

## Dr Des Griffin AM testimony

Dr Des Griffin AM is a museum professional who has spent his life advocating for cultural diversity within the museum sector, especially in Australia and New Zealand.

Born in New Zealand, Des Griffin came to Australia as a senior research scientist at the Australian Museum, conducting research on marine science, particularly the biology of Crustacea. In this capacity he published some 60 research papers, and a number of genera and species were named in his honour by other scientists. In 1976 he was appointed Director of the Australian Museum. Not content with advocating for science, research, education and transforming the culture and museum practice within the Australian Museum, Des Griffin also led initiatives, reviews and policies to advance the rights and representation of Indigenous people in museums.

Des Griffin was the Chair of the Council of Australian Museum Associations Inc (CAMA) from 1988 through 1993 and the first President, until 1996, of Museums Australia. He was a key player in the establishment and development of what became the Heritage Collections Council, which in turn supported the development of Australian Museums On-Line (AMOL).

Des Griffin was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 1990 for his services to museums, and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of New South Wales in 2014. After his retirement as director of the Australian Museum in 1998 his advisory and leadership roles expanded. He was the George Fairfax Fellow in Arts & Entertainment Management at Deakin University, Melbourne in April 2002 and delivered the Kenneth Myer Lecture, *Entrepreneurship in the arts, entrepreneurship in museums*.

A deep thinker on museum management, leadership and governance, Des has published more than 30 papers since his retirement on these and other issues. He has been involved in reviews of science and museums, including their programming and management, and served on numerous committees and advisory bodies about science and museum policy in Australia. He was the co-editor with Leon Paroissien, of the e-book *Understanding museums: Australian museums and museology* published in 2011 by the National Museum of Australia, with essays spanning every facet of museum practice since the 1975 Piggott Report. More recently Des has written on climate change, industrial relations, economics and education in the online journals *New Matilda* and *On Line Opinion*. His book *Education reform: the unwinding of intelligence and creativity* was published January 2014 by Springer.