

Wellington Museums Trust - Collection Management Procedures

1. Introduction

The procedures outlined below implement the Wellington Museums Trust Collections Policy.

The Trust Board shall delegate authority to carry out these procedures to the Chief Executive, who may further delegate authority to staff as is deemed appropriate.

However, the Trust Board will be consulted on acquisitions and de-accessioning matters as set out in the Collections Policy section *Delegations*.

The Collection Management Procedures will be reviewed on the same schedule as the Collections Policy and revised as warranted.

2. Acquisition criteria

All acquisitions to the Collections must comply with Section 5 of the Collections Policy *Criteria governing future collection development*. Further the Collections will be developed and implemented through the Collections Plan (Section 6 Collections Policy).

Material shall only be added to the Collections if it is accompanied by provenance and/or clear evidence of prior ownership and it meets one of the following criteria:

1. The item is significant to the Tangata Whenua of Te Upoko o Te Ika a Maui.
2. The item is significant to Wellington's civic, social or cultural history.
3. The item is significant to Wellington's maritime or transport history.
4. The item enhances the existing collections.
5. The item has intrinsic value by virtue of its relationship to Wellington through a historical event or a significant individual, and its social, cultural or technological significance.

Additionally, if a good example of the item is held in another public collection within Wellington and is accessible to the Trust for display/research purposes, the decision may be taken not to acquire it. In such cases the item will be fully documented for research purposes.

Further the item must meet the following two criteria:

1. It is not exactly the same as an item already in the Collections or if it is, it is a significantly better example, and
2. It does not impose onerous obligations on the Trust for its restoration, conservation and storage.

Items required for a specific exhibition but do not meet the above criteria and cannot be borrowed from another collection may be acquired and disposed of at the end of the exhibition.

3. Acquisition procedure for items to be gifted

The procedures for acquisitions are as follows:

1. The potential donor may either bring the item to the Trust or the appropriate member of the Collection team (e.g. Collections Manager or Registrar) may view the item at a designated location.
2. A signed copy of the Receipt / Dispatch Form (see forms) indicating that the item is a potential acquisition must be given to the potential donor or their authorized agent.
3. A signed copy of the Receipt / Dispatch Form will be retained by the Registrar.
4. The item will be evaluated at the Collection Store.
5. Initial recommendations for the item's acquisition consideration is made by the appropriate member of staff to the Chief Executive by completing the Acquisition Assessment Form (see forms).

They must conform to the acquisition criteria guidelines set out within section 2 Acquisitions Criteria, and go through the following evaluation procedure:

1. What is the significance of the item?
2. What is the relevance of the item to the current scope of the Collections?
3. What is the number of like items in the Collections?
4. What is the condition/conservation needs of the item?
5. What are the costs for the conservation and care of the item?
6. What are the housing needs of the item?
7. Are there any legal or ethical considerations regarding the item?
8. Will it form part of an exhibition or display within the next 12 months?

If the donation is approved, the Registrar explains to the donor, in writing, the procedure for transfer of the title and provides the donor with a completed Deed of Gift form (see forms).

The Deed of Gift form will be kept as a paper copy and used as an Accession form.

Proposed purchases of items for the Collections, to be acquired either for or by the Trust must also undergo the acquisition recommendation process and require final approval by the Chief Executive.

4. Accession

Accession means the formal process used to accept an item permanently into the Collections.

Once the acquisition process is complete, the item is entered into the Accession Register and assigned an accession number (consists of the calendar year of acceptance and then a sequential number). The item's accession number is attached to it.

The item's details are then entered on to the collection management database. The details entered into the database will be:

1. Accession number,
2. As full a description as possible, including condition report,
3. Photograph of the item,
4. Provenance, and
5. Background information relating to the item.

When the accession and registration process is complete, the item is wrapped or boxed appropriately and housed in the Collection Store or prepared for display.

The location of the item is then entered on to the database.

All paperwork relating to the gift/acquisition is then filed in the appropriate accession folder by accession number.

Any further documentation relating to the item will be stored in the accession folder.

5. De-accession criteria

De-accession means the formal process of removing an accessioned item from the Collections.

Where items are proposed for de-accessioning, they shall be researched to establish whether the Trust holds legal title without any restrictions on disposal. If the right to dispose of the item remains unclear the Trust shall publicly notify through the Trust website and by public notice its intention to dispose of the item.

Any item considered for de-accessioning must meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. The item does not fall within the scope of the Collections as specified in section 5 of the Collections Policy *Criteria governing future collection development* or Collections Plan,.
2. The item has no current or likely future potential in advancing the Trust's mission through contribution to research, display or education.
3. The item is a duplicate, or otherwise unnecessary to the Collections.
4. The item has deteriorated irreversibly.
5. Retention of the item could endanger other items in the Collections.
6. The item has not been legitimately acquired.
7. The item is proven to be a forgery or fake.
8. The Trust is unable to care for the item to the appropriate standard.

6. De-accessioning procedure

Any member of the curatorial/collection management staff may recommend at any time items for de-accessioning by following the procedure below:

1. An item must meet at least one of the criteria for de-accessioning.
2. The Collections record including any relevant documents on the item should be checked for any restrictions on de-accessioning.
3. If there are no restrictions, then the matter shall be referred to the Chief Executive, accompanied by a report recommending de-accessioning, with full documentation.
4. Once full de-accessioning approval and documentation have been completed, the Chief Executive shall approve the means of disposal.
5. A full record of the item including photographs shall be retained by the Trust (see forms).

7. Disposal from the Collections

Dispose means to remove either a de-accessioned item from the Collections or a non-accessioned item from Trust storage.

Only items that have gone through de-accessioning as set out in section 6 *De-accessioning procedure* or non-accessioned items may be disposed of on approval of the Chief Executive.

Non-accessioned items identified for disposal will have been assessed as set out in of the Collections Policy section 2 *Acquisition Criteria*.

In respect of an item which is valued in excess of \$500 the Trust will have obtained the written consent of the Wellington City Council prior to disposal of the item from the Collections.

In such cases the items will first be offered back to the donors/lenders and then to other museums (if of museum quality) before disposal.

Where origin is not known the Trust will dispose of an item by whatever process and method seems most appropriate as set out below.

An item may be disposed of by:

1. Return to the donor or his/her relatives. A clause in the Accession Form will state whether, in the event of the Trust wishing to dispose of the item/s in question, the donor wishes to be contacted. If the donor does not wish to accept the item/s, material will be disposed of in one of the following ways with priority given to the interests of other museums and non-profit, educational or cultural organisations.
2. Gift to another museum or non-profit, educational or cultural organisation.
3. Exchange with another museum or similar organisation.
4. Sale by public auction or other means. De-accessioned material may not be disposed of to staff, Trustees or anyone in any way connected with the Trust, unless under public sale.
5. Destruction where the item has irreversibly deteriorated.

All funds obtained from the sale or other disposal of items from the Collections will be used only for the purposes of:

1. Further additions to the Collections.
2. Conservation work on the Collections.
3. Other collection related purposes agreed to by the Chief Executive.

The Trust will arrange a peer review of its decision making process relating to the deaccessioning and/or disposal of items from the Collections at least once a year.

8. Conservation of the Collections

The Trust shall use preventative conservation techniques to ensure the items in the Collections receive appropriate care. Preventative conservation includes appropriate handling, packing and storage, climate, temperature and light control, and regular inspection of items.

1. Where required, remedial conservation work may be done on items by staff qualified to undertake the work and where appropriate a specialist professional conservator should be employed, for example for severely deteriorated or fragile items.
2. Any conservation work must be of an acceptable professional standard (as per the Code of Ethics for the New Zealand Conservators of Cultural Materials).
3. Conservation surveys should be conducted by a qualified conservator at least every three years.
4. When items are needed for display and there is doubt about their condition, a conservator or other expertise will be sought to ensure display conditions are not detrimental to the physical well being of the item.

9. Storage of the Collections

All items should be stored in the manner most appropriate to their material, size and shape.

All storage should ideally be in an environment with stable temperature and relative humidity per current conservation standards (ideally 55% RH plus or minus 5% and 20 degrees Celsius, plus or minus 2 degrees).

10. Security of the Collections

All storage and exhibition areas should be made secure and safe from theft, fire, water damage and natural disasters as far as possible.

Items on display will be securely mounted and protected from theft or vandalism.

11. Disaster Recovery Plan

A Disaster Recovery Plan shall be prepared by the Collection Manager and staff trained in the relevant procedures, ready to implement the Plan if required or assist other institutions in need.

A disaster recovery team will be established and will meet regularly to co-ordinate the evacuation of the Collections in an emergency. An emergency kit will be prepared and sources for emergency equipment noted. Emergency evacuation drills of the Collection Store will be held periodically.

The buildings housing the Collections, including the Trust museums, will be regularly inspected for potential problems, and preventative maintenance procedures implemented.

The Trust will ensure a duplicate copy of its catalogue is stored offsite and regularly updated.

12. Insurance of the Collections

Within budget constraints the Collection should be insured for a reinstatement value where possible and/or consolation value if a market price or replacement value is not possible to establish. If the Trust is unable to insure all or any part of the Collections the Wellington City Council must be immediately advised as per the Trust Deed.

13. Review procedure

The Collection Management Procedures will be updated as required and reviewed when the Collections Policy is reviewed.

Approved by: Trust Board	Date: 4 February 2009
Date of next review: February 2014	Responsible: Chief Executive

There being a consensus the Board:

i. ...;

ii...

; and

iii. approved the extension of the review date for the Collections Management Procedures until after the completion of the Museum Development.

April 2015