



Collections Management Clinic

Tempe History Museum

September 21, 2022



Supported in part by a grant from the Registrars Committee-Western Region

Museum Governance

Public Trusts

Public trust is the principle that certain natural and cultural resources are preserved for public benefit. In essence, it means the public owns the collections, and they should be kept available so the public can study them, enjoy them, and learn from them.

Governed by state and federal law

Guided by professional standards (“best practices”)

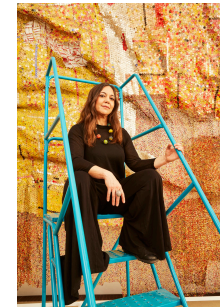


Museum is governed by the Board of Trustees (also called Directors)

Legally responsible for the proper management of the museum's (trust's) assets, which includes the collection.

Responsibility for the collections is generally delegated by the Board to the Director, who then delegates specific responsibilities to the staff

Board-approved collection management policies form the “agreement” between Board and staff on how that will be done

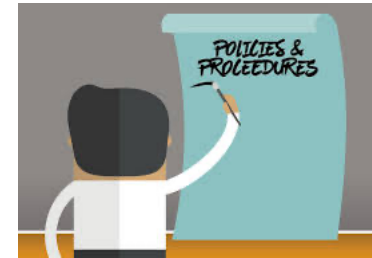


Collections Management

The goal of collections management is to make the collection usable

In order to facilitate collections use we need to know:

- what the collections are (documentation)
- where the collections are (inventory)
- how the collections may be used (policies and procedures)



Policies and Procedures

Policies

- define why a museum is in operation and how it goes about its business
- identifies the museum's professional standards for the care of its objects
- serves as a guide to the staff and as a source of information

Policies are internal documents

- include legal requirements
- may follow professional guidelines

In general policies tell us who is allowed to do what

Procedures tell us how policies will be carried out



POLICY	PROCEDURES	FORMS, ETC.
Museum Mission Statement		
Collecting Policy		
Accessions	Accessions	Deed of Gift Temporary Receipt IRS Form 8283 Accession File Accession Ledger Work Sheet Catalogue Ledger
	Cataloguing	Catalogue Card Photograph Database entry
Deaccessions	Deaccessions	Proposal External appraisal Approvals Receipt
Loans Out	Loans Out	Loan Agreement Loan Extension Form Facilities Report Routing Sheet Loan File Condition Report Photograph
Loans In	Loans In	Certificate of Insurance Customs forms
Destructive Analysis	Destructive Analysis	Proposal Approvals Agreement
Access to Collections and Documentation	Internal Users External Users	Agreement
Object Identification		
Appraisal/Valuation		
Temporary Deposit		
Photography		
Insurance		

Mission Statement and Collecting Policy

Mission Statement

Identifies the institutional goals

- what the museums does
- who the museum does it for (its “publics”)
- how the museum does it



Collecting Policy

What the museum collects

A clear collecting policy - that is followed - can prevent problems with

- unwanted donations
- need for future deaccessioning



Will discuss in greater detail in 2023 workshop

Accession Policy

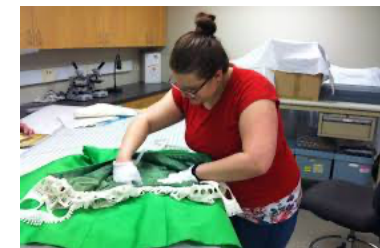
Who has authority to accept objects on behalf of the museum

How collections items come to the museum

Purchase, donation, exchange, bequest

Basis of decision to accept

- relevance of the object to the collection
- ability to care for the object
- intention for use



Types of collections

- Permanent (“The” collection)
- Research
- Education (Hands-on)
- Exhibition (“props”)



Policy can define different levels of care for each type of collection

Legal and Ethical Considerations

Legal restrictions on what can be accepted (commitment to follow law)

- Fish and Wildlife regulations
- Antiquities legislation
- NAGPRA (can chose not to accept)
- Hazardous materials (can chose not to accept)



Ethical restrictions on what can be accepted (what non-legislated standards will be followed)

- UNESCO Convention on Cultural Property
- Indigenous cultural material



Will be discussing this in more detail in 2023 workshop

Transfer of Title

- Legal requirement - offer, acceptance, transfer of property
 - Deed of Gift
- Restrictions on gifts
- Transfer of title does not include transfer of copyright

MITCHELL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN
KENDALL COLLEGE
2600 Central Park
Evanston IL 60201

DEED OF GIFT

The Donor(s), below named, agree to give, and the Trustees of Kendall College agree to accept with appreciation, the following item(s):

ACCESSION NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	DATE OF RECEIPT
------------------	-------------	-----------------

Subject to the following conditions:

1. The Donor(s) attest that he/she/they has/have legal title to the object(s) and may legally dispose of it/them.
2. The Donor(s) attest that the object(s) are not subject to any liens, charges or encumbrances.
3. The Donor(s) attest that the object(s) listed above will be received as an unrestricted gift, offered without any limiting conditions.
4. The Donor(s) hereby transfer all right, title, and interest in, and all rights and interests associated with, the object(s) listed above, including literary property rights and/or copyright.
5. The Donor(s) received no substantial goods or services from the Museum or Kendall College in consideration for this gift.

DONOR(S)

Signature(s) _____
Name(s) _____
Address _____
Date _____

MITCHELL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN
KENDALL COLLEGE

Signature _____
Name: _____
Title _____
Date _____

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Outgoing and Incoming Loans



Sharon Moore, MAA

Outgoing and Incoming Loans

- Policy

- Set of rules or guidelines
- Board approved



- Procedure

- Instructions
- More flexible, changeable without board involvement

Outgoing Loan Policy

- Requests in writing
 - Letterhead? Email?



Outgoing Loan Policy



- Which of your staff positions can authorize an outgoing loan?
 - Curator? Director? Committee?
 - Collection items leaving the building
 - More than one staff is aware

Outgoing Loan Policy

- Use/sign only your loan contract:
 - Don't want competing contracts with different terms
 - Owner/lender of objects controls contract terms



Outgoing Loan Policy

- What type of institutions loaned to:
 - Accredited?
 - Nonprofit?
 - Facility Report?
 - Similar collection?
 - Require particular staff positions?
Ex: Registrar, Collections Manager,
Collections Specialist



Outgoing Loan Policy



- Institution to Institution:
 - Preferable to lend to University Department or School rather than individual professor or grad student
 - Institution takes responsibility for insurance and care
 - What if researcher leaves the scene?

Outgoing Loan Policy

- Reasons to not lend to private individuals:
 - Not for the public good
 - No control over environment and security
 - No professional staff charged with care
 - Higher probability of damage



Outgoing Loan Policy



- Reasons to lend to individuals:
 - Artist repair of artwork
 - Individual contractor doing repair or modification. Ex: mount maker, framer, conservator
 - Make sure museum insurance will cover

Outgoing Loan Policy

- *Which staff on Borrower side must request a loan?
- Director? Curator?
- Prof? Dept. Chair? Dean?



Outgoing Loan Policy

- Define approved purposes of loan:
 - Ex: exhibition, education, publication, research
- Prevents improper purposes:
 - Office decoration
 - Destructive analysis without permission



Outgoing Loan Policy



- Renew annually, regardless of agreed term of loan:
 - Maintains communication at both museums through staff changes
 - Maintains oversight at both museums
 - Borrower acknowledges condition of object
 - Encourages both institutions to revisit purpose of loan

Outgoing Loan Policy

- Cert. of Insurance
- Photography
- Publication
- Filing and Records

Retention:

- File all correspondence, preferably hardcopy
- Retain files in perpetuity
- Part of your collection history



Outgoing Loan Procedures



- How much advance notice required for loan requests
- Review of Facilities Report
- Certificate of Insurance
- Use only Lender's loan contract
- Condition review
- Est. costs for Borrower (packing, shipping, conservation, loan fee?)
- Competing internal use of objects?
- Checklist handy

Outgoing Loan Contract



- Include:
 - Name/address/contact of Lender, Borrower
 - Staff contacts
 - Purpose of loan
 - Begin date and end date of loan
 - Provisions for loan modification (ex: extension, Sub-loans for travelling exhibits)

Outgoing Loan Contract

- Include:
 - Object #, description, condition, photo of each item
 - \$ value of each loan item, total value of loan



Outgoing Loan Contract

- Environmental requirements (Temp., RH, light-visible and UV)
- Type of packing, shipping
- Exhibit mounting
- Security, barriers
- Credit line



Incoming Loans



Incoming Loan Policy



- Should benefit your museum:
 - Exhibition
 - Publication
 - Education
 - Current, ongoing research

Incoming Loan Policy

- Which staff position can make request:
 - Curator? Director?
 - Museum takes responsibility, not individual staff



Incoming Loan Policy



- Insurance:
 - How is value determined?
 - Will your insur. policy cover lender's verbal value?

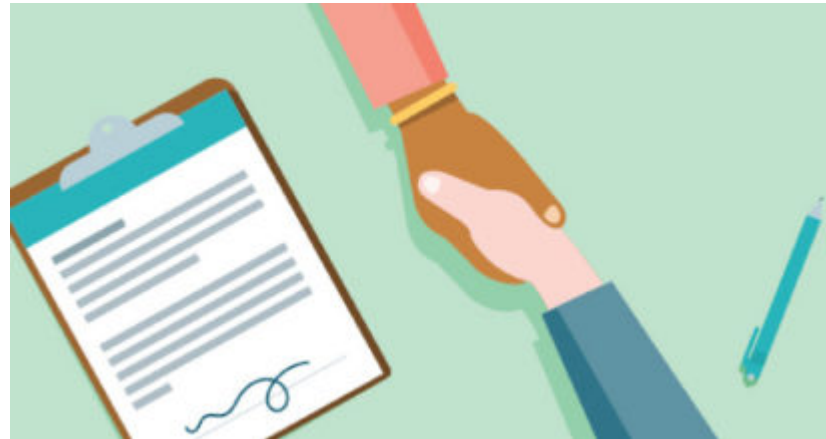
Incoming Loan Policy

- Filing and Records Retention:
 - File all correspondence, preferably hardcopy
 - File images of borrowed items, if practical
 - Retain files in perpetuity
 - Part of your institutional history
 - Can't predict what future staff will want to know
 - Protects against future claims, Ex: what was and was not borrowed and returned



Incoming Loan Policy

- Renew annually, regardless of overall length of loan
 - Esp. private lenders
 - Maintains contact with lender, because people move, die
 - Encourages both parties to revisit purpose of loan



Incoming Loan Contract



- Include:
 - Name/address/contact of Lender, Borrower
 - Purpose of loan
 - Begin date and end date
 - Provisions for loan modification (ex: extension)

Incoming Loan Contract

- Object descriptions, \$ values
- Total value of loan
- Condition of each item!!!
- Which party will cover insurance:
 - Does museum have adequate coverage?
 - Sometimes a rider is necessary



Incoming Loan Contract

- Where is loan returned?
 - Changes of ownership or lender address
 - Loan contract signer must authorize a different return address.
 - Who pays for additional packing/shipping costs?
 - If lender dies, what is required for heir to collect loan?



Should You Borrow?



- Responsibility for someone else's property
- Are policies and procedures in place?
- Is there a staff position responsible for tracking, renewal, care, packing, return?

"you have anxiety? but you're so confident!"



- Will your insurance policy cover loss or damage of borrowed property?
- Can you fulfill promise of loan contract?

Should You Borrow?



- If responsible staff person left the scene, would other staff know:
 - what to return,
 - when to return it, and
 - to whom to return it?

Incoming Loans: Short Term vs. Long Term

- Short Term:
 - Finite Period
 - For Exhibition, Research, Education, Publication
 - Serves the museum's interest



Incoming Loans: Short Term vs. Long Term Loans



- Long Term Loan:
 - No such thing as “permanent loan”
 - From an individual
 - Not for immediate benefit of museum
 - Primarily serve interest of lender
 - Sometimes called “Future Gift”

Long Term Incoming Loans

- Often not in your museum's best interest:
 - Use of Museum Storage for free
 - Drain on staff time
 - Museum responsible for renewal, care, insurance
 - Can be Recalled by Lender after Years of Museum Storage
 - Donation promises made can be broken
 - Upon Lender's Death, reverts to Heirs, not museum
 - Lenders/heirs later claim "you lost/damaged my item!"



Long Term Incoming Loans

- If you decide to accept:
 - Try to manage situation
 - Require board approval
 - Require annual donations
 - Require copy of will or trust where museum is named heir of all items under museum care



Reso



- Things Great and Small
 - John E. Simmons

- Museum Registration Methods
 - Multiple editions by various editors

Deaccessions



Deaccessioning is the removal of an object from the museum’s “permanent” collection

It is an internal process, not a legal one

Objects can be removed from “permanent” collection and still be property of museum (i.e., have a different use for education, display, research)

Decision to deaccession is separate from the determination of method of disposal

Will discuss in greater detail in October 19 Workshop

Access to Collections and Collections Documentation

Need to balance the care and safety of the collection and documentation against the right of the public to access information held by a public institution

- Arizona Public Records Law

Policy needs to be consistent

- not necessary to grant access immediately on demand
- can require advance notice, specific object requests
- request does not have priority over all other collections activities
- can limit due to condition



Public/Private/Restricted

Public Information - generally about the source of the object, including its cost (if purchased)

Private/Proprietary - generally created by museum staff: e.g., curatorial research, including valuations

Restricted - by law, policy or agreement with donor

Some records can be sealed or require special permission

Sensitive information (e.g., location of archaeological sites)

Culturally sensitive objects (identify reason and if there is a way to get permission)



Questions?

