

Exhibits Policies and Procedures

Contents

Title: Exhibits Policies - Overview	2
Title: Exhibit Planning and Development.....	4
Title: Exhibiting Sacred, Ceremonial and Sensitive Objects	5
Title: Exhibit Text and Labels	6
Title: Props and Reproductions.....	7
Title: Exhibit Maintenance.....	8
Title: Use of Exhibit Galleries.....	9
Title: Travelling, Temporary and Community Exhibits	10
Title: Off-Site Exhibits	11
Title: Exhibit Safety	12
Title: Exhibit Maintenance Procedures.....	13
Title: Travelling and Community Exhibits Submissions	16
Appendix 1 – Notes on Exhibit Reporting	18

Policies and Procedures and Forms referenced in this document:

- Curatorial Committee - Terms of Reference
- Editorial Style Guide (2018)
- Corporate Image Policy (2012)
- Collections Development Policies (2019)
- Research Policy (under development)
- Community Exhibit Application Form (2019)
- Community Exhibit Agreement Form (2019)

Title: Exhibits Policies - Overview	Category: EP - 1 (Page 1 of 2)
Type: Exhibits	Approved: December 23, 2019 Revised:
Review Frequency: Every three years	When: 2 nd Quarter, 2022

Purpose of the Exhibits Policies

The Exhibits Policies provide standards to ensure that the WDM achieves its public-trust responsibilities through a comprehensive program of permanent, temporary and traveling exhibits that are effective communication vehicles for engaging people with Saskatchewan’s diverse histories. These policies provide a management framework for the production of new exhibits, renewal of permanent exhibits, exhibit maintenance, borrowing of traveling exhibits and exhibit-based outreach activities. These policies do not cover virtual exhibitions, blogs or social media marketing.

Goal:

All exhibits will be consistent with the WDM’s mission and meet the needs and interest of audiences served by the WDM. Themes are guided by the Vision and Mission of the WDM in concert with the Ends Policy. These policies inform the Curatorial Committee.

- The diversity of Saskatchewan’s people, places, and stories are reflected in WDM exhibits.
- Understanding of Saskatchewan’s diverse histories is increased by making the WDM exhibits and the stories they tell physically and intellectually accessible.
- Exhibit integrity, artifact security and visitor safety are maintained.

Applicability

Exhibits management affects all areas of WDM operations and as such, the Exhibits Policies apply to all staff, volunteers and anyone using or accessing exhibit spaces.

Scope of Exhibits at the WDM

Exhibits at the Western Development Museum play a central role in achieving institutional core objectives. Exhibits are located within the WDM’s four museum locations in permanent and temporary exhibit galleries, outside on Museum grounds and at offsite locations.

Inclusivity and Reconciliation

The WDM values inclusivity and will prioritize exhibiting stories and objects that have hereto been underrepresented in the collection as outlined in the *Collections Development Plan (under development)*. The WDM is committed to aligning its exhibits to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

Ethics and Standards

The WDM is guided by established international, national and provincial professional ethics and standards, including the most up-to-date version of the ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums, Canadian Museums Association Ethic’s Guidelines and the Museums Association of Saskatchewan Standards for Saskatchewan Museums.

Revision and Approval

The Exhibits Policies will be reviewed every three years from their effective dates. This process will be initiated by the Director of Exhibits and will require the input of all Exhibits Department staff. Other staff and stakeholders may be consulted. The Policies may be revised before that time to make necessary updates and ensure that they reflect current standards, ethics and legislation. All changes must be approved by the CEO.

Acknowledgements

The following publications and documents were referenced in the creation of these policies:

- MAS Standards for Saskatchewan Museums 2016
- MAS Responsible Exhibition & Interpretation of Indigenous Artifacts
- Caring for sacred and culturally sensitive objects. CCI. <https://www.canada.ca/en/conservation-institute/services/preventive-conservation/guidelines-collections/caring-sacred-culturally-sensitive-objects.html#a6>
- Museum of Ontario Archeology Exhibit Policy

Title: Exhibit Planning and Development	Category: EP-2 (Page 1 of 1)
Type: Exhibits	Approved: December 23, 2019 Revised:
Review Frequency: Every three years	When: 2 nd Quarter, 2022

Approvals: The Curatorial Committee approves exhibit development projects as per the *Curatorial Committee - Terms of Reference*.

The Curatorial Committee undertakes exhibit planning in consultation with stakeholders. Exhibit planning and development responds to curatorial plans developed from this process.

Content: Exhibit themes and objectives will be developed from stated goals in the Mission, Strategic Plan and Ends Policy of the WDM.

Procedures: Exhibit development follows a defined exhibit development procedure. (*Exhibit Development Procedure* under development)

The WDM will strive to develop exhibits in cooperation with members of the community through partnerships, advisory groups and formal institutional relationships.

Compliance with local and international legislation will be maintained (Ex. Privacy, Copyright, Cultural Property)

Accessibility: Intellectual and physical accessibility will be prioritized for all new and re-development projects.

Title: Exhibiting Sacred, Ceremonial and Sensitive Objects	Category: EP-3 (Page 1 of 1)
Type: Exhibits	Approved: December 23, 2019 Revised:
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Consultation: Sacred, ceremonial and sensitive objects will not be displayed without consultation and permission from recognized representatives of the relevant Indigenous Nation, faith group, organization or community.

Objects or photographs that are deemed not acceptable for public display will not be exhibited.

Objects will be handled, stored and displayed in ways that respect the protocols adhered to by the source community.

Access: In alignment with the UNDRIP, Indigenous communities will have private access to any ceremonial object on exhibit. The WDM is committed to accommodating Indigenous communities' repatriation requests as outlined by the *Collections Management Policies*.

Title: Exhibit Text and Labels	Category: EP-4 (Page 1 of 1)
Type: Exhibits	Approved: December 23, 2019 Revised:
Review Frequency: Every three years	When: 2 nd Quarter, 2022

Approvals: All new or revised artifact labels, interpretive panels, exhibit titles and any other exhibit related text must be approved by the Curator or designate before final production. Sign and label placement must be approved by the Director of Exhibits or designate.

Language: Exhibit text and labels will adhere to the *WDM Editorial Style Guide*.

Indigenous objects will be referred to using the originating community's own language, relevant concepts and worldviews.

Language and terminology used by the WDM in relation to culturally specific collections must be deemed acceptable by the relevant contemporary cultural community.

Design: Exhibit signage will be produced and installed using professional techniques.

Typography and design elements that contribute to stereotypes, inequity, prejudice and discrimination will not be used.

Research: Research used in interpretive panels must conform to the standards outlined by the *Research Policy* (under development).

Title: Props and Reproductions	Category: EP-5 (Page 1 of 1)
Type: Exhibits	Approved: December 23, 2019 Revised:
Review Frequency: Every three years	When: 2 nd Quarter, 2022

Approval: Props used for exhibits must be approved by the Director of Exhibits. Props used for programming, outreach or any other purpose must be approved by the appropriate department manager and follow their policies and procedures.

Acquisition: Props may be acquired through purchase or donation. Items originating through collections acquisition or deaccessioning may be considered for use as props under circumstances outlined by the *Collections Management Policies*.

Identification: Props may be used for exhibits provided they are marked as such. Marking in a hidden location is acceptable.

Reproductions of artifacts in the WDM collection or other museum collections may be used for exhibits. They must be marked with the word "Reproduction," the year created, and the accession number of the original artifact.

Tracking: Props and reproductions on exhibit will be recorded and filed with the exhibit documentation housed at Corporate Office.

Disposal: Props and reproductions may be disposed of through sale, donation or destruction. Disposal of props and reproductions will be carried out in a professional and sensitive manner.

Any funds generated by prop or reproduction disposal will be used to support the WDM's collections.

Title: Exhibit Maintenance	Category: EP-6 (Page 1 of 1)
Type: Exhibits	Approved: December 23, 2019 Revised:
Review Frequency: Every three years	When: 2 nd Quarter, 2022

Procedures: An exhibit maintenance program will be adhered to and monitored. See *Exhibit Maintenance Procedures*.

Artifacts: Artifacts on exhibit must receive proper handling, cleaning and care.

Inspection: Exhibits will be inspected regularly for safety, integrity and maintenance issues.

Damaged Artifacts: Damaged artifacts will be documented and reported to the Collections Manager as per the *Collections Management Policies*.

Safety: Visitor and staff safety is prioritized. Relevant legislation is adhered to. (OHS Regulations, Employment Act, Firearms Act, and others.)

Title: Use of Exhibit Galleries	Category: EP-7 (Page 1 of 1)
Type: Exhibits	Approved: December 23, 2019 Revised:
Review Frequency: Every three years	When: 2 nd Quarter, 2022

Approvals: Permanent exhibit galleries may be used for programming, rental and other uses as approved by the Museum Manager when the artifacts and exhibits will not be modified to accommodate the activity.

When available, travelling exhibit galleries may be used for non exhibit purposes with prior approval of the Director of Exhibits.

Exhibit Integrity: Exhibit elements (signage, plinths, stanchions and other furnishings), artifacts and exhibit lighting may not be modified or rearranged to accommodate non exhibit uses without prior approval of the Director of Exhibits.

Food Services: Food and drink are not permitted in the exhibit galleries with the exception of breastfeeding, baby bottles, sealed water bottles and medically necessary supplies.

Exceptions for special events can be made provided a risk assessment has been completed and relevant modifications to housekeeping and integrated pest management are made.

Museum Managers are responsible for the risk assessment and implementing appropriate housekeeping and integrated pest management requirements.

Seasonal: Seasonal changes and decorations added to galleries or exhibit areas must be approved by the Director of Exhibits prior to the changes being made.

Title: Travelling, Temporary and Community Exhibits	Category: EP-8 (Page 1 of 1)
Type: Exhibits	Approved: December 23, 2019 Revised:
Review Frequency: Every three years	When: 2 nd Quarter, 2022

Approvals: Incoming travelling, temporary and community exhibits must be approved by the Curatorial Committee.

Procedures: Selection process for incoming traveling and community exhibits will be clearly defined and accessible. (*Travelling and Community Exhibit Submission Procedure*)

Exhibitions originating from and/or owned by other institutions/private individuals require a signed loan agreement to be installed on WDM property or transported by a WDM staff member.

Outgoing travelling exhibits (i.e. created by the WDM for presentation at outside organizations) follows the policies for *Exhibit Planning and Development* and *Off-Site Exhibitions*.

Title: Off-Site Exhibits	Category: EP-9 (Page 1 of 1)
Type: Exhibits	Approved: December 23, 2019 Revised:
Review Frequency: Every three years	When: 2 nd Quarter, 2022

Approvals: Off-site exhibits including artifact loans are approved by the Curatorial Committee and administered by the Curatorial Department. More details are available in the *Collections Management Policies*.

Off-site exhibits with the primary objective being outreach will conform to the *Corporate Image Policy* and be approved by the Director of Marketing or Director of Museum Education as appropriate.

Outgoing travelling exhibits are not required to conform to the *Corporate Image Policy* however they must present the Museum in a professional manner.

Provisions: Exhibitions owned by the WDM may be presented in off-site/outreach locations provided that:

- (a) The exhibit is consistent with the stated goals of the WDM as per the mission, strategic plan and ends policy.
- (b) The exhibit is secure.
- (c) Light, temperature and humidity levels are acceptable.
- (d) Sensitive, irreplaceable or artifacts of high monetary value are not included in the exhibit unless approval has been granted by the Collections Manager.

Title: Exhibit Safety	Category: EP-10 (Page 1 of 1)
Type: Exhibits	Approved: December 23, 2019 Revised:
Review Frequency: Every three years	When: 2 nd Quarter, 2022

Legislation: All WDM staff, volunteers and contractors are required to adhere to legislated safety standards as defined by the Saskatchewan Employment Act, OHS Regulations and other relevant federal or provincial legislation.

All harmful or dangerous artifacts on display must be secured and conform to relevant regulations or standards.

Firearms: Firearms must be handled, stored and exhibited in compliance with the Firearms Act.

Construction: Exhibit installations will be considered construction sites. Galleries under construction must be posted and closed to the public.

All staff, volunteers, media, guests or others entering a construction area must comply to all relevant WDM safety policies, legislation and regulations in order to enter the site.

Title: Exhibit Maintenance Procedures	Category: Procedure
Type: Exhibits	Approved: December 23, 2019 Revised: Feb 10, 2022
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Exhibits Daily Inspection

- Complete and sign the form **Exhibits Daily Inspection** in **SiteDocs**.
- The daily inspection will be completed by the Exhibits Maintenance Technician. If there is no Exhibits Maintenance Technician at the location or on days when the Technician is unavailable, the daily inspection must be assigned to another staff member by the Museum Manager.
- The daily inspection is a visual inspection of all exhibits, with particular attention to visitor safety, artifact security, A/V and mechanical systems, and custodial issues.
- Safety concerns must be reported to the Museum Manager and the Director of Exhibits immediately. This includes hazards to the public, staff and artifact security. Use SiteDocs to flag the appropriate manager and follow-up if necessary.
- The Exhibits Maintenance Technician or designate has the authority to close a gallery or exhibit area immediately when a hazard is identified.
- Please see **Appendix 1** for examples

Exhibits Biweekly Inspection Report

- Complete and sign the **Exhibits Biweekly Inspection Report** in **SiteDocs**.
- A thorough exhibit inspection must be completed every two weeks by the Exhibits Maintenance Technician or designate.
- Add all new items to the maintenance report for your location. It is important to do this every inspection, so the Exhibits Department has a record of the work you have completed.
<https://westerndevelopmentmuseum.sharepoint.com/sites/Exhibits2>
- Please see **Appendix 1** for examples

Annual Review

- The annual review will be undertaken by the Exhibits Department in collaboration with the Exhibits Maintenance Technician and/or the Museum Manager.
- This is a general with each museum, and not specifically a review to point out deficiencies.

Scheduled Maintenance

- Each Museum is responsible for creating a scheduled maintenance calendar which includes cleaning of exhibit areas, computers and A/V housings, furnishings and artifacts.
- This calendar should also include other routine maintenance tasks such as treatment of wooden floors, checking car tires and drip pans, etc.
- Staff must be trained by Collections staff before they are authorized to handle artifacts.

Reporting

- The Exhibits Maintenance Technician or designate is responsible for reporting to the Exhibits department by way of the online maintenance report (Sharepoint).
- All staff, volunteers and visitors can report exhibit maintenance issues or concerns.
- Staff should direct concerns to the Exhibits maintenance Technician or the Museum Manager. In the event of a dispute the concern should be brought to the Director of Exhibits. All staff are expected to pass on visitor comments they have received.
- Volunteers should report exhibit concerns and visitor comments to their Volunteer Coordinator.
- If an artifact is found to be damaged or is damaged by a maintenance procedure, the Exhibits Maintenance Technician or designate will fill out a condition report and submit it to the Curatorial Department with a copy to Exhibits.

Role of the Museum

- Most exhibit maintenance work will be dealt with at the branch level. In most cases, the Exhibit Maintenance Technician or local maintenance staff will carry out the work required including troubleshooting, research, purchasing, painting, carpentry, lighting, etc.
- The Exhibit Maintenance Technician or designate is responsible for tracking and supervising all exhibit related work performed by other branch staff and volunteers.
- The Exhibit Maintenance Technician or designate is the liaison between the Museum and outside contractors such as electricians.

Role of the Exhibits Department

- The Exhibits Department is available for consultation on exhibit maintenance issues.
- Exhibits undertakes most signage work and some exhibit maintenance projects. In these cases, the maintenance reports will show the items assigned to "Exhibits."
- In some cases, assistance will be required from the Curatorial Committee, Curatorial Department (Research, Collections, Conservation) or other departments. Exhibits will liaise with the appropriate staff members to complete the projects.

- Daily activities of the Branch will be considered when scheduling work. CO staff will notify both the Museum Manager and the Exhibit Maintenance Technician before on-site work is performed.
- The Exhibits Department maintains a central lighting inventory as well as some replacement audio visual equipment. Email to request replacement lights and A/V equipment.

Title: Travelling and Community Exhibits Submissions	Category: Procedure
Type: Exhibits	Approved: December 23, 2019
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Overview

The WDM develops permanent, temporary and travelling exhibits for all four WDM locations. Additionally, the WDM borrows temporary exhibits from other museums and community organizations.

Exhibit topics are developed in accordance with goals outlined in the Museum’s Mission, Strategic Plan and Ends Statements. The WDM maintains a Curatorial Committee responsible for the evaluation and selection of all exhibit proposals, partnership requests and community exhibit requests. WDM staff, other museums and members of the public may bring forward ideas for exhibits to the Curatorial Committee.

Travelling Exhibit Submissions

Travelling Exhibit offers from other museums, exhibit production companies and community organizations will be reviewed by the Curatorial Committee. The following information is required for the selection process:

- Summary of exhibit themes
- Square footage requirements
- Costs (loan fees, predicted transportation costs, etc.)
- Security and facility requirements
- Labour and technical support required for set-up, maintenance and tear-down

The Director of Exhibits collects Travelling and Community exhibit proposals for presentation to the committee.

Partnership Proposals

The WDM strives to develop exhibits in cooperation with members of the community through partnerships, advisory groups and formal institutional relationships. Partnership requests most often come into the museum through the Curatorial, Programming or Exhibits Departments. While the WDM values partnerships the Museum has a limited capacity for exhibit development, and we regret that we cannot pursue all proposals.

Partnership requests and exhibit ideas will be reviewed by the Curatorial Committee. (See *Curatorial Committee Terms of Reference*)

Community Exhibit Program

The WDM Saskatoon offers showcase space to community groups and individuals wishing to display their archives or personal collections. When available, travelling exhibit galleries at any WDM may also be considered for use by community groups. Design, set-up and take down are the responsibility of the exhibitor.

To apply for this program please fill out the *Community Exhibits Application*. Applications are received by the Director of Exhibits or designate as identified on the form.

Evaluation

Submissions and requests are evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Fit with WDM Vision, Mission, Strategic Plan and Ends Statement as well as organizational values.
- Connection to Saskatchewan communities and communities served by the exhibit topics.
- Logistical considerations and capacity (square footage, technical requirements, staff capacity).
- Budget and sponsorship opportunities.

Schedule

Exhibit planning and development is a long-term process. The WDM plans its travelling and temporary exhibits well in advance aiming to have the exhibition schedule in place two to three years ahead of time. Most community partnerships will take three to five years from proposal stage to installation in the Museum.

We receive numerous exhibit proposals and enquiries throughout the year. The Curatorial Committee normally meets monthly, however due to the volume of submissions, responses may take up to three months.

Appendix 1 – Notes on Exhibit Reporting

Daily Check (SiteDocs)

- This is a walk around to make sure the galleries are in acceptable condition to be open to the public and to note anything that needs to be addressed during the day. You are on the lookout for obvious safety hazards, artifact security issues, burnt out light bulbs, garbage, etc.
- Things noted here do not necessarily end up in the maintenance report (SharePoint), but they could. Changing a light bulb would end up here but doesn't necessarily have to be put into the maintenance report. If you are noting that same light fixture over and over, then it would be a good idea to put it in the maintenance report.

Bi-weekly Inspection Report (SiteDocs)

- This is a more critical inspection than the daily check. You are looking for all the things you would note on a daily plus not so obvious issues: loose boards, splinter risk, artifacts out of place, paint chips, peeling signage and anything you think could use further attention.
- The Biweekly inspection is more critical in that you should be seeing potential issues that may arise. Maybe something doesn't look quite right, but it does not constitute an appearance issue, or safety hazard, but it could if left alone. An example might be a rug that is starting to fray at the seams. It may not be a safety issue right now, but if left alone it will become one in the near future.

Maintenance Report (SharePoint)

- Items end up here to indicate potential projects, issues, or improvements. These help to identify how much time is spent fixing and painting walls; how many times safety issues pop up; or even when an artifact needs to be deep cleaned.
- Example 1
 - o You might note on a daily that a trunk was open on your rounds. Could be a unique situation and that's as far as you need to report it.
 - o Bi-weekly – you note that that same trunk has been noticed open 6 times in the last month. Now it is something to note and could create a project to prevent this from happening.
- Example 2
 - o You note on a daily that there is a loose board on the ramp. That would constitute a safety hazard and would be reported in the maintenance report. If it is not part of an artifact, it could be repaired and closed off. If it does affect an artifact, the Exhibits and Collections departments would have to be notified before any repair could be conducted. This is to ensure that the artifact and exhibit's integrity are not compromised.
- Example 3
 - o On the bi-weekly, you notice an excessive amount of wear and tear on a wall. This would become a maintenance report item, and a project to rectify it would be created.
- If you are working on the same problem, it can be edited. You do not need a separate entry for each day you are working on a project. You can go back in and add in more information as you investigate and problem solve the issue.