

Museums at Union Station Collection Protocol

Mission Statement and Organization Background

Mission Statement

To preserve and use Ogden's stories to inspire curiosity and inquiry and to help people make meaningful personal connections with history.

Organizational Background

The Museums at Union Station (MUS) celebrate and interpret Ogden City, educating the public about its distinctive character, especially its heritage of diversity, opportunity, and perpetual transformation. Founded in 1978 as a public city corporation, MUS connects the past, present, and future of Ogden City with its citizens. It serves the people of Ogden and visitors from around the world through exhibitions, school and public programs, publications, and collections.

In 1983, the Union Station Foundation was established with the mission to receive grants and donations to augment revenue for the Union Station and its museums. The Foundation operated alongside city-run development corporations in this capacity for many years. On July 1, 2004, the Union Station Foundation took over management and operations of the Union Station, its museums, and its collections. The city resumed management of the Union Station and the Museums at Union Station in 2018. Since 2018, the Museums at Union Station are housed under the Community and Economic Development (CED) Department of Ogden City.

Statement of Purpose

This document defines MUS's commitment to ethical conduct, best practices, and good stewardship of the public trust in fulfillment of the Museum's mission. By articulating the institution's expectations for the management of its collections, this policy document will serve as the framework to ensure the museum continues to uphold the public trust. The ultimate priority for this policy is the safe, ethical management of collections in coordination with the Museum's mission and the public good.

Review Policy

Maintaining an active and up-to-date Collection Policy is essential to good collection stewardship and the Museum's mission. Therefore, this policy will be reviewed and updated a minimum of every 5 years to reflect current organizational positions and evolving professional practices and standards. Any amendment to this policy will require approval from governing authorities.

Statement of Authority

MUS is owned by Ogden City and managed by the CED Department. Authority is designated to the Arts, Culture, and Events (ACE) Division under the CED Department. The ACE Division Manager delegates responsibility to museum staff members. Within the museum staff, the

Museum Curator reports to the Division Manager and has primary responsibility for ensuring the preservation, accessibility, and sustainable growth of the collection. The Museum Curator supervises and directs the efforts of the collections and research team.

Governing Bodies

Ogden City is governed administratively by a Mayor and legislatively by a City Council. MUS policies are proposed by the ACE Division Manager and approved by the CED Director. The ACE Division Manager is responsible for administering these policies.

Collections decisions are overseen by the Collections Committee, which is comprised of the CED Director, the ACE Division Manager, and the Museum Curator.

Collection Scope

The primary focus of the Museums at Union Station is to tell the history of Ogden through collections, exhibitions, publications, and programs. The Museums at Union Station, operating under the authority of Ogden City, collects materials documenting Ogden's history and heritage, with particular emphasis on the following:

Life in Ogden: broadly, the stories of the people who have lived in Ogden. This includes community-wide information about demographics, crime, neighborhoods, and local history, as well as individuals' experiences of domestic life, family, sports, recreation, religion, and education.

Work in Ogden: this includes the economic pressures and trends that our city has experienced throughout its history, including business development, labor, entrepreneurship, the dealings of local Ogden businesses, and scientific and technological development as created by Ogdenites.

Governance in Ogden: MUS collects the stories of Ogdenites leading in local, state, and national government; citizens advocating for action and change; choices made in Ogden urban planning; and education in Ogden.

Built Environment in Ogden: MUS documents the choices Ogdenites have made in their city, including the use of natural resources, the use of land, and the layout and use of streets and neighborhoods. This also includes the social and economic forces of our city, the physical landscape, and the local buildings and houses in Ogden.

Individuals and Ideas in Ogden: we collect materials documenting the art, literature, music, philosophy, scientific developments, and other noteworthy accomplishments produced by people living in or with significant ties to Ogden. Particularly, we document the ways that Ogdenites have reflected on and interpreted the social, political, physical, and economic landscapes of Ogden.

MUS is also designated as the Utah State Railroad Museum. As such, MUS seeks to document the history of railroads in the state of Utah. MUS collects materials produced by individuals, businesses, and organizations related to:

- Railroad history, planning, development, and impacts in the state of Utah
- Labor on the railroad, including leaders of the railroads, employees of railroad offices, and workers directly involved in the implementation of railroad activities, labor movements, and infrastructure. We are responsible to seek to document underrepresented groups in the railroad stories, including the stories of immigrants, women, and ethnic minorities.
- The culture and lifestyle of railroad workers, their families, and the community. This includes celebrating, documenting, and reflecting on the work, businesses, and lifestyle of railroading, including through model railroad materials created in or reflecting on the state of Utah; commemorative materials and celebrations; and original photographs and recordings by community members documenting local railroading.

The MUS collection focuses on collecting materials produced in or relating to the Ogden City geographic bounds as the limits have been defined throughout the city's history. In accordance with the MUS's obligations as the Utah State Railroad Museum, collections documenting the history of railroads should be created in, reflecting on, or pertaining to the state of Utah.

MUS focuses primarily on the historical time frame from the year 1800 to the present. MUS does not collect archaeological materials from prehistoric indigenous groups that lived in or around the Ogden area, unless said archaeological material relates to the historical time frame defined here.

Collection Categories

In fulfillment of its mission, MUS holds accessioned material in the public trust and maintains these materials in perpetuity. Individual objects may be accessioned into or deaccessioned from the primary collection in service of MUS's mission, and as regulated by this policy and current ethical museum standards.

Accessioned: objects that are formally accepted into MUS's permanent collection as part of the public trust in perpetuity. This commits MUS to the proper storage, care, management, and documentation of the objects for the benefit of the public. Objects chosen for accession must be in line with the collection scope, enhance the existing collection, have a documented provenance, come to the museum with free and clear title, and be designated for the permanent collection. Accessioned material cannot be disposed of unless deaccessioned by the standards in this Collections Management Policy.

Non-accessioned: objects that are acquired by the Museum but are not selected for accession. These are not held in perpetuity as part of the public trust. Non-accessioned material acquisitions are approved by the Curator before acceptance. These materials should be stored securely but are not held to the same standard of care as accessioned material. Disposal of these items does not need to go through a formal deaccession process, but disposal will be approved by the Museum Curator. This category includes:

Institutional Archives: Documentation, including paper documents, tape, film, and digital formats, of the history and activities of the Museum. This may also include supplemental information, research, and scholarly activity pertaining to the accessioned collection. These materials will be regularly inventoried.

Education: Objects that are intended to be used for public programs, demonstration, experimentation, and exhibition on-site or off-site. These objects are expendable, and do not require formal approval for disposal. These materials will be regularly inventoried.

Library: Objects that include books, videos, or other supplemental reference information that provide information used for collections, interpretation, research, or scholarly activity. The library does not include books that are accessioned or have historical significance. These materials will be regularly inventoried.

Acquisitions, Accessions, and Registration Policy

The most important element of collections management is a carefully articulated and followed policy for acquisitions, accessions, and registrations. For purposes of this document, the following are defined:

Acquisition: the procurement of objects by the institution. Not every object that is acquired for the museums is accessioned (i.e., library and educational materials).

Accession: the process of transferring ownership of an acquisition to the Museum's permanent collection. Accessioned objects are held in the public trust and regulated by the Collections Management Policy. Accessioned objects are to be held by MUS in perpetuity.

Acquisition of Objects

The Museum may acquire an object in the following ways:

Adoption of an orphaned collection: if an object is of sufficient merit to consider for accession, legal counsel will be consulted to determine or claim legal ownership of an object.

Bequest: Bequests are considered in the same light as a proposed gift. The Museum is not obligated to accept every bequest that is made.

Conversion of an unclaimed or old loan: if an object is of sufficient merit to consider for accession, legal counsel will be consulted to determine or claim legal ownership of an object.

Exchange: an object may be exchanged with another museum or non-profit organization. A written agreement between the organizations must exist before transfer of objects occurs. All requirements of deaccession must be observed for the exchanged artifact, including approval by the CED Director, the ACE Division Manager, and the City's Chief Administrative Officer.

Gift or donation: objects may be donated to MUS upon acceptance from the Collections Committee. Gifts that are deferred to a later date need to be accepted with a written contract.

Purchase: objects may be purchased upon approval of the Collections Committee. Chosen objects will follow all requirements of accession, in addition to the current City Purchasing regulations. Objects will not be purchased from staff members of MUS or members of the Collection Committee.

All objects being acquired for consideration for accession will be thoroughly researched to ensure their authenticity. In the case of exchange or purchase of collection objects, the Museum Curator is responsible for proposing acquisition before the Collections Committee.

Requirements for Accession

For a material to be accessioned, the Museum Curator is required to prepare a Collection Impact Statement, which must include information about the means of acquisition, the space considerations, current and future costs of resources required, the current condition of the object, the potential use, the provenance, and relevance to the collection. The Collection Impact Statement will be presented to the Collections Committee prior to their approval for any accession.

For an object to be chosen for accession, it must also meet all the following requirements:

1. The object is relevant to and consistent with the mission of MUS and its collection scope as defined in the official Collections Management Policy.
2. The object comes to MUS with no restrictions, liens, encumbrances, or conditions for its donation, including title to the object and applicable copyright. No fractional interest may be retained by the donor after acquisition. Donations from living artists will be considered on a case-by-case basis with regards to rights for reproduction, in consultation with legal counsel.
3. MUS is able to provide for the storage, protection, and preservation of the objects in accordance with professionally accepted museum standards and without compromise to the protection of other objects already in the collection.
4. The object is in, or capable of being returned to, acceptable conditions and is safe for long-term preservation, unless the object's condition is inherent to its significance.
5. Objects are legally and ethically acquired from persons or organizations with full authority to donate or sell the object. The object is in compliance with all applicable city, state, and federal laws and regulations.
6. Objects are thoroughly researched to ensure their authenticity and are what they are purported to be at the time of accession.
7. The object is an original material. Derivative materials will be approved for accession only when the original materials are believed to no longer exist.
8. The object is not human remains or a sacred funerary object.
9. The object is intended to remain in the public trust for the foreseeable future.

Documentation of New Accessions

The Museum Curator is responsible for selecting items to propose for accession before the Collections Committee. The Collections Committee is composed of the Museum Curator, the ACE Division Manager, and the CED Director. The Collections Committee will then approve or deny the accession of an object. For objects anticipated to have an impact of more than \$5,000 on MUS in immediate costs, storage, or conservation treatments, the City's CAO will be required to approve the Collections Committee's decision.

The Museum Curator is responsible for the accession, registration, and cataloging of objects and maintaining their associated records, in accordance with applicable laws and ethical practices.

After an accession is approved, the Museum Curator will record all information required about the accession decision, including the date of accession, the method of acquisition, identifying information for the donor, the full description and condition report of the object, and its legal title documents. The curator will assign a unique accession number to the object upon its accession.

Doorstep Donations

Doorstep donations, or objects that are left at MUS without approval and without contact information or context, cannot be accepted into the collection without going through the above documented process. In such cases, the Museum will document all known information about the object and consult with legal counsel to establish ownership and right to make a decision to accession or dispose of such objects. In most cases, the lack of provenance will prohibit the acceptance of doorstep donations into the permanent collection.

Deaccession Policy

Deaccessioning is the formal removal of an object from the permanent collection, as the opposite of accessioning. Disposal is the act of physically removing and getting rid of an item that has been deaccessioned.

Deaccessioning is a controversial but important part of ethical collections management. Deaccession must be considered in the context of MUS's responsibilities, including its mission and public trust requirements, respect for the protection and preservation of cultural resources, and prevention of illegal or unethical trade. However, deaccessioning objects can also prevent the Museum for caring for collections outside the Museum's mission. When done properly, deaccessioning can be a tool to enhance the Museum collection. Deaccession must only occur to advance the Museum's mission.

As a public museum, the Museum conducts deaccessioning activities ethically and in good faith. Permanent records will be kept of the documentation for all deaccessioned objects, including the decision-making process, authorization, and process of disposal.

All deaccessions must follow the American Alliance of Museum's standards as outlined in the *Code of Ethics for Museums* and all applicable law.

Criteria for Deaccession

Accessioned objects may be deaccessioned only if the object meets one or more of the following criteria:

1. The object is not useful in carrying out MUS's mission or is outside the scope of collections as defined in the Collections Management Policy.
2. The object is redundant or is a duplicate of another object of better quality or stronger provenance currently owned or about to be acquired.
3. The object has been determined to be inauthentic, misidentified, or misattributed.
4. The object lacks sufficient historical significance, merit, or importance to be maintained in MUS's permanent collection.
5. MUS can no longer adequately care for the object in accordance to professionally accepted standards or the object poses a threat to other objects or staff.
6. The object's condition has deteriorated beyond reasonable repair.
7. MUS does not have free and clear legal title to the object and the object was therefore accessioned in error.
8. Object removal is mandated by local, state, or federal law, including the Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act, or by court order.

When a donor requests that an object is returned, the Museum Curator will determine the clear title and ownership of an object. If it is determined that MUS holds the object's title, MUS will not return ownership of the object unless it meets one or more of the deaccession criteria listed here and the deaccession of the object is deemed beneficial to MUS's mission.

Objects may also be deaccessioned if MUS has reasonable proof that an accession was made in error. This includes objects with title owned by someone other than MUS or objects that belong

to MUS but are not genuine historical artifacts. In all cases, the deaccession and disposal of objects found in collection will be approved by the ACE Division Manager, CED Director, and the City's CAO. Legal counsel will be consulted for objects with disputed title.

Requirements for Deaccession

For materials to be deaccessioned, the Museum Curator shall write a detailed report including a description of the material, its ownership status if MUS's title is in question, and the justification for deaccession. Deaccession requests must be approved by the ACE Division Manager, by the CED Director, and by the City's CAO.

The object must also meet all the following requirements:

1. It has been accessioned into MUS's permanent collection.
2. The object has been in the collection for a minimum of three years in accordance with the Tax Reform Act of 1984 and to avoid tax penalties placed upon the donor.
3. One or more criterion for deaccession has been met.
4. The object has been physically found.
5. Legal counsel has been consulted if the object has a restriction from deaccession imposed in the Museum's documentation.
6. Deaccession is approved by the Museum Curator, the ACE Division Manager, by the CED Director, and by the City's CAO.

Donors of materials to be deaccessioned are not required to be notified of the decision to deaccession. However, donors may be notified as a courtesy.

Deaccession of Objects Found in Collections

Objects found in collection (FIC) are objects that do not have documentation as to their ownership status or provenance but are physically found in MUS collection spaces. FICs can include unretrieved loans, objects not properly accessioned, or objects left for authentication but never retrieved. In general, MUS presumes ownership of FIC objects after a good-faith effort to locate any associated documentation for an object proving alternative ownership or provenance.

By definition, MUS cannot deaccession what is not accessioned with a clear and free title. However, MUS is authorized to consult with legal counsel as to the use of quit-claim deeds or abandoned property laws to claim title and dispose of FIC objects.

Surplus Policy

The surplus policy defines the appropriate methods of physical removal of objects from the collection, taking place only after the deaccession process and the legal removal of objects from the collection.

When making decisions about disposition, the ability for an object to remain in the public trust and remain accessible to the public will be prioritized by MUS staff. In all cases, the reason for the chosen disposition will be documented in MUS's permanent record.

MUS accepts the following as appropriate means of disposition for deaccessioned objects:

- Exchange of ownership to a dealer or non-profit organization.
- Transfer of ownership of an object to a dealer or non-profit institution.
- Keep as part of a non-accessioned collection category (i.e., educational collection, institutional records, or library)
- Repatriation of objects to the appropriate national government, tribal entity, or cultural group.
- Return of object to original donor under circumstances of courtesy, legal requirement, or right of first refusal.
- Return of a work of art to a living artist, as a gift, exchange, or sale.
- Sale at public auction of deaccessioned objects, as handled by a disinterested third party to avoid conflicts of interest.
- Destruction of a severely deteriorated object, a fake or forged object, or a hazardous material. Destruction will be witnessed by a disinterested third party.

MUS will not dispose of deaccessioned objects with these methods:

- Sale in MUS's gift shop.
- Sale, exchange, or transfer to city employees (including MUS volunteers), elected officials, or an agent or immediate family member of a city employee or elected official.
- Putting objects into the trash.

Before disposal of an object, all accession, registration, and catalog numbers are to be removed from the object unless transferred to another museum. All identification numbers will remain tied to the object in MUS's documentation and paperwork, so those numbers should never be reused on a different object.

MUS will inform prospective recipients of all known hazards associated with deaccessioned materials, including inherent hazards or hazards due to the care of the objects.

Use of Proceeds

The Museums at Union Station will always follow the current ethical standards established by the American Alliance of Museums and the American Association of State and local History.

The American Alliance of Museum's *Code of Ethics for Museums* (1993) states: "proceeds from the sale of nonliving collections are to be used consistent with the established standards of the museum's discipline, but in no event shall they be used for anything other than acquisition or direct care of collections."

The American Association of State and Local History has defined this statement for history museums in its *Statement of Professional Ethics* (2002): "collections shall not be deaccessioned or disposed of in order to provide financial support for institutional operations, facilities maintenance, or any reason other than the preservation or acquisitions of collections."

Funds from deaccessioning and surplus will be placed in a separate, identifiable account. Funds from this account are to be used only in the direct care of collections: to acquire an object that has relevance to MUS's mission, or to enhance the useful life or quality of the museum's existing

collections. This includes, but is not limited to, conservation treatments, storage equipment, or other strategic expenditures to help preserve the collections.

Use of funds for routine collections maintenance and care (rather than strategic improvement) will be carefully considered in light of the American Alliance of Museum and American Association of State and Local History ethics and standards, and requires approval by the ACE Division Manager and by the CED Director.

Under no circumstances will funds from deaccessioning and surplus be used to cover institutional budget shortfalls, routine maintenance of the institution, or staff salaries.

Artifact Loan Policy

Loan of objects from Museum collections is an important way that MUS can fulfill its mission. As in most museums, MUS lends artifacts in *outgoing loans* or borrows artifacts on *incoming loans* that are in fulfillment of its mission. A loan is defined here as a transaction in which one party transfers custody but not ownership of an object for a defined period of time.

Outgoing Artifact Loans

MUS loans out objects from its permanent collection and education collection to further its mission to educate and make objects accessible to the public. MUS does not loan objects that would involve MUS to take on a significant amount of risk or create a negative experience for current Museum guests. This includes items under active research, items in a fragile condition, items with cultural considerations, items with a high monetary value, objects currently on display at MUS, or objects held in the institutional archive or library collections.

When a group or institution desires to request an outgoing loan from MUS, they must submit the request in writing naming the purpose of the loan, the duration of the loan period, the contact information for two individuals from their organization or group, and the items requested to borrow. MUS loans objects from its permanent collection and educational collection only to peer institutions, non-profit organizations, or other groups or institutions that benefit the public good and the mission of MUS. MUS does not loan objects to private individuals or for-profit organizations. If an institution or organization has previously violated a loan agreement or has mistreated loaned artifacts, it is the prerogative of MUS to refuse to loan objects in the future. All loans must be approved by the Museum Curator and by the ACE Division Manager.

The receiving institution must have the ability to appropriately care for and secure the loaned objects. Insurance coverage will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis, but in no case will the insurance coverage be less than the typical coverage for the object provided by MUS. Before an object is loaned and after its return, an object condition report will be performed and documented in the permanent collection record.

All loan periods will be defined. No loan will be given on a “permanent” basis. Long-term loans will be subject to annual review and will be recalled if necessary. MUS is free to terminate a loan agreement at any time if it is deemed in the best interest of MUS.

All objects on loan will be credited to the Museums at Union Station Collection.

Outgoing Artifact Loan Criteria

Objects chosen to be on loan must meet all of the following requirements:

1. The loan helps MUS fulfill its mission, including but not limited to education, research, exhibition, reference, or publication uses.
2. MUS has clear right and title to the object.
3. The lendee can provide for the adequate storage and security of the object.
4. The length of the loan has been determined.

5. The lendee is a peer institution or non-profit organization, and two sets of contact information have been recorded.
6. An object condition report has been completed.
7. The loan has been approved by the Museum Curator and the ACE Division Manager.

Incoming Loans

MUS accepts incoming loans from other groups and private individuals in fulfillment of its mission. Accepted loans must help MUS to carry out its mission statement and museum mandate. MUS does not accept loans that would create a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest. This includes a loan with the intention of enhancing the value of an object or an organizational or personal interest in the sale of loaned objects (excluding when an object is explicitly loaned on a consignment agreement). The loan value of an object will be determined by the lender. Insurance is negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

During the course of a loan period, it is the lender's responsibility to notify MUS of any changes in ownership of a loaned object during the loan period. The loan will be returned to the designated address unless other arrangements are authorized by the loaning party. MUS is free to terminate a loan agreement at any time if it is deemed in the best interest of MUS.

For old or abandoned loans where the loan period has expired and the lender cannot be located, MUS will consult with legal counsel to determine the legal status of abandoned property. After a good faith effort to locate the lender, the loan may be converted into presumed ownership of the object.

Incoming Artifact Loan Criteria

Objects accepted on loan must meet all of the following requirements:

1. The loan helps MUS fulfill its mission, including but not limited to education, research, exhibition, reference, or publication uses.
2. The lender has clear right and title to the object and permission to lend the object.
3. MUS can provide for the adequate storage and security of the object.
4. The length of the loan has been determined.
5. Two sets of contact information for the loan have been recorded with the loan documentation paperwork. This includes the name of the individual handling the loan, the legal name of the organization (if applicable), telephone numbers, mailing addresses, and email addresses.
6. The loan has been approved by the Museum Curator.

Documentation, Records, and Inventories Policy

As part of its role in the care of collections, MUS maintains documentation for the context, condition, and use of its collections. Documentation is the evidence of the history, condition, use, location, and value of an object in the collection. It is key to the mission of the museum that documentation is properly recorded and managed. All documentation must be kept in a clear, permanent, and comprehensive format for the future use of museum staff. Collections documentation will be kept by the Museum Curator.

Record Type	Description	Retention Period
Acquisition Records	Records of the acquisition of objects, collections, and documents, including receipts and correspondence.	Permanent
Accession Records	Records for the accession of artifacts	Permanent
Catalogs	Records relating to collection catalogs.	Permanent
Conservation Files	Files relating to conservation projects.	Permanent
Deaccession Records	Records relating to objects deaccessioned.	Permanent
Donation History	Records regarding donated objects and their donors.	Permanent
Location Records	Records regarding the physical location of objects.	While in use +1 year, then transfer to Institutional Archives
Loaned Materials	Working files of contracts, correspondence, condition reports, etc. of materials loaned from outside sources.	While in use +1 year, then transfer to Institutional Archives
Loaned Out Materials	Working files of contracts, correspondence, condition reports, etc. of materials loaned to outside sources.	While in use +1 year, then transfer to Institutional Archives
Object Use Files	Reference files for curatorial use regarding objects in collection.	While in use, then transfer to Institutional Archives
Markings and Labeling	The unique identifying number assigned to each object will be attached to or marked on each object.	Permanent unless object is deaccessioned. Previously-assigned numbers will not be reassigned to a new object.

Physical records will be kept in the offices of the Museum Curator. Original records will never be taken off-site without the permission of the Museum Curator. Electronic collection records will be backed up regularly using current technology.

Objects in Custody Policy

FIC objects are objects that do not have documentation as to their ownership status or provenance, but are physically found in MUS's collection spaces. FICs can include, but are not limited to, unretrieved loans, objects not properly accessioned, or objects left for authentication but never retrieved. In general, MUS presumes ownership of an FIC object after a good-faith effort to locate any associated documentation for an object proving alternative ownership or provenance.

Collections Access Policy

In fulfillment of its mission to promote the preservation of and education about the history of Ogden and Utah railroading, MUS provides access to its collection while ensuring collections preservation.

The use of collections must support the mission of MUS, comply to ethical and legal standards, and protect the integrity of collections. Collections access can be granted for either educational use or commercial use. However, if commercial or private use prevents access to the collections for the public's education, access may be denied. For this reason, MUS prohibits the use of original artifacts in office spaces.

MUS may share information and allow collections access via the internet. Information will always be posted securely. Sensitive information, including donor records, images of sacred objects, and locations of archaeological sites, will not be shared online.

Research Access

The public can view collections on display during public hours. Researchers and interested members of the public can also make an appointment for individual collections access. MUS does not accept walk-in appointments. Depending on the demands to staff, a collection access fee may be charged. Collection access appointments will be supervised by a trained staff member, including all access by untrained staff, contractors, inspectors, or museum leadership. Level of access granted will be determined by the museum curator.

Object handling will only be done by individuals trained in object handling. Researchers may take their own photographs of collection materials for personal reference. Any published image must be approved by the curator and credit the Museums at Union Station Collection. A publication fee may be charged. Requests for destructive sampling must be submitted in writing and approved by the Museum Curator, the ACE Division Manager, and the CED Director. Criteria evaluated will include the level of impact on the artifact's future usefulness, whether alternative methods could yield the same information; the expected impact and reach of the research; and the qualifications of the researcher. A copy of all publications referencing the museum's collection will be provided by researchers to MUS free of charge.

Objects currently on display, objects used in active research, unprocessed artifacts, or fragile objects may be unavailable to researchers. Inquiries can be made to the Museum Curator. Donation and catalog information for an object will be available subject to open records laws with special care given to sensitive or private information.

Event Access

Special events held in proximity to collections are rare and evaluated by the Museum Curator based on risk to collections. Any event involving contact with or proximity to collections needs to be approved by the Museum Curator, with all events being supervised by at least 1 collections staff member at the event. Exhibit space is available for events with the following conditions: no food or drink in the exhibition area, a staff member's adequate supervision, and no secure access granted.

Appraisal Policy

In compliance with the Tax Reform Act of 1984, MUS prohibits any staff member of MUS, including volunteer staff, from making an appraisal shared with a donor or potential donor, arranging or paying for an appraisal for a donor or potential donor, or recommending an appraiser to any donor or potential donor. Internal appraisals made for the use of MUS will not be shared with donors.

Collections Care Policy

MUS is committed to following museum best practices in the care of collections. By delineating the expected standard of care in this policy, MUS strives to ensure continuous and consistent care to the collections to prevent agents of deterioration. The agents of deterioration are: physical trauma, theft and vandalism, dissociation of provenance, fire, water, pests, pollutants, light and radiation, incorrect temperature controls, or incorrect relative humidity. The Museum Curator is responsible for the proper oversight and delegation of all collections care.

Preservation Conservation

MUS will practice preventative conservation for all items in its permanent collection. This includes:

1. Preventing exposure of collections items to agents of deterioration
2. Minimizing the effects of agents of deterioration on the collection
3. Detecting and monitoring the agents of deterioration; and
4. Mitigating the effects of the agents of deterioration to minimize damage to the collection.

These strategies minimize damage to the collection, preventing the need to hire experienced conservators to implement remedial treatment of a collections object. As needed, conservation treatments may be authorized and approved by the Museum Curator and the ACE division manager. Conservation treatments will only be done by professional conservators.

Storage Environment and Environmental Monitoring

All storage environments will be monitored for light, temperature, and humidity by MUS staff. Lux levels should be between 50-100 lux. Temperature should range between 65-70 degrees. Humidity should be between 47-55%.

Regular full building inspections will be completed by the Operations Manager and the Maintenance Lead.

Integrated Pest Management

The Museum Curator will work with the Operations Manager to regularly update, implement, and enforce an Integrated Pest Management Policy according to best museum practices.

Collections Object Handling

Only trained individuals will handle collections objects. Because poor object handling is one of the most common causes of damage to an artifact, all objects (including those on loan) will be handled with the upmost care. The Museum Curator will be responsible for training museum staff and ensuring correct handling procedures.

Collections Inventories

MUS is accountable for knowing what it holds and where objects are housed. Thus, a full inventory will be done at least every ten years. Partial inventories or spot-check inventories may be done more frequently to maintain accurate recordkeeping and intellectual control.

Further Reading:

“AAM Code of Ethics for Museums.” American Alliance of Museums. American Alliance of Museums, accessed March 21, 2023. <https://www.aam-us.org/programs/ethics-standards-and-professional-practices/code-of-ethics-for-museums/>

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“Chicago Historical Society Collection Management Policy.” Chicago History Museum. Chicago Historical Society, accessed March 21, 2023. https://www.chicagohistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Collections-Management-Policy_-2015-09-18-final-revision.pdf

“Collections Management Policy.” American Alliance of Museums. American Alliance of Museums, accessed March 21, 2023. <https://www.aam-us.org/programs/ethics-standards-and-professional-practices/collections-management-policy/>.

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