Curator

Cover Photo: Translucent and Comet McNaught on the left of Orion. Andrew Lockwood

ASTROFEST 2014 ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION



WELCOME TO THE ASTROFEST 2014 ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION

The 2014 Astrofest Astrophotography Exhibition, presented at Western Australia's biggest annual astronomy festival, is a celebration of Western Australian astrophotographers and astro-imagers. Our 2014 exhibition represents a milestone event, being our 10th year of exhibiting astrophotography at Astrofest. This year, we welcome our three eminent judges, Dr David Main, as well as Professor Peter Quinn and Professor Andrew Wevers from the International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research (ICRAR). Our judges have each provided expert and critical appraisal, selection and judging for all entries into the astrophotography exhibition. Three awards recognise outstanding efforts and achievements, including the Best Astrophotography, Best Timelapse Video, and the People's Choice Award, which is determined on the night of Astrofest.

The 2014 exhibition showcases the superb accomplishments of WA astro-imagers. Telescope based imaging combined with the power of sophisticated image processing reveals stunning deep space colour images of galaxies and nebulae in extraordinary detail. We also see the very strong popularity of digital camera as used for timelapse, star trail and night-time landscape images, at a myriad of locations throughout Western Australia and beyond. Notable astronomical events feature prominently in the exhibition, including the annular solar eclipse of 10 May 2012, the Southern Lights (Aurora Australis), Comet Pan STARRS, an occultation of Jupiter by the moon and a variety of other fascinating astronomical events.

Thanks to due to the exhibition entrants, the judges, our generous printing sponsor, WPM Group, ICRAR, our press sponsors Camera Electronic and Short Photography Workshops and our associates, The World At Night and Celestial Visions. Enjoy the exhibition!

John Goldsmith
Astrofest Astrophotography Curator

Cover Photo: Translucent and Comet McNaught on the left of Orion. Andrew Lockwood

ASTROFEST 2015 ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION



WELCOME TO THE ASTROFEST 2015 ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION

The 2015 Astrofest astrophotography exhibition, now in its sixth year, features at Western Australia's biggest astronomy festival. Presented during the International Year of Light 2015, the exhibition celebrates and showcases superb astronomical imaging by Western Australian astrophotographers and astro-imagers. This year, we welcome the return of our three eminent judges, Dr David Main, Prof Peter Quinn, and Prof Andrew Wevers, who have each provided expert and critical appraisal, selection and judging. Three awards recognise outstanding efforts and achievements within the exhibition, including the Best Astrophotography, Best Timelapse Video, and the People's Choice Award, which is determined on the night of Astrofest. The Best Astrophotography Award has been generously sponsored by Camera Electronic and Short Photography Workshops and their support is greatly appreciated.

The 2015 exhibition promotes the accomplishments of Western Australian astro-imagers. We see the very strong popularity of digital camera based used to record superb astronomical landscape images at a myriad of locations throughout Western Australia and beyond. Telescope based imaging, combined with the power of sophisticated image processing, reveals stunning colour images of deep space objects in extraordinary detail. Thanks go to all of the entrants to the exhibition, the judges, our sponsors, Lennyway, WPM Group, Camera Electronic, Short Photography Workshops, and the International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research (ICRAR), as well as our associates, The World At Night and Celestial Visions. Enjoy the exhibition!

Dr John Goldsmith
Astrofest Astrophotography Curator

Cover Photo: Comet C/2013 UC1 (Lyngby) in the Pleiades. Andrew Lockwood

ASTROFEST 2016 ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION



WELCOME TO THE ASTROFEST 2016 ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION

The 2016 Astrofest astrophotography exhibition is presented at Western Australia's biggest annual astronomy festival. The exhibition celebrates and showcases Western Australian astrophotographers and astro-imagers. With its beginning in 2009 and now in its seventh year, the exhibition has also featured at the Mount Magnet Astronomy Festival (since 2012) and at the Western Australian Museum (Bendigo) in 2015. About 20,000 visitors have enjoyed the exhibition to date.

The 2016 exhibition showcases the superb accomplishments of twenty talented Western Australian astro-imagers. We see the very strong popularity of digital camera used to record superb astronomical landscape images at a myriad of locations throughout Western Australia and beyond. Superb images of deep space objects are shown in extraordinary detail, using telescope based imaging combined with the power of sophisticated image processing.

Our three eminent judges, Dr David Main (Bendigo), Prof. Peter Quinn (ICRAR), and Prof. Andrew Wevers (ICRAR), have each provided expert and critical appraisal, selection and judging. For the 2016 exhibition, we awarded the Best Astrophotography (sponsored by Camera Electronic), Best Timelapse Video, and the Best New Talent Award (sponsored by Pendlebury Environmental). Voting on the night of Astrofest determines the People's Choice Award.

Thanks go to all of the entrants to the exhibition, the judges, our sponsors, Camera Electronic, the International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research (ICRAR), Lennyway, Pendlebury Environmental, Short Photography Workshops, and our associates, The World At Night and Celestial Visions.

Dr John Goldsmith
Astrofest Astrophotography Curator

Cover Photo: The top edge of the Magellanic Cloud. Andrew Lockwood

ASTROFEST 2017 ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION



WELCOME TO THE ASTROFEST 2017 ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION

The 2017 Astrofest astrophotography exhibition celebrates and showcases Western Australian astrophotographers and astro-imagers. With its beginnings in 2009 and now in its eighth year, the exhibition is presented at Astrofest, Western Australia's biggest annual astronomy festival, and then at various regional events throughout the year, including the Western Australian Museum (Bendigo) since 2015, and the Mount Magnet Astro-fest, since 2012. More than 20,000 visitors have enjoyed the exhibition to date.

The 2017 exhibition showcases the superb accomplishments of twenty three talented Western Australian astro-imagers. This year's entries include superb deep space images shown in extraordinary detail and colour, using telescope based imaging combined with the power of sophisticated image processing. Deep space and planetary images are complemented by superb astronomical landscape images which record the cosmos above a myriad of locations throughout Western Australia.

Our three eminent judges, Dr David Main (Bendigo), Prof. Peter Quinn (ICRAR), and Prof. Andrew Wevers (ICRAR), have each provided expert and critical appraisal, selection and judging. For the 2017 exhibition, the judges have awarded the Best Astrophotography (sponsored by Camera Electronic), Best Timelapse and the Best New Talent Award (sponsored by Pendlebury Environmental). Voting on the night of Astrofest determines the People's Choice Award.

Thanks go to all of the entrants to the exhibition, the judges, our sponsors, Camera Electronic, the International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research (ICRAR), Lennyway, Pendlebury Environmental, Short Photography Workshops, and our associates, The World At Night and Celestial Visions.

Dr John Goldsmith
Astrofest Astrophotography Curator

ASTROFEST 2018 ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION



WELCOME TO THE ASTROFEST 2018 ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION

The 2018 Astrofest astrophotography exhibition celebrates and showcases Western Australian astrophotographers and astro-imagers. With its beginning in 2009 and now in its ninth year, the exhibition is presented at Astrofest, Western Australia's biggest annual astronomy festival, and then at various regional events throughout the year, including the Western Australian Museum (Bendigo) since 2015, and the Mount Magnet Astro-fest, since 2012. More than 25,000 visitors have enjoyed the exhibition to date.

The 2018 exhibition showcases the superb accomplishments of talented Western Australian astrophotographers and astro-imagers. With its beginning in 2009 and now in its ninth year, the exhibition is presented at Astrofest, Western Australia's biggest annual astronomy festival, and then at various regional events throughout the year, including the Western Australian Museum (Bendigo) since 2015, and the Mount Magnet Astro-fest, since 2012. More than 25,000 visitors have enjoyed the exhibition to date, with 20 exhibitions throughout Western Australia since 2009.

Our three eminent judges, Prof. Peter Quinn (ICRAR), Prof. Andrew Wevers (ICRAR), and Mr Patrick Baker have each provided expert and critical appraisal, selection and judging. For the 2018 exhibition, the judges have awarded the Best Astrophotography (sponsored by Camera Electronic), Best Timelapse and the Best New Talent Award (sponsored by Pendlebury Environmental). Voting on the night of Astrofest determines the People's Choice Award. A record number of entrants entered their images in 2018. Thanks go to all of the entrants to the exhibition, the judges, our sponsors, Curtin University, the International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research (ICRAR), Camera Electronic, Short Photography Workshops, Pendlebury Environmental and our associates, The World At Night and Celestial Visions.

The Universe is yours to discover, enjoy the exhibition!

Dr John Goldsmith
Astrofest Astrophotography Curator

Note: A selection of exhibited work is now presented as exhibition prints, and others presented in digital format. Cover Photo: The Great Gas Galaxy by Andrew Lockwood.

ASTROFEST '19 ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION



WELCOME TO THE
ASTROFEST 2019
ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY
EXHIBITION

The 2019 Astrofest Astrophotography Exhibition celebrates and showcases Western Australian astrophotographers and astro-imagers. With its beginning in 2009 and now in its tenth year, the exhibition is presented at Astrofest, Western Australia's biggest annual astronomy festival, and then at various regional events throughout the year, including the Western Australian Museum (Bendigo) since 2015, and the Mount Magnet Astro-fest, since 2012. More than 25,000 visitors have enjoyed the exhibition to date, with 20 exhibitions throughout Western Australia since 2009.

This year's entries include superb deep space images shown in extraordinary detail and colour, using telescope based imaging combined with the power of sophisticated image processing. Deep space and planetary images are complemented by astronomical landscape images which record the cosmos above a myriad of locations throughout Western Australia since 2009.

Our eminent judges, Dr David Main, Prof. Peter Quinn (ICRAR), Prof. Andrew Wevers (ICRAR), and Mr Patrick Baker have each provided expert and critical appraisal, selection and judging. For the 2019 exhibition, the judges have awarded the Best Astrophotography (sponsored by Camera Electronic), Best Timelapse Video, and the Best New Talent Award (sponsored by Pendlebury Environmental). Voting on the night of Astrofest determines the People's Choice Award. A record number of entrants entered their images in 2019. Thanks go to everyone that entered! Thanks also to the judges, and our sponsors, Curtin University, the International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research (ICRAR), Camera Electronic, Short Photography Workshops, Pendlebury Environmental, and our associates, The World At Night and Celestial Visions. The Universe is yours to discover, enjoy the exhibition!

Dr John Goldsmith
Astrofest Astrophotography Curator 2009 - 2019

Note: A selection of exhibited work is now presented as exhibition prints, and others presented in digital format. Cover Photo: The Great Gas Galaxy by Andrew Lockwood.

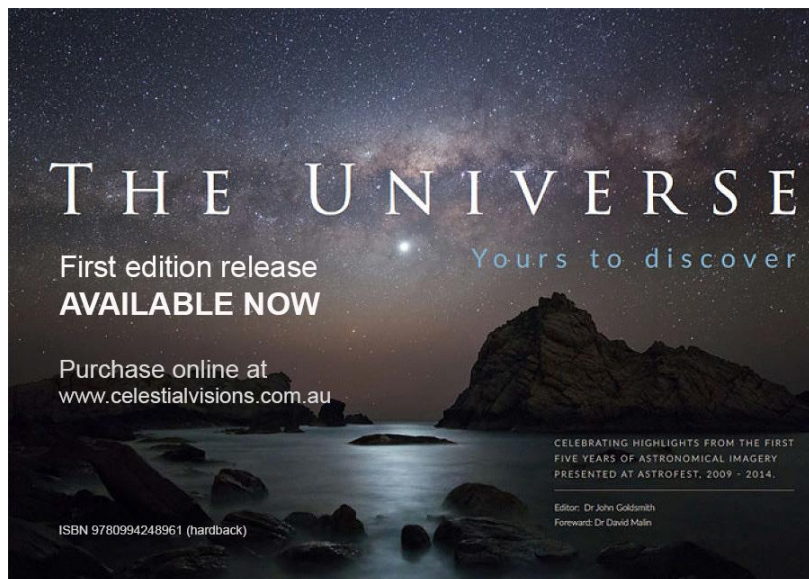
10.2 Major Milestones

Exhibition books to mark major milestones

Curator John Goldsmith produced two books to mark the occasion of the first five years, and ten years of the exhibition, to celebrate those major milestones. No government support or funding was provided to cover the production costs.

Five-year milestone

To mark the five-year milestone of the exhibition, Dr Goldsmith produced and authored the first book, ***“The Universe. Yours to discover”***, which presented the work of 29 photographers.



Ten-year milestone

The ten-year milestone was marked with a new book, ***“The Universe. Yours to discover, Volume 2”***, to mark the first 10 years of the exhibition, in 2019. Volume 2 featured 31 photographers.



10.3 Strategic business review and management issues

In 2015, a strategic business review was conducted in relation to the Astrofest astronomy festival.

Dr John Goldsmith put forward a 15-page submission regarding development opportunities in relation to the astrophotography exhibition that he established and curated from 2009. A range of development issues were identified, including the issue of insufficient budgets.

Two versions of the business review were released under the title:

“A Business Review of ASTROFEST Part One”
(2015) by Inside Lane.

When the first version of the business review was issued, barely a few lines of content were included in relation to the exhibition, and of that, a major false representation was presented:

“JG has created with support of Astronomy WA and Astrofest a Commemorative Book showcasing history of what has been done in past. The book was funded by ICRAR and is used by ICRAR for VIP’s and guests (100)”

This was the first major sign that something untoward was taking place, regarding management issues, by UWA and ICRAR.ORG, impacting the exhibition and the curator. The business plan was amended, upon request, to read as:

He has created a Commemorative Book showcasing history of what has been done in past with support of Astronomy WA and Astrofest. The book was funded by Celestial Visions and book sales. It is used by ICRAR for VIP’s and guests.

In 2018, other issues emerged, in relation to staff from the University of Western Australia, and those issues were raised (December 2018) by the curator, as the issues seriously and unjustly impacted the exhibition. It was the curator’s duty and obligation to raise those issues, and that is exactly what was done and fulfilled.

None of the issues raised were addressed by ICRAR.ORG / UWA.

In 2019, Astrofest was awarded the WA Premiers Science Prize, however, several claims in the application were factually wrong, misleading or omitted, and various persons involved in the delivery of both Astrofest, and the Astrophotography exhibition, between 2009 to 2019, were entirely excluded from the prize award. Instead of properly acknowledging the hard work of the many community members (many of whom were voluntary and unpaid), over a decade worth of work, only a select few benefitted from the award and prize. What should have been proudly shared and celebrated together as a genuine community collaboration, became an exclusive and self-serving promotional exercise, mainly for large institutions. Not surprisingly, that state of affairs was disappointing to many.

10.4 Management changes

In early 2019, the curator, Dr John Goldsmith, concluded his curator role, on the commitment by ICRAR.ORG that the astrophotography exhibition would be appropriately and effectively managed. Within weeks of the management change-over having taken place, the commitment by ICRAR.ORG was not fulfilled, as demonstrated by the major contractual breach and failure to acknowledge the 17 photographers, noted below. No transfer of ownership of the exhibition took place.

10.5 False claims of copyright

The Exhibition Loan Agreement between UWA and Curtin University (John Curtin Gallery), dated 13 March 2019, states:

<i>“LENDER</i>	<i>UWA</i>
<i>OWNER OF THE WORK</i>	<i>UWA</i>
<i>COPYRIGHT</i>	<i>UWA</i>
<i>FORM OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</i>	<i>NONE”</i>

It falsely states that UWA owns the copyright.

It falsely states “form of acknowledgment, none” when in fact, the exhibition terms and condition clearly defined obligations that exhibited works would always be acknowledged.

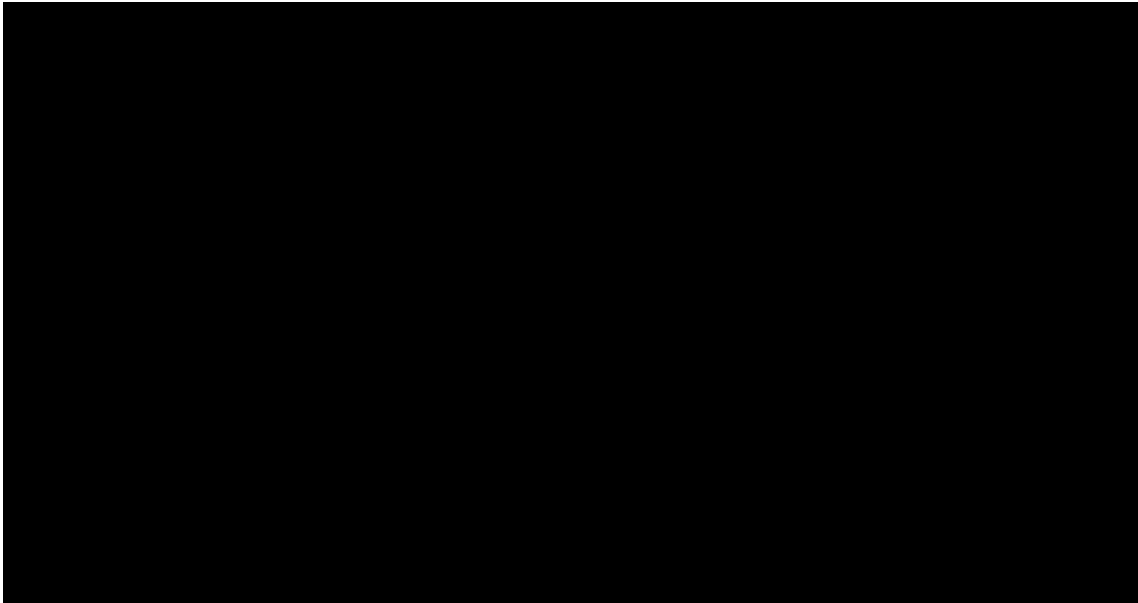
10.6 John Curtin Gallery (March 2019) fails to acknowledge astrophotographers.

In March 2019, John Curtin Gallery, Curtin University, presented what was purportedly a ten-year retrospective of the Astrofest Astrophotography Exhibition.

The exhibition featured 19 works by 17 photographers, but as demonstrated (refer to photo), no photographers were correctly acknowledged.

Nor was the ten-year role of the curator, Dr John Goldsmith, acknowledged by John Curtin Gallery, despite the exhibition being billed as the 10-year retrospective exhibition.

And further, no mention was made of the ten-year commemorative book “*The Universe. Yours to discover, Volume 2*” (2019) by Dr Goldsmith, that had just been released.



(March 2019) John Curtin Gallery did not correctly acknowledge 17 photographers, a serious contract breach.

John Curtin Gallery claimed that the issue of lack of correct acknowledgment had been “fixed rapidly”. Formal FOI findings in 2025 found no evidence to support claims that the issue was “fixed” by Curtin University.

10.7 Inappropriate comments

The then Director of John Curtin Gallery, Chris Malcolm, stated (26 November 2019):

“Yes he is like a spectre that will haunt us for all eternity... : (

And John Curtin Gallery Manager Jane King replied (26 November 2019):

“I knew this guy just wouldn’t let up”.

The emails were;

- concealed for five years.
- highly inappropriate, clearly breaching the Curtin University Code of Conduct.
- revealed via a successful Freedom of Information application.

That led directly to a formal complaint to the Curtin University Chancellor, who instructed Curtin University Legal Services to provide an apology:

“We apologise for any offence that may have been caused by the contents of their emails dated 26 November 2019”.

The (above) unsigned apology (12 Feb 2025) is invalid because it is anonymous.

10.8 Formal decision and recommendation ignored

Other issues were formally raised to the Astronomical Society of Australia Ethics and Conduct committee, in late 2019. The formal decision and recommendation, 22 June 2020, found in favour of Dr John Goldsmith, and provided highly critical comments regarding the conduct of certain UWA staff involved, and a non-UWA person.

Further, the formal recommendation, that mediation should take place between the parties concerned, was entirely ignored by the UWA staff and the non-UWA person.

10.9 John Curtin Gallery and the Carrolup Centre for Truth-telling

In 2025 and 2026, John Curtin Gallery, in conjunction with the Carrolup Centre for Truth-telling, made numerous public statements. Refer to ***Once Known*** (exhibition catalogue), (2025) and the essay by Chris Malcolm, page 5:

“By shining a light on the past through truth-telling, it is hoped that we can build a pathway to reconciliation thorough education and a reckoning with the past”.

The published comments are entirely inconsistent with the comments made by the same person, Chris Malcolm, as noted in section 10.7.

This case study highlights issues that any cultural endeavour in Australia, and any person or creative developer, could be faced with, in the future. There is a strong need for proper resolution of all outstanding issues, regarding the above issues. It is therefore of the utmost importance that the issues be resolved, lessons learnt, and accountability be taken by those responsible. Ethical values should be placed at the heart of such endeavours. For all publicly funded activities, good governance and effective management should be implemented at all times, and valid, due process should be absolutely insisted upon. When issues occur, which they inevitably will from time to time, the parties should act to promptly correct issues.

This concludes a very brief and preliminary case study, which considers a small sample of known issues regarding Astrofest, the Astrofest Astrophotography Exhibition (from 2019 onwards), UWA, ICRAR.ORG, John Curtin Gallery and Curtin University.

Attachment 1. Background information: National Cultural Policy

<https://www.arts.gov.au/what-we-do/new-national-cultural-policy>

(Extracts)

A new National Cultural Policy

The Australian Government is developing a new National Cultural Policy to shape the future direction of the creative and cultural sector.

Building on the success of [Revive: A place for every story, a story for every place](#), the new policy will address gaps, respond to emerging priorities, and provide a clear framework to support a vibrant and sustainable cultural future. It will set a clear direction for the coming years and guide how we support creativity, cultural expression and participation across the nation.

The policy will continue to be structured around the 5 pillars first set out in [Revive](#):

1. First Nations First
2. A Place for Every Story
3. Centrality of the Artist
4. Strong Cultural Infrastructure
5. Engaging the Audience

This is your chance to help create a vision that reflects Australia's diversity and responds to the challenges and opportunities ahead.

Public consultation

Read the [public consultation paper](#) and then [have your say by providing a submission](#). You can write a statement of up to 500 words, or upload your written submission in one of the following formats: .docx (Word), .pdf.

...

A new National Cultural Policy

We invite you to share your views to inform the development of Australia's new National Cultural Policy, ensuring it embodies the diversity and aspirations of our nation.

Why we want your input

Australia's cultural and creative sector is vital to our national identity, social cohesion and economy. As we develop the next National Cultural Policy, we want to ensure it reflects Australia's diversity and responds to the challenges and opportunities ahead. Your views will help us identify priorities, address emerging challenges and opportunities and build on the achievements of [Revive: a place for every story, a story for every place](#).

Attachment 2. Case Study who's who

Astrofest This is an annual astronomy festival held on one day per year, at Curtin University, Western Australia. There are many organisations that participate in Astrofest. It attracts approximately 4000 visitors. The event was awarded the Premiers Science Award / Chevron Science Engagement award in 2019, and \$5000 prize.

Astrofest Committee The Astrofest Committee undertook the practical management or organisation of the Astrofest Astronomy Festival. A non-incorporated organisation. It began as the IYA Astrofest Committee, and morphed into the Astrofest Committee. A non-incorporated committee that assists with the management decisions about Astrofest. The chairperson of the Astrofest Committee, is (was) Kirsten Gottschalk / Frederiksen, a past ICRAR.ORG / UWA employee.

Astronomy WA This is a non-incorporated network or committee, involving many (approximately 20) astronomy related organisation in Western Australia. They are independent, not controlled by ICRAR. The co-chairperson is Carol Redford. See <http://www.astronomywa.net.au/>

Astrofest Astrophotography Exhibition This is a specific photographic exhibition, curated by John Goldsmith, between 2009 and early 2019 (and continuing under a new curator since 2019). It is one of many initiatives that make up the broader Astrofest astronomy festival.

ICRAR is the International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research (ICRAR), an organisation involved in the Square Kilometre Array radio telescope project, located primarily in Western Australia (approx. \$2 billion plus project.....). ICRAR is formed as a Joint Venture between Curtin University and the University of Western Australia. Staff involved in the Astrofest Committee included Pete Wheeler, ICRAR Communications Outreach and Education Manager, who was the line-manager of Kirsten Gottschalk (later, the chairperson of the Astrofest Committee). Prof Peter Quinn, one of the directors of ICRAR, served as one of the judges of the Astrofest Astrophotography exhibition, for several years.

Dr John Goldsmith Curated the Astrofest Astrophotography photographic exhibition between 2009 and 2019. Conducted his PhD research at ICRAR. PhD award in 2014. John Goldsmith runs his own business, "Celestial Visions" (astrophotography, photography, exhibition etc).

Celestial Visions Is an astrophotography / photography / exhibition and publications business operated by Dr John Goldsmith.

- CSIRO** The Commonwealth Science and Industry Research Organisation, Australia's national science-based organisation.
- UWA** The University of Western Australia. One of two universities that form a joint venture to operate ICRAR.ORG.
- Curtin University** One of two universities that form a joint venture to operate ICRAR.ORG.
- John Curtin Gallery** A Western Australian gallery based at (and part of) Curtin University.
- Carrolup Centre for Truth-telling.** In conjunction with John Curtin Gallery, Curtin University, the Carrolup Centre for Truth-telling is focussed on Carrolup artworks.
- Scitech** A science education organisation located in West Perth, Western Australia.
- Perth Observatory** Australia's oldest scientific organisation, formed in 1896, Perth Observatory was located in Perth, near Kings park, and relocated decades later to Bickley, on the outskirts of the Perth Metropolitan Region.
- TWAN** The World at Night. An international network of advanced landscape astrophotographers, based on a core membership of less than 40 persons worldwide. Established and led by Babak Tafreshi.
- ASA** Astronomical Society of Australia. The Australian National professional society for astronomers. The ASA is an incorporated association (incorporated in ACT), has a code of conduct for members, and operates an Ethics and Conduct Committee, with formal complaint procedures.
- JTSI** Western Australian State Government Department: Previously known as Jobs Tourism Science and Innovation (JTSI).

Attachment 3. The Celestial Visions Statement of Values

Celestial Visions and its founder, Dr John Goldsmith, is proud to contribute towards the advancement of astrophotography and astrophotographers, by the promotion of images with integrity, the encouragement of good photographic practices, the recognition of the work of photographers, and the showcasing and celebration of photography. With this context, Celestial Visions has articulated the following statements of values.

- **We respect the efforts of astrophotographers, we value and promote astrophotography.**
- **We respect copyright and intellectual property** at all times, and as per agreements, correct attribution to recognise photographers.
- We **encourage collaborative working together** based on informed agreement, informed consent, within our communities from local to global scale.
- **Contractual agreements to be respected by all parties.**
- **Open, honest communication**, valuing facts, accuracy, truthfulness and just processes.
- We **respect the efforts and achievements of our past community members**, we honour our contemporary astrophotographers and we encourage the advancement of future astrophotographers.
- We **value the importance of the natural night sky**, free from excessive human interference and disturbance, including protection of dark sky environments / avoiding light pollution and excessive impact from satellites.
- We **value astro-images with integrity**, images that are realistic representations of the cosmos, free of misrepresentation or manipulation.
- We **value and recognise the role of creativity in astrophotography (or digital art)**, but that context is needed to avoid misrepresentation or misapplication.
- We are **mindful of the communities and the natural environment in which we operate**, with the aim of encouraging positive outcomes and avoiding negative impacts on communities or environments.
- We **support justice and remediation** where copyright, intellectual property or agreements are not respected by other parties.

Attachment 4. Information about FOI documents and “released to the world”.

Information referred to and quoted in this submission is based on extensive and compelling documentary evidence, including formally released Freedom of Information documents, released via ten successful formal FOI applications, between 2019 and 2025, which has resulted in the formal release of approximately 1700 pages of FOI documentation. The successful FOI applications were submitted to Curtin University, The University of Western Australia, CSIRO, Department (formerly known as) of Jobs, Tourism, Science, and Innovation (JTSI) and the (Western Australia) Public Sector Commission (PSC).

In August 2024, the Office of Information Commission (Western Australia) provided information regarding the status of formally released Freedom of Information documents, in the context of the Freedom of Information Act 1992 (WA) (FOI Act WA).

Information about the meaning of the commonly used term “released to the world” in relation to formally released FOI documents is provided below, noting that this information is not legal or professional advice.

The FOI Act WA is silent regarding any responsibilities of an access applicant that has been given access to documents under the FOI Act WA. However, in a number of decisions, the Information Commissioner has commented that disclosure of the documents under the FOI Act WA is considered to be disclosure to the world at large. In *Re Herbert and Ministry of Housing* [2000] WAICmr 41 at [21], the former Information Commissioner states:

“An applicant seeking access to a document under the FOI Act is not required to establish any antecedent reasons for seeking access and the right of access in the legislation is not affected either by any reasons the person gives for wishing to obtain access or by the agency's belief as to what the person's reasons might be (s.10(2)). Further, disclosure under the FOI Act is considered to be “disclosure to the world at large” because no restrictions or conditions can be attached to the disclosure of documents, or their further dissemination by a successful access applicant, other than those that apply under the general law.”

There are similar comments in *Re “U” and Department of Health* [2010] WAICmr 3 at [59] and in a number of other decisions of the Commissioner. *Re McGowan and Department of the Premier and Cabinet* [2015] WAICmr 3 – at [80 to 81] when considering the public interests in disclosure of the certain information, the Commissioner states:

... disclosure under the FOI Act is potentially disclosure to the world at large and there can be no limits imposed on publication of the documents or the use to which they are put by the complainant.

In *Re Paul and Department for Family and Children's Services* [1999] WAICmr 44 at [17], the Commissioner noted as follows:

As no conditions (other than those imposed by other laws) can be attached to the use – including the further dissemination of documents disclosed under the FOI Act, disclosure generally has to be considered as though it were disclosure to the world at large. Therefore, whether the complainant is entitled to be given access to an unedited copy of the disputed document depends on whether it is in the public interest to disclose, not merely to the complainant but to the world at large, personal information about third parties.