

WDM Collection Management Policies
version approved March 9, 2026

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To be developed:

- Care and Preservation Policy
- Operating Collection: Use & Maintenance

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Purpose of the Collections Management Policies

The *Collections Management Policies* provide standards to ensure that the WDM achieves its public-trust responsibilities through the care and stewardship of the WDM collections. These policies provide a management framework for the acquisition, care, use, deaccession and disposal of the WDM collections, contributing to the efficiency and accountability of the WDM in fulfillment of its mandate and mission.

Scope of Collections

The WDM collections represent the cultural, agricultural and industrial history of Western Canada, with strong emphasis on Saskatchewan, from the settlement period (c.1870s) to the present day. Generally, the WDM will not collect fine arts, natural history or archaeological artifacts.

The WDM holds over 75,000 artifacts and over 500,000 archival, photographic and library materials in trust for the people of Saskatchewan. Objects and their associated documentation are acquired for research, programming and exhibit uses.

History of WDM Collections

Early collecting at the WDM focused on the history of agricultural settlement. Today, the WDM has one of the largest farm machinery collections in Canada, strong in pre-1950 steam engines, tractors and field machinery. The WDM artifact collection contains thousands of artifacts related to living, working and playing in Saskatchewan, including household tools and furnishings, popular culture and entertainment items, communication and business equipment, sports equipment and home crafts. The collection also contains original buildings, including a Saskatchewan Wheat Pool grain elevator, two farmhouses, a barn, a railway station and five churches.

The WDM has maintained a library since its inception in 1949. It was given the name The George Shepherd Library (GSL) in 1972 in honour of the WDM’s first curator who dedicated a large part of his career to developing the library. In 1980, an initiative to formally organize the growing collection began. The GSL has operated as a reference library at the WDM Corporate Office since 1984.

Today, the WDM has evolved to become much more than an agricultural implement museum. We collect artifacts that show the diversity of the Saskatchewan spirit up to the present day. We want our collection to represent who we are, tell a Saskatchewan- inspired story, depict an historic event or illustrate our skills and innovation. The WDM continually strives to refine and improve our collections through standards-based collections management and conservation practices.

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We value inclusivity and prioritize collecting stories and objects that have been underrepresented in the collection as outlined in the *Collections Development Plan*. The Museum is committed to advancing reconciliation and meaningful engagement with Indigenous communities and will activate the Canadian Museums Association’s *Moved to Action* report when working with them.

Revision and Approval

The *Collections Management Policies* will be reviewed every three years from their effective date. The Collections Manager will initiate this process and will require the input of all Curatorial 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. The CEO must approve all changes to the *Collections Management Policies*.

Acknowledgement

This *Collections Management Policy* was modeled after the Alberta Collections Policy (dated January 1, 2014), the Nova Scotia Museums Policy (dated April 21, 2016) and the Museum of Ontario Archeology’s Library Collection Policy (dated February 10, 2014).

Policy Title: Authority and Applicability	Category: CM-2 (Page 1 of 2)
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The WDM Board of Directors has legal responsibility for the Museum’s collections under the *WDM Act*. The WDM Chief Executive Officer (CEO) approves operational policy decisions and *Collections Development Plans*. The WDM Chief Curator - Director of Collections & Research is responsible for the oversight of the *Collections Management Policies*. The WDM Collections Manager is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the *Policies* and the development and implementation of related procedures.

Management of WDM collections affects all areas of WDM operations, and as such, the *Collections Management Policies* apply to all staff, volunteers and anyone using or accessing the collections.

Curatorial Committee

The Curatorial Committee (see Curatorial Committee Terms of Reference) develops and implements a *Collections Development Plan* to guide collections activities.

The Curatorial Committee oversees acquisitions and deaccessioning processes. It has the authority to approve or decline acquisitions based on criteria set out in the *Collections Development Plan* and in accordance with Acquisition (CM-4) and Deaccessioning (CM-8) Policies.

Collections Development Plan

The Chief Curator - Director of Collections & Research will prepare a *Collections Development Plan* every five years for the Curatorial Committee to define collection priorities in accordance with the WDM’s vision, mission, mandate and other guiding plans and priorities.

The *Collections Development Plan* will identify acquisition priorities and provide written guidance to Curatorial Department staff about identifying artifacts for deaccession in a systematic and consistent manner. The *Collections Development Plan* will be responsive to current needs in the collections, flexible and relevant to the people of Saskatchewan.

The Collections Manager is responsible for implementation of the *Collections Development Plan* under the oversight of the Curatorial Committee.

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*, the Canadian Museums Association *Ethics Guidelines* and the Museums Association of Saskatchewan *Standards of Saskatchewan Museums*.

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WDM Staff and Volunteer Conduct in Relation to the Collection

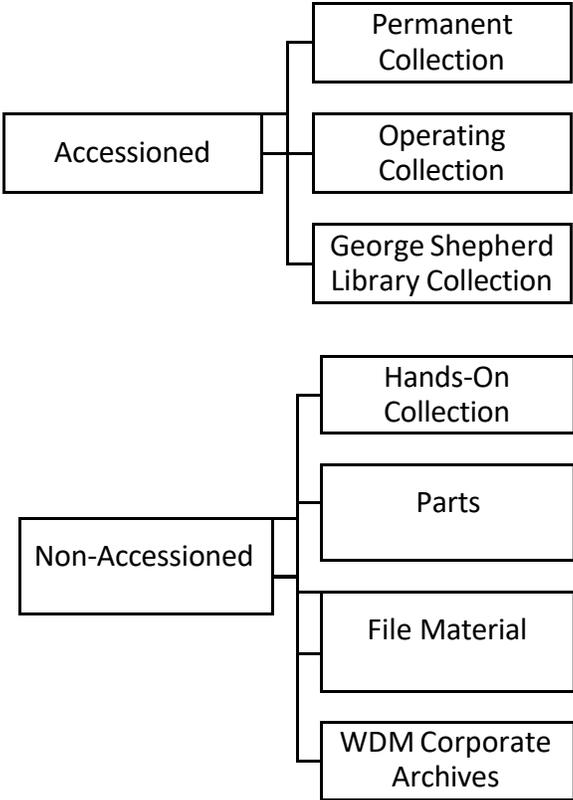
As part of their public trust and stewardship responsibilities, all WDM staff and volunteers must adhere to the *Collection Management Policies* to ensure accountability, transparency and professionalism. Therefore, WDM staff and volunteers (including the WDM Board of Directors);

- Will not represent or appear to represent the WDM without a mandate to do so.
- Will not use their affiliation with the WDM for personal gain, to promote personal collecting activities or to benefit a third party.
- Will not use artifacts, library materials and objects in the WDM collections in their homes or for personal business.
- Will not purchase deaccessioned artifacts, library materials and objects being disposed of through public auction.
- Will not store personal collections or artifacts at any WDM location.
- Will not research, conserve, restore, or document personal collections using WDM resources (i.e. on work time, unauthorized use of WDM shops or materials, etc.).

WDM staff and volunteers will adhere to the Confidentiality (HR-2) Policy found in the *WDM Human Resource Policies* and manage sensitive information about the collection in a legal and ethical manner that meets established museum standards.

Policy Title: Types of Collections	Category: CM-3 (Page 1 of 4)
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The WDM collections are divided into two main categories, accessioned and non-accessioned collections. Within these two categories are several collection types.



Accessioned Collection

The WDM holds its collections as a public trust and, in doing so, will treat them as a resource of lasting value for the people of Saskatchewan. The accessioned collections are the priority of the Curatorial Department and are divided into three categories: the Permanent Collection, the Operating Collection, and the George Shepherd Library Collection. New acquisitions to the accessioned collections are thoroughly documented and limited to artifacts the WDM intends to retain for the foreseeable future. Permanent and Operational collection artifacts must be recorded in the accession register. Material accessioned in the George Shepherd Library must be recorded in the donor files. Transfer of ownership documentation is permanently retained for all artifacts and library materials in the accessioned collections.

Removal of artifacts and library materials from the accessioned collections must adhere to the Deaccessioning (CM-8) and Disposal (CM-9) Policies.

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Permanent Collection

The Permanent Collection consists of objects that document Saskatchewan's cultural, agricultural and industrial history. Artifacts in the Permanent Collection are a significant representation of the tangible and intangible aspects of these histories. The Permanent Collection is the core of WDM research, exhibition and interpretation activities.

Long-term preservation and care of the Permanent Collection is the utmost priority of the Curatorial Department. The Chief Curator - Director of Collections & Research must approve alterations, modifications and conservation treatments to permanent artifacts and only in cases where the benefits outweigh risks. Permanent artifacts are not to be operated or modified for demonstration purposes.

In occasional and justified circumstances, the Chief Curator - Director of Collections & Research may approve, in writing, an Exception for Use allowing limited use of select Permanent Collection artifacts as immersive or functional objects for visitor engagement. Such approval will be granted only where risks to the artifact have been assessed, and the Exception for Use has interpretive merit.

The Collections Manager manages the Permanent Collection.

Operating Collection (Formerly “Extension”)

The WDM recognizes the value of maintaining an operating collection of machinery and equipment. Artifacts in the operating collection are used for demonstration, training and other museum functions.

The Operating Collection is comprised of steam and gas tractors, stationary and portable engines, automobiles, trucks, animal-powered transportation, including wagons and sleighs and trade specific tools, both motorized and hand-powered. Operating Collection artifacts may be restored and altered for continued and safe use.

The Collections Manager oversees the Operating Collection, with the Chief Steam Operator assuming primary responsibility for the management and care of steam-powered artifacts.

George Shepherd Library Collection (GSL)

The GSL Collection consists of books, monographs, reports, pamphlets, catalogues, manuals, manuscripts, published and unpublished documents, photographs (printed and digital) and other media types related to Saskatchewan and Western Canadian History, artifacts in the collection and Museology. The uncatalogued WDM corporate archive is also maintained in the GSL.

The Collections Manager manages the GSL.

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Non-Accessioned Collections

The WDM keeps collections of non-accessioned objects to support education, exhibits and other WDM activities. Objects in these collections are not accessioned in the collections register and, as such, do not require formal deaccession. Transfer of ownership documentation is permanently retained for all acquisitions to non-accessioned collections. Objects in these collections are documented and tracked on an ongoing but basic level. Disposal of objects from non-accessioned collections must be documented and comply with the Disposal (CM-9) Policy.

Hands-on Collection

The Hands-on Collection consists of demonstration objects used in public programs. Objects in this collection represent aspects of life in Saskatchewan past and present. The Hands-on Collection will not include working machinery, tools and equipment typically represented in the Operating Collection.

Hands-on Collection objects will be operated and handled by staff, volunteers and the public with appropriate supervision and safety precautions in accordance with Occupational Health & Safety regulations, the *WDM Volunteer Policy* and other relevant WDM policies and procedures. Objects may be restored or altered for continued and safe use.

Hands-on Collection objects are clearly labelled with an assigned tracking number easily distinguishable from an accession number. Although due care must be taken to maintain these objects, they are ultimately considered expendable, which may result in a reduced level of maintenance and documentation.

The Programs Manager manages the Hands-on Collection.

Parts Collection

The WDM may acquire parts to support the exhibit, study, repair and maintenance of artifacts. Parts are acquired for the following purposes:

- I. As non-accessioned complements to Permanent Collection artifacts, based on exhibit or research potential or, to facilitate artifact storage. These parts must be clearly labelled and tracked. They may be handled and altered to facilitate access and use. Parts will generally be stored with the relevant artifact or artifact file.

Parts acquired for this purpose are the responsibility of the Collections Manager under the oversight of the Chief Curator - Director of Collections & Research.

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II. For the maintenance and repair of Operating Collection artifacts. These parts are generally contemporary to Operating Collection artifacts and are most often acquired through donation (for example, vintage car parts, steam traction engine fittings, etc.). A designated Operating Collection parts storage area is maintained at the Corporate Office in an organized system clearly delineated from other collections areas. Generally, unused objects from the parts collection will not be stored at the WDM branches.

Parts acquired for this purpose, including approval of access or use, are the responsibility of the Operating Collections Manager as part of their Operating Collection duties.

File Material

The WDM may acquire supporting documents, images and other printed materials that relate directly to a specific accessioned artifact. These materials do not possess a level of significance to warrant accession, but they do have research value. File material may be stored in hard-copy in relevant artifact paper files, or in a digital format on the WDM server.

The Collections Manger oversees file material and the Registrar manages it.

WDM Corporate Archives

The WDM Corporate Archives are maintained in the George Shepherd Library. These institutional archives are non-accessioned.

Internal Transfers between WDM Collections

Artifacts and objects held in the WDM’s accessioned and non-accessioned collections may be transferred to another WDM collection category or type as follows:

- Within the same collection category with approval of the Chief Curator - Director of Collections & Research (i.e. from the Operating Collection to the Permanent Collection or vice versa). The rationale for transferring the artifact or object to another collection type must be clearly documented.
- From the non-accessioned collection to the accessioned collection in accordance with the Acquisition (CM-4) Policy.
- From the accessioned collection to the non-accessioned collection in accordance with the Deaccession (CM-8) Policy.

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The WDM will collect artifacts, library materials and non-accessioned objects that connect people to the diversity of the Saskatchewan spirit up to the present day, in accordance with all Board of Directors’ Ends Statements, Strategic Frameworks and other positioning statements.

Acquisition Management

The Curatorial Committee oversees and approves acquisitions. The Registrar is responsible for receiving prospective acquisitions and the day-to-day management of acquisitions with assistance from other Curatorial department staff as required.

The Registrar has the authority to immediately refuse a prospective acquisition if the basic acquisitions principles and criteria set out in this *Policy* and the *Collections Development Plan* cannot be met.

The Registrar or designate will submit artifact offers and purchase requests demonstrating clear potential to meet the acquisitions criteria set out in this *Policy* to the Curatorial Committee, along with supporting documentation. The Curatorial Committee has the authority to approve or decline these offers as per the Authority and Applicability (CM-2) Policy.

Acquisition Methods

Artifacts, objects and library materials are acquired by active and passive collecting through the following methods:

Donation or Bequest

A donation or bequest may be accepted from any source provided there is evidence to show that the source has authority to make the donation and complete transfer of ownership. The WDM is not obligated to accept any donation or bequest into its collection and must communicate this with a potential donor when notice of a donation or bequest is given. Donations must be accepted without conditions, except in exceptional circumstances or within specific special collections like the *Saskatchewan 2SLGBTQ+ History Collection* or Indigenous collections.

Purchase

Artifact purchases must be recommended by the Curatorial Committee in accordance with the *Collections Development Plan*. Purchase approvals and associated costs (i.e. conservation and transportation) must be approved according to the WDM Purchase Order Policy.

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Transfer

The WDM may acquire artifacts from other government departments or agencies, or public cultural and heritage organizations. Transfers must be supported by documentation, including a transfer of ownership agreement, and made without restrictions.

Found in Collection (FIC)

Undocumented objects found within WDM collections areas and exhibits that have been treated as artifacts and for which no provenance is found are referred to as FIC objects (i.e., non-accessioned, unknown donor and unknown specific history of use). All reasonable efforts must be made to establish provenance before classifying an object as FIC.

Preference is given to the disposal of these objects per the Disposal (CM-9) Policy. The WDM will not consider FIC objects for acquisition unless exceptional historical value is assigned by the Curatorial Committee. In this case, all efforts made to establish the provenance of the FIC object will be documented along with the rationale for formally accepting it into the collection.

Abandoned Property

Collections offers deposited anonymously at any WDM location are not considered for acquisition as documentation standards cannot be met. Abandoned property is documented and disposed of immediately as set out in the Disposal (CM-9) Policy. Communication efforts should be made at regular intervals to dissuade the public from leaving abandoned property anonymously at or outside of all WDM locations.

Acquisition Principles

The following principles are universal and constant, providing guidance on the basic values the WDM will follow when considering prospective acquisitions. More detailed, fluid, responsive and time-sensitive principles are outlined in the *Collections Development Plan*.

Alignment – Acquisitions are aligned with the WDM’s vision, mission, mandate, guiding plans, Ends Statements and priorities.

Strategic Collecting –The WDM will follow the *Collections Development Plan*. The WDM will regularly review its collections to identify areas for development as part of maintaining an active *Collections Development Plan*. Resources will be primarily directed toward acquiring underrepresented stories and objects. Few to no resources will be directed toward acquiring artifacts that are adequately represented or overrepresented.

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Legal and Ethical Compliance – The WDM will comply with all relevant laws, treaties and regulations with the intent to protect and enhance cultural heritage.

Stewardship – The WDM will carry out sustainable collecting activities through the responsible allocation of available resources. The WDM only acquires objects it can manage and maintain to professional standards.

Accountability – All processes are transparent and accountable to donors, stakeholders and the public.

Inclusive – The WDM will consult with community representatives when appropriate. The WDM aims to balance the acquisition of artifacts to help develop a collection that is representative of Saskatchewan’s diversity by committing to collecting from underrepresented communities.

Respecting Indigenous Rights– The WDM will align its acquisitions to the recommendations in the Canadian Museums Association’s *Moved to Action* report. The WDM recognizes Indigenous knowledge and materials as significant cultural property belonging to Indigenous peoples. The WDM will not collect objects where there is evidence of cultural appropriation unless Indigenous peoples wish for these items to be retained for their historical value as examples of cultural appropriation. The WDM will consult with Indigenous organizations, Elders and Knowledge Keepers when considering Indigenous artifacts for acquisition.

Acquisition Criteria

The WDM may acquire artifacts and library materials for the accessioned collection according to the following basic acquisition criteria. Further criteria for accessioned collections development are found in the *Collections Development Plan*. Acquisition of non-accessioned objects for the non-accessioned collections is also guided by these criteria but is generally not referenced in the *Collections Development Plan*.

- The object helps to fulfill the WDM’s vision, mission, mandate, guiding plans, Ends Statements and priorities.
- The object tells a Saskatchewan story.
- The object represents an activity, process, time-period, event, region, person or community with demonstrable historical and cultural significance to Saskatchewan.

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- The object belongs to an identified high-priority category identified in the *Collections Development Plan*. Low priority artifacts will only be accepted if they are shown to meet acquisitions criteria to an exceptional degree beyond what is already represented in the collection. In these cases, a review of similar and duplicate artifacts in the collections may be scheduled with an eye toward deaccessioning.
- The object has a documented history of ownership and use.
- The object is in good, stable physical condition and does not pose a significant threat to the health and safety of the public, staff or the WDM collections.
- The WDM has the resources required to document, care for and provide reasonable access to the object.
- The object is offered as an unconditional donation. Conditional donations are rarely considered, usually where exceptional historical value is documented and for special collections.
- The object does not infringe on intellectual property or privacy rights.
- The object creates opportunities for research, exhibition, programming or other uses.

Additional Guidance

George Shepherd Library - The WDM may acquire materials for the GSL that support the research activities of staff, volunteers and registered public researchers, but only in cases where those materials are not better suited to other local, regional, provincial or national libraries and archives. In 2022, the WDM restricted acquisitions to the GSL to primarily local history books.

Corporate Archives - To preserve the WDM's institutional memory, the Corporate Archives may collect either by public donation or internal staff deposit:

- Archival items related to the history of the WDM, including its events, awards, programs, exhibits and research.
- Printed news media where the WDM is mentioned or featured.
- Publications, studies, reports and other documentation undertaken in the name of, on behalf of or about the WDM.

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Income Tax Receipts

The WDM will provide an income tax receipt reflecting the fair market value of donated artifacts or material at the donor’s request and in accordance with the WDM *Gifts-In-Kind Policy*. The fair market value will reflect the artifact, object or library material’s value at the date of transfer of ownership to the WDM. A signed donation agreement transferring legal ownership of the object to the WDM must be in place before a tax receipt is issued.

The WDM will adhere to the Canada Revenue Agency’s *Income Tax Act* and regulations when issuing charitable tax receipts for all donations.

Pursuant to the Canadian *Income Tax Act*, the following requirements must be met before a non-monetary gift is eligible for a tax receipt:

- The gift is valuable to the WDM.
- The donor does not receive any residual benefit from the donation.
- An independent appraisal has been made of the fair market value of the gift if the value exceeds \$1,000.

Appraisals

To issue a tax receipt for gifts other than cash, a qualified professional must complete an assessment of the gift’s worth. The following rules apply:

- Appraisals for income tax purposes should be made by an appraiser not associated with the donor.
- The value of the gift is in the donor’s interest and, therefore, the donor should be encouraged to obtain and pay for the appraisal wherever possible.
- Where the value of a gift does not meet the Canada Revenue Agency’s threshold for an appraisal, the valuation may be made by a WDM staff member, provided the staff member is knowledgeable in the field and is qualified to establish the value of the gift.

WDM staff will not endorse specific appraisers, auctioneers or dealers to the public. WDM staff may provide a general list with the understanding that this does not constitute an endorsement.

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Collections documentation is vital to collections management and informs the use, management and care of collections. A well-documented collection increases understanding of Saskatchewan’s history by making the WDM collections and the stories they tell accessible.

Collections Documentation Management

The Collections Manager is responsible for developing and implementing collections documentation procedures in consultation with other Curatorial Department staff.

Documentation of Accessioned Collections Artifacts (Cataloguing)

All research to collect and update artifacts documentation is carried out in compliance with the *WDM Research Policy*. The WDM will maintain accurate, up-to-date and comprehensive documentation for all accessioned artifacts and materials. These documents are retained in perpetuity and are not disposed of after deaccessioning. Collections documentation will include, but is not limited to:

- Accessioning information including source, object name, date of acquisition and assigned accession number.
- Accessioning information for the Permanent and Operating Collections is maintained in a hard-copy accession register located in the Collections Vault. Accession information for the GSL is maintained in donor files located in the Collections Vault. Accession information for all collections is also stored in digital format on the WDM collections management system.
- Proof of transfer of ownership to the WDM. A hard copy of these documents must be kept in the corresponding permanent artifact files for the Permanent and Operating Collections or the donor files for the GSL collection.
- Significance and history of use, particularly as it relates to the Collections Development Plan.
- Descriptive and identifying information, including location, physical description, photographs and condition.
- WDM use including exhibit, research, publication, programming and loan histories.
- Conservation records.
- Internal transfers to other WDM collections.
- Deaccession and disposal information.

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The WDM follows established national standards to maintain consistency in recording artifact information. Permanent Collection and Operating Collection artifacts are catalogued in compliance with Nomenclature for Museum Cataloguing and the CHIN Data Dictionaries.

All documentation will be maintained in an organized and accessible filing system and stored in a secure, stable physical and digital environment. Access to documents containing personal or confidential information is restricted to authorized personnel, including the CEO, Director of Finance, Director of Administration, Fundraising Specialist and Curatorial Department staff. Volunteers may access the Vault with documented special permission from one of the following: the CEO, Chief Curator - Director of Collections & Research or Collections Manager.

Documentation of Non-Accessioned Collections

A reduced level of documentation is required for non-accessioned objects and materials. At a minimum, the following documentation is required and will be retained for the life of the object at the WDM.

- Proof of transfer of ownership to the WDM.
- Physical description with enough detail to easily identify the object.
- Collection type and general location.
- Disposal information.

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The WDM understands the importance of physical and intellectual access to its collections. Staff, volunteers and the public can access WDM collections through exhibits, programming, events, tours, publications, social media, the WDM website, the collections database, research files, visual resources, loans and consultation with WDM staff and volunteers within relevant intellectual property, privacy, safety and resource limitations. Management and levels of access are informed by collection type.

The names and contact information of artifact, library material and non-accessioned object donors are confidential. Access to this information is restricted to authorized staff and volunteers as per Collections Documentation (CM-5) Policy. This information cannot be made public unless written permission is received from the donor.

Accessioned Collections Access

Responsible access to the accessioned collections is encouraged but must be carefully managed to ensure the safety and security of the collections and those who use them. The Chief Curator - Director of Collections & Research oversees access to the accessioned collections in consultation with Curatorial Department staff. Curatorial Department staff facilitate access to the accessioned collections at the Corporate Office. Museum Managers and designates, facilitate access to the accessioned collections in their WDM locations in consultation with the appropriate Curatorial Department staff members and in compliance with the *Collections Management Policies*.

Permanent Collection Access

A balanced approach between access to the Permanent Collection and its long-term care and preservation is required. Permanent Collection artifacts will be handled only under the supervision of trained WDM staff and volunteers.

Requests to access the Permanent Collection beyond what is typically made available must be submitted to the Collections Manager for approval on a case-by-case basis. The nature of the request and available resources will be considered as part of decision making. The WDM reserves the right to restrict access to the Permanent Collection to ensure its preservation as mandated by the *WDM Act* and related policies.

Operating Collection Access

Access to the Operating Collection is guided by Occupational Health & Safety regulations, the *Volunteer Policy* and other relevant WDM policies and procedures.

Requests to access the Operating Collection beyond what is typically made available must be forwarded to the Operating Collections Manager for approval on a case-by-case basis. Decisions will be based on the WDM's best interests and will consider available WDM resources and potential risk to the artifact.

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George Shepherd Library (GSL) Access

The GSL supports the research activities of WDM staff, volunteers and registered public researchers. Public researchers must apply for access and be approved by the Collections Manager to use the GSL using the *Research Agreement Guidelines* form. Staff and volunteers do not need to apply. Only WDM staff and volunteers may sign GLS materials out of the library. Material must remain in the Corporate Office unless approved for outreach functions by the Chief Curator - Director of Collections & Research (i.e. for media spots or special exhibits).

Non-Accessioned Collections Access

Access to non-accessioned collections is managed and guided by the conditions below.

Hands-on Collection objects are accessed primarily through handling and operation by WDM staff, volunteers and the public as part of regular programming activities. Access to this collection is appropriately supervised and follows safety precautions in accordance with Occupational Health & Safety regulations, the *WDM Volunteer Policy* and other relevant WDM policies and procedures.

The Programs Manager oversees access to the Hands-on Collection.

Parts collection objects are primarily accessed for study and use as repair pieces for the operational collection. Access to this collection is appropriately supervised and follows safety precautions in accordance with Occupational Health & Safety regulations, the *WDM Volunteer Policy* and other relevant WDM policies and procedures.

The Operating Collections Coordinator oversees and approves access to the Parts Collection.

File material is primarily accessed for research by WDM staff. File material may be accessed by WDM volunteers and the public within relevant intellectual property and privacy limitations.

The Collections Manager oversees access to file material.

Policy Title: Loans	Category: CM-7 (Page 1 of 2)
Policy Type: Collections	Approved: February 26, 2019 Last Revised: March 25, 2024
Monitoring Frequency: Every three years	Next Review: March 2027

The WDM will lend artifacts, objects and library materials to other museums, cultural institutions and like-minded organizations to promote access to its collections and support the activities of partner organizations. The WDM will borrow artifacts to enhance its exhibits and provide a space for partner organizations to exhibit their collections in accordance with the *WDM Exhibits Policy*.

Loan Management

The Registrar manages external requests for outgoing loans from the WDM. Outgoing and incoming loans must be approved by the Chief Curator - Director of Collections & Research. If approved, a paper record of the loan documentation must be placed in the artifact file and a digital record of the loan entered into the on the collections management database.

Loans from the WDM (Outgoing)

The WDM may loan artifacts to other organizations for purposes consistent with the interests of the WDM and to be of service to the heritage sector in Canada. Loans are generally not made to individuals or for stage props or decorative use. In all cases, the safety and integrity of the artifact is paramount, and borrowers must meet WDM conditions regarding the term of the loan, security, storage, handling, transportation, conservation and insurance.

Organizations accepting a loan from the WDM must sign a WDM loan agreement. Loan agreements are made for a fixed term, extendable upon the mutual consent of the WDM and the borrower. Loan agreements will not exceed five years and must be formally renewed at the end of their term if applicable. Borrowers will typically pay for transportation costs.

Loans to the WDM (Incoming)

The WDM may borrow artifacts from other institutions or individuals to complement WDM exhibits or for other specific purposes identified and approved by the Chief Curator - Director of Collections & Research. Incoming loan agreements must be made for a fixed term, extendable upon the mutual consent of the WDM and the lender. Loan agreements will not exceed five years and must be formally renewed at the end of their term if applicable. The WDM will not accept permanent loans.

Lenders may be required to complete a loan agreement in which values are assigned to artifacts. Insurance arrangements will be stated, and values established by the lender. The WDM will follow the loan conditions prescribed by the lender and will typically sign the lender's loan agreement.

Policy Title: Loans	Category: CM-7 (Page 2 of 2)
Policy Type: Collections	Approved: February 26, 2019 Last Revised: April 11, 2019
Monitoring Frequency: Every three years	Next Review: March 2027

Travelling Exhibits

Artifacts and other materials contained in external travelling exhibits do not fall under the authority of the Loans (CM-7) Policy or the Curatorial Department. Contracts for travelling exhibits containing artifacts belonging to other organizations are the responsibility of the Director of Exhibits.

Policy Title: Deaccession	Category: CM-8 (Page 1 of 4)
Policy Type: Collections	Approved: February 26, 2019 Last Revised: March 10, 2025
Monitoring Frequency: Every three years	Next Review: March 2027

Deaccessioning is a necessary component of responsible collections management and is used to refine the WDM collection, improving its relevance to the community and its sustainability.

The WDM Act, paragraphs 12 and 17, gives the Board of Directors the authority to dispose of property acquired by it:

- (1.1) “The Board may acquire personal property necessary for its purposes and may sell or otherwise dispose of any personal property acquired by it”
- (1.2) “The Board may accept and receive gifts, devises and bequests for the purposes of the Board, and, subject to the terms of any trust imposed by the testator or donor thereof, may sell, lease, convey or otherwise dispose of and convert to money real and personal property given, devised, or bequeathed for these purposes.” R.S.S. 1953,c.365,s.15 (WDM Act, p. 17)

Only accessioned artifacts require formal deaccession. The decision to deaccession must be thoroughly documented and based on objective, ethical and defensible motives. The WDM must have clear title to the artifact or demonstrate that a diligent and thoroughly documented effort has been made to determine ownership before proceeding with deaccession.

As a courtesy, the WDM may inform a donor of the decision to deaccession an artifact when possible and only in situations where:

- Current contact information for the donor is readily available.
- The deaccessioned artifact of library material was acquired through donation or transfer from a government department or agency, or a public cultural or heritage organization that is currently operational or has a direct successor.

Where a signed transfer of ownership was obtained, deaccessions cannot be returned to the donor upon notification of deaccession. However, the donor will be informed of disposal method details. The WDM will not notify heirs and descendants of donors who are deceased unless stated in the donor agreement.

Deaccession Management

The WDM Board of Directors must approve all deaccessions. The Chief Curator - Director of Collections & Research will provide written guidance to the Curatorial Committee on planned deaccession investigations and projects every five years as part of the *Collections Development Plan*. The Chief Curator - Director of Collections & Research must approve each deaccession recommendation in writing before it is submitted to the Board of Directors for review. All Curatorial Department staff are responsible for the ongoing routine identification and research of artifacts that may meet deaccession criteria.

Policy Title: Deaccession	Category: CM-8 (Page 2 of 4)
Policy Type: Collections	Approved: February 26, 2019 Last Revised: March 25, 2024
Monitoring Frequency: Every three years	Next Review: March 2027

Deaccession Process

Deaccession recommendations to the Board of Directors originate in two streams:

- I. Deaccession recommendations born of day-to-day research and contact with the collections.
 - Curatorial Department staff will routinely identify artifacts, objects and materials for removal using the collections management database as part of their regular duties of caring for the collections.
 - Staff will routinely forward deaccession recommendations to the Collections Manager using the collections management database and other procedures the Collections Manager develops and implements. The Collections Manager will determine if all criteria are met and forward the recommendation for deaccessioning to the Chief Curator - Director of Collections & Research.

- II. Planned deaccession investigations and projects.
 - The Chief Curator - Director of Collections & Research, through the *Collections Development Plan*, will recommend larger-scale deaccessioning projects to be completed every five years.
 - As a result of knowledge gleaned from routine deaccessioning in Stream I, the Collections Manager may decide a larger subsequent deaccessioning project should be scheduled.
 - A disposal plan will be developed in conjunction with any planned deaccession projects.

The electronic collections management database will be used to research, track and record all deaccessioning activities.

Consultation for Deaccession Recommendations

Deaccession recommendations must be thoroughly researched and based on objective, ethical and defensible motives. To meet this requirement, the WDM may seek subject-specific expert third-party advice as part of their large-scale planned deaccession projects in Stream II when internal expertise is unavailable or as a second opinion in conjunction with internal expertise (for example, assessment of 1920s automobiles).

Generally, expert third-party advice is not required to support deaccession recommendations for artifacts and library materials identified as low significance, in poor physical condition, hazardous to human or collections health or lacking relevance to the WDM.

Policy Title: Deaccession	Category: CM-8 (Page 3 of 4)
Policy Type: Collections	Approved: February 26, 2019 Last Revised: March 25, 2024
Monitoring Frequency: Every three years	Next Review: March 2027

Deaccession Principles

The following principles are universal and constant, providing guidance on the basic values the WDM will follow when considering deaccessions. In response to excessive duplication in the WDM collection, large-scale planned deaccession projects targeting these areas for refinement will be developed every five years and outlined in the *Collections Development Plan*.

Alignment – Deaccession and disposal activities directly support the WDM vision, mission, mandate, guiding plans, Ends Statements and priorities by improving the quality of the collections.

Strategic Deaccessioning – Deaccessioning priorities are identified. Preference is given to planned, systematic and consistent deaccessioning based on relevant parameters such as artifact type, supporting documentation, materials and location.

Artifacts may be deaccessioned in the absence of a related plan if the need is apparent, usually due to the artifact's poor and/or hazardous condition, although other criteria may also apply.

Legal and Ethical Compliance – The WDM complies with all relevant laws, treaties and regulations to protect and enhance cultural heritage.

Stewardship – Curatorial Department staff routinely review the collections to identify areas requiring refinement. External expertise may be necessary to aid this process.

Accountability – All processes are transparent, thoroughly documented and accountable to donors, stakeholders and the public.

Inclusive – The WDM aims to continually refine and improve its collections over time, creating space to be more representative of Saskatchewan's evolving heritage.

Respecting Indigenous Rights - The WDM will align its' deaccessions to the Canadian Museums Association's *Moved to Action* report. The WDM recognizes Indigenous knowledge and materials as significant cultural property belonging to Indigenous peoples. The WDM will consult with Indigenous organizations, Elders and Knowledge Keepers when considering Indigenous artifacts for repatriation.

Policy Title: Deaccession	Category: CM-8 (Page 4 of 4)
Policy Type: Collections	Approved: February 26, 2019 Last Revised: March 25, 2024
Monitoring Frequency: Every three years	Next Review: March 2027

Deaccession Criteria

Accessioned and non-accessioned collections artifacts, objects and materials may be deaccessioned based on the following criteria at any time:

- The artifact or library material lacks relevance to the WDM’s vision, mission, mandate, guiding plans, Ends Statements and priorities as outlined in the *Collections Development Plan*.
- The artifact or library material is in poor physical condition and has deteriorated or is damaged or incomplete to a point where it does not serve a useful purpose.
- The artifact or library material is a hazard to the collection.
- The artifact or library material is a weak representation of a type that is over-represented in the collection.
- There are prohibitive restrictions to use by the WDM, including but not limited to donor conditions, intellectual property rights, privacy, copyright and trademark.
- The artifact or library material constitutes a significant human health risk.
- The artifact or library material is to be repatriated.
- The artifact or library material is permanently lost or has been stolen.

Policy Title: Disposal	Category: CM-9 (Page 1 of 3)
Policy Type: Collections	Approved: February 26, 2019 Last Revised: March 9, 2026
Monitoring Frequency: Every three years	Next Review: March 2027

Disposal of deaccessioned artifacts and library materials, and non-accessioned objects are made with the best interest of the WDM and the public in mind. Reasonable effort is made to ensure that deaccessioned artifacts and library materials remain in the public domain. As a registered charity, the WDM will not return deaccessioned artifacts to their original donors in compliance with the Canadian *Income Tax Act*. All disposals must be thoroughly documented.

Disposal Management

The Collections Manager manages the disposal of deaccessioned artifacts and library materials under the oversight of the Chief Curator - Director of Collections & Research. In all cases, the disposal methods for deaccessioned artifacts must be approved in writing by the CEO before disposal.

The Programs Manager oversees and manages the disposal of objects in the Hands-on Collection, including appropriate documentation.

The Operating Collections Coordinator and the Collections Manager manage the disposal of parts in their identified management areas under the oversight of the Chief Curator - Director of Collections & Research.

The Collections Manager manages the disposal of file materials.

Disposals will occur in a timely manner, dependent on the nature of the artifact or materials. In general, disposals will occur as follows:

- Objects and materials that are hazardous to the collection will be disposed of within one year of deaccessioning.
- Objects and materials in poor physical condition will be disposed of within six months of deaccessioning.
- Objects and materials that may be transferred to other institutions or sold at auction will generally be disposed of within two years of deaccessioning. Indigenous repatriations will proceed at the space directed by the receiving First Nation which may exceed two years from deaccession.

Disposal of Deaccessioned Artifacts and Library Materials

The following disposal methods are permissible:

Internal Transfer - Deaccessioned artifacts and library materials may be transferred to another WDM non-accessioned collection if deemed relevant and appropriate to that collection.

External Transfer – Deaccessioned artifacts and library materials may be offered for external transfer to relevant local, provincial/territorial, regional or national museums as a gift, trade or sale. Deaccessions may also be offered to charitable public organizations as a gift, trade or sale. The WDM will endeavour to transfer deaccessioned artifacts with a Saskatchewan history of use to other Saskatchewan museums and charitable organizations.

Policy Title: Disposal	Category: CM-9 (Page 2 of 3)
Policy Type: Collections	Approved: February 26, 2019 Last Revised: March 25, 2024
Monitoring Frequency: Every three years	Next Review: March 2027

Transfer offers will stand for a minimum of 30 days before the WDM may pursue public auction or other disposal methods.

The WDM may request that the transfer costs be assumed in whole or in part by the receiving organization. A transfer of ownership document is required for all external transfers.

Deaccessioned artifacts and library materials that represent a significant risk to human or collections health will not be offered for transfer unless they possess exceptional historical value and the risks associated are clearly identified and communicated by the WDM as part of the transfer offer.

If the deaccessioned artifact or library material is of significance to Indigenous peoples, the WDM will contact the source community directly or the Saskatchewan Indigenous Cultural Centre (SICC) for advice on repatriation.

An independent appraisal will be obtained for deaccessioned artifacts or library materials offered for trade or sale with an estimated value greater than \$10,000.

Public Auction – If the WDM is unable to arrange a mutually-beneficial transfer, it will proceed with disposal via publicly-advertised auction conducted by a professional auctioneer. Consignment of deaccessioned artifacts for public auction must be witnessed in writing by a minimum of two WDM staff members.

Funds generated by the public auction of disposed artifacts are placed in the Artifact Fund. Funds generated by the public auction of disposed library materials are placed in the George Shepherd Memorial Fund.

An independent appraisal is not required for deaccessioned artifacts or library materials being disposed of through public auction.

Destruction - Deaccessioned artifacts and library materials may be disposed through destruction if they are of very low significance and/or are in such poor condition that it is not reasonable to expend any resources to attempt to keep it in the public domain through transfer or auction. Disposals by destruction must be carried out in a professional and sensitive manner and witnessed in writing by two or more WDM staff.

Deaccessioned artifacts that pose a significant hazard (i.e. live ammunitions, uncontained friable asbestos, etc.) may also be disposed of through destruction. Disposal of hazardous materials will often require professional services from a qualified external contractor equipped to handle and dispose of the specific hazard.

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Monitoring Frequency: Every three years	Next Review: March 2027

Disposal of Objects from Non-Accessioned Collections (Hands-on, Parts and File Material)

Objects from the hands-on, parts and file material collections may be disposed when they are no longer relevant to their respective collection or have become damaged or deteriorated to a point where they are no longer useful or safe.

Disposal of these objects is documented and carried out at the discretion of the WDM staff member(s) assigned management responsibilities for them as defined in the Authority and Applicability (CM-2) Policy. The Chief Curator and Director of Collections and Research must approve all disposals from non-accessioned collections. Acceptable disposal methods include internal transfer, external transfer, public auction and destruction. Disposals will be documented with summary information, including the reason for disposal, signed approval and final disposal method.

Funds generated by the disposal of objects from the non-accessioned collections are placed in the Artifact Fund.

Disposal of Found in Collection Objects and Abandoned Property

Objects that are determined to be abandoned property or FIC (see Acquisition Policy (CM-3)) will be disposed of through external transfer, public auction or destruction as outlined in this *Policy*.

Generally, the Collections Manager will recommend the disposal method to the Chief Curator - Director of Collections & Research. The Chief Curator - Director of Collections & Research must approve the proposed disposal method of non-accessioned objects in writing before the disposal.

Funds generated by the disposal of objects from FIC objects will be placed in the Artifact Fund.

Policy Title: Repatriation and In-Trust Safekeeping Agreements for Indigenous Cultural Belongings	Category: CM-10 (Page 1 of 5)
Policy Type: Collections	Approved: January 28, 2025 Last Revised:
Monitoring Frequency: Every three years	Next Review: March 2028

Background

There are approximately 300 Indigenous (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) artifacts identified in the WDM Permanent Collection. These cultural belongings are listed on the *Indigenous Artifact Summary*. Each have a catalogue record stored in the WDM’s information management system and the collections management database. Staff are encouraged to share this inventory with interested Indigenous stakeholders.

While not known for having collecting priorities centered around Indigenous artifacts, the WDM has been collecting Indigenous artifacts since its inception, mostly through donation from non-Indigenous people who obtained them through purchase, gift, trade, as payment for a debt, or other means.

In the 1990s, a large portion of the WDM’s Indigenous collections were transferred to the Royal Saskatchewan Museum.

Since 2019, the WDM has initiated or responded to several repatriations of artifacts remaining in the Collection. All known sacred or ceremonial artifacts have been repatriated, although future research may reveal the sacred or ceremonial nature of some of the remaining artifacts as their file materials and descriptions may be incomplete. Most, though, are known to be cultural belongings such as clothing, beadwork, handicrafts, artwork, or tools, dating from the late 19th century to the present day.

The WDM accepts an expanded definition of “duress” as described and defined in the Canadian Museums Association *Moved to Action* report (2022) as having been the societal context during the period of history when these belongings came into the possession of non-Indigenous people and continuing today.¹

The WDM recognizes and affirms Indigenous peoples’ inherent rights and sovereignty over their tangible cultural material and intangible heritage. As such, the WDM will make efforts to engage in repatriation of cultural belongings (artifacts) in the Collection to identified and/or probable Indigenous rights holders.

The WDM acknowledges as part of its response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s Calls to Action, it is obligated to ensure, to the best of its ability, that artifacts are returned to the appropriate Indigenous party wherever possible and no matter in what manner the cultural belonging(s) was accessioned into the Collection.

¹ See pages 10, 12, 33, 41, 121-122, and particularly 48-49, for definitions of “duress” in: Canadian Museums Association, *Moved to Action*, 2022

Policy Title: Repatriation and In-Trust Safekeeping Agreements for Indigenous Cultural Belongings	Category: CM-10 (Page 2 of 5)
Policy Type: Collections	Approved: January 28, 2025 Last Revised:
Monitoring Frequency: Every three years	Next Review: March 2028

Purpose

This policy sets the guidelines for repatriation activities from the Collection to Indigenous parties, the guidelines for temporary in-trust safekeeping agreements for Indigenous parties, and the guidelines for the continued care and stewardship of Indigenous artifacts in the Collection.

The WDM recognizes there are cultural differences between the many Indigenous people who live in what is now Canada. This policy applies only to Indigenous stakeholders. Non-Indigenous stakeholders may not request repatriation of cultural belongings or seek support for in-trust safekeeping agreements.

Repatriation

The WDM supports the repatriation of cultural belongings to Indigenous communities, families, groups, or identified designates (herein referred to as ‘party’ or ‘parties’) that are currently part of the WDM Permanent Collection or belongings that are not accessioned but ‘found in collection.’

Repatriation is a dynamic and sensitive process and each case is unique. The WDM will both proactively and reactively support repatriation.

The WDM will continue to conduct research on the provenance of the Indigenous artifacts in the Collection and will communicate those findings to relevant Indigenous parties. The research may identify an unequivocal or probable rights holder or may require further consultation and research. The WDM will proceed with repatriation should the Indigenous party be identified as the rights holder(s), or the most suitable rights holder(s), and subsequently request repatriation either verbally or in writing. If the party does not wish to proceed with repatriation, the WDM will retain the artifact in its Collection and follow any cultural protocols for its care and handling as directed by the party.

The WDM will initiate research on a cultural belonging that an Indigenous party requests for repatriation to determine if provenance and rights holding can be suitably determined to move forward with repatriation.

In some cases, determining an unequivocal rights holder may not be possible given disrupted or unknown provenance over many decades. However, repatriation may still be deemed a suitable path forward if there is sufficient supporting evidence that the identified probable rights holder is an acceptable recipient for repatriation.

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In cases where provenance is unknown or unclear, the WDM will consult with Indigenous subject matter experts to work towards identifying the belonging's origin. Where consensus cannot be reached, or in cases of competing claims, the WDM will defer to the decision-making of a third-party Indigenous cultural agency. Support may also be sought from the Museums Association of Saskatchewan to find a suitable Indigenous mediator. If a decision cannot be reached, the WDM will retain the artifact and provide access to it, if appropriate, under the guidance of a third-party Indigenous agency or mediator.

The WDM will remain neutral on contested claims. If, after repatriation, a different rights holder claimant comes forward, or new information sheds light on the certainty of a different rights holder, they will be directed to the community that has received the item. Only Indigenous people may determine the outcome of a competing claim.

Ongoing stewardship and access

The WDM will continue to care for the Indigenous cultural belongings in the Collection that are not yet identified for repatriation. It will do so following proper cultural protocols determined by Indigenous parties.

Where provenance is known, viewing and handling access will only be provided to the origin community under advisement of their governing bodies (i.e. a Chief and council or tribal council). If provenance is not known, Indigenous subject matter experts, knowledge keepers, Elders, or Indigenous governing bodies may be invited to view or handle the artifact(s) for the purpose of researching it with the goal of working towards establishing provenance. Viewing and access may be conducted at a WDM location, or WDM staff may take cultural belongings to Indigenous communities for a visit. At the end of the visit, the belongings will return to the WDM location where they are stored unless a loan agreement is negotiated.

When questions arise about appropriate care and handling of Indigenous belongings, the WDM will seek subject matter expert advice from the origin community when known, or from third-party Indigenous cultural agencies, when not known.

Repatriation cultural protocol

The WDM will respect, follow and support cultural protocols related to repatriation ceremonies, activities, correspondence, and the care and handling of artifacts, including providing space for smudging, Elders' honoraria, traditional feasts and pipe ceremonies at any of the five WDM locations. WDM staff will act with respect, care and sensitivity during these activities and will ask for guidance using the proper protocols when unsure of next steps or appropriate conduct to the best of their ability.

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Resource budgeting

The WDM will budget resources annually for repatriation activities. Unless the Indigenous party indicates otherwise, the WDM will cover the costs associated with repatriating artifacts from the WDM Collection.

Conditions of deaccession and transfer for repatriated artifacts

Artifacts recommended for repatriation will be forwarded to the Board of Directors as deaccession recommendations. Once deaccessioned, the WDM and the receiving Indigenous party will both sign a transfer document at a transfer ceremony, event, or meeting. The type and location of the transfer ceremony, event, or meeting will be determined by the receiving Indigenous party and supported by the WDM with the appropriate resources on a case-by-case basis. The transfer document will be permanently stored in the artifact file and in the collections management database.

Before and after transfer, the WDM will not impose conditions on use on the cultural belonging(s) being returned. Only Indigenous people may determine the future use of their cultural belonging(s).

Reporting and communication

The WDM will report on repatriation to the Board of Directors and the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport. The WDM will not publish, discuss, or divulge repatriation activities publicly without the clear and informed consent of the involved Indigenous party.

The WDM will respect requests for repatriation activities to remain confidential, exempting the aforementioned reporting requirements as these are required as a publicly funded museum.

In-trust safekeeping agreements

The WDM will respond to requests for temporary storage of cultural belongings that have been recently repatriated, or in the care of Indigenous parties, on a case-by-case basis and as space and security allows in the requested WDM location.

The WDM and the Indigenous party will co-develop an in-trust safekeeping agreement that suits both the needs of the WDM and the party. The WDM may end the agreement at any time and return the belonging(s) to the party should the agreement terms not be satisfied or the WDM's ability to care for the belonging(s) in a suitable manner changes due to unforeseen circumstances.

The WDM will care for and handle the belonging(s) with the same standard of care as its own artifacts and will respect, follow and facilitate cultural protocols as instructed by the party. The WDM will post signage on rooms containing scared or sensitive belongings and restrict entry to authorized collections and facilities staff only.

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The WDM will respect, follow and support cultural protocols related to in-trust safekeeping agreements such as ceremonies, activities, correspondence, and the care and handling of artifacts, including but not limited to: providing space for smudging, Elders’ work, traditional feasts and pipe ceremonies.

In-trust resource budgeting

When requested, the WDM may provide financial support for carrying out necessary cultural protocols related to In-trust agreements. Funding may be approved on a case-by-case basis and within the resources of the WDM. Funding may be provided for activities such as but not limited to: Elders’ honoraria, tobacco, gifts and feast food.

The WDM will budget resources for WDM staff to execute in-trust safekeeping agreements.

The WDM will consider conservation requests beyond basic storage on a case-by-case basis and as resources allow.

The WDM will not carry insurance on the belongings and will not require the party to carry their own insurance but will agree the WDM is not liable for any damages or losses incurred during the safekeeping period and upon return.

Reporting and communication related to in-trust safekeeping agreements

The WDM will report on its in-trust safekeeping agreements to the Board of Directors and the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport. The WDM will not publish, discuss, or divulge its in-trust safekeeping agreements activities publicly without the clear and informed consent of the involved Indigenous party.

The WDM will respect requests for its in-trust safekeeping agreements to remain confidential, exempting the aforementioned reporting requirements as these are required as a publicly funded museum.