

Board Chair: Douglas Tkach	Page: 1 of 1 Supersedes: February 2014, 2017, 2020 Board approval date: December 1, 2025 Review by 3 years: November 2028
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Preamble

A core activity of the Manitoba Museum (the Museum) is to collect and preserve a systematic and cumulative body of materials (the ‘collections’) that represent all aspects of Manitoba’s human, natural, and scientific heritage. This activity is consistent with the Museum’s mandate and mission as approved by the Board of Governors (cf. The Manitoba Museum Act, C.C.S.M. c. M270).

Purpose

The Museum’s collections are valued for their intrinsic historical, cultural, natural, and scientific significance. As material resources, they provide the basis for further research (both internal and external), education, and knowledge dissemination through exhibits, programs, publications, and other media.

Policy

The Museum will strive to achieve the highest professional standards to manage and maintain its collections in the functions of pre-acquisition, accessioning, documentation (cataloguing), care and handling, conservation, storage, loans, and deaccessioning. Decisions regarding the use, management, and care of the collections will be guided by principles of permanence, preservation, and sustainability. Collections development will be guided by institutional directives and departmental planning. Acquisitions, deaccessions, appraisals, and loans are reviewed and approved by the Museum’s Collections Management Committee.

The Museum will apply all applicable laws and professional codes of ethics, such as those endorsed by the Canadian Museums Association, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, the Canadian Association for Conservation of Cultural Property, and the International Council of Museums.

All staff who work with the Museum’s collections, under the leadership of the Director of Research, Collections & Exhibitions (RCE), are responsible for the implementation of, and compliance with, this policy. The Director of RCE will be responsible for developing collections procedures and internal guidelines detailing use of the Museum’s collections and collections database.

Definitions

Acquisition(s) – The procedure for obtaining possession of an object, as well as the object(s) so obtained, where legal title in ownership of the object(s) is transferred from an external party to the Museum.

Appraisal – An estimate of the fair market value of an object.

Artifact – An object showing human workmanship or modification; may include traditional or contemporary objects, images (photographs, drawings, charts, plans, maps, etc.), books, oral history recordings, or archival materials.

Assemblages – A group of objects comprised of multiple components created to simulate human, natural or scientific principles, causes and/or effects.

Belongings – The preferred terminology used by many First Nations, Inuit, and Metis communities to refer to their material culture (in place of using artifact).

Cataloguing – The process of recording essential information about an object and its particular identifying characteristics so that it can be categorized within a designated classification system and interpreted in its appropriate context.

Collections – The collection embraces multiple types, of objects – artifacts, specimens, library and archival materials, interactive assemblages, replicas and models, and supporting documentation and images. These items are either permanent assets of the Museum, or entrusted to it as temporary steward, through agreements with other institutions, organizations, and individuals.

Collections Database – A searchable, automated repository used for storing digitized textual and visual records that pertain to the Museum’s collection.

Collections Development – Any activity resulting in an addition to (acquisition) or deletion from (disposition) the collections, for refinement of the collection based on established criteria.

Collections Management – Activities or decisions that balance preservation and use of the collections as an important scientific and educational resource.

Conservation – All actions aimed at safeguarding of the Museum’s collections for the future. The purpose of conservation is to study, record, retain, and restore the culturally significant qualities of the collections as embodied in their physical and chemical natures, with the least possible intervention.

Deaccessioning – The procedure for releasing the Museum’s title in ownership of an accessioned object, prior to enacting the disposal procedure.

Disposal – The procedure informing the permanent, physical removal of an object(s) from the Museum’s collections.

Documentation – The body of records assembled by museum staff and others to confirm, validate, and secure the identity, provenance, significance, and condition of an object.

Fair Market Value – The price at which property changes hands between a willing buyer and a willing seller, acting independently, neither being under any compulsion to buy or sell, and both having reasonable knowledge of the relevant facts.

Loan – A term that describes objects temporarily released from the Museum’s collections to another organization, or temporarily borrowed by the Museum from an individual or organization.

Pre-acquisition(s) – The temporary custody of an object, where a reasonable proposition of legal transfer in title or legal stewardship agreement, is under negotiation between the owner and the Museum.

Specimen – A unique and/or representative sample of a natural object, such as a rock, mineral, fossil, animal, plant or biological organism.