

**Preamble**

The Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) is dedicated to preserving, enhancing, interpreting, and communicating its *collections* which document human cultures and the natural diversity of Ontario, Canada, and the world. The purpose of the collections policy is to establish the ROM's guidelines for

- The methods of acquiring for *accession* objects including artifacts, works of art, and biological and geological materials (hereafter collectively referred to as objects) for the collections.
- The care of the collections.
- The establishment and maintenance of a comprehensive, accessible system of record-keeping for all objects placed in the custody of the ROM.
- The *deaccessioning* of objects.
- The lending of objects to or borrowing of objects from other museums, institutions, and private sources.

Although, the ROM may accept *loans* or donations of non-accessioned objects for purposes of research, teaching, and public programming and every effort will be made to maintain the same level of *safeguards* as for accessioned objects, the following policy applies only to objects that have been accessioned.

**Policy**

The ROM will actively establish, maintain, and expand the accessioned collections according to three tiers of priority: Core areas, Intermediate areas, and Peripheral areas. These tiers are meant to be fluid in that collections may move from one tier to another as new opportunities for significant *acquisitions* and curatorial research arise. Collection development and the setting of priorities will be guided by the specialized knowledge and research expertise of qualified professional staff.

*Core Areas*

The ROM's core collections are those of established national and/or international significance supported by nationally and/or internationally recognized programs of curatorial research. These core areas are central to the ROM's mandate and the ROM is committed to them on a long-term basis. The following collections are currently considered core areas:

- Canadian historical art, decorative arts, and historical documents.
- Material culture and art of Aboriginal Peoples of ( ) North and Central America and contiguous regions.
- Near Eastern and Asian arts and archaeology, specifically China, Japan and Korea, Islam/Middle East, ( ) and South Asia.
- Africa, including ancient Egypt/Nubia
- Textiles and accessories.
- Western decorative arts, gold and silver, and arms and armour.

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- Biodiversity, specifically botany, entomology, herpetology, ichthyology, invertebrate zoology, mammalogy, mycology, and ornithology.
  - Earth Sciences, specifically minerals, gemstones, and petrology.
  - Palaeobiology, specifically dinosaurs and other fossil vertebrates, Burgess Shale biota, and Ontario fossils.

As the ROM's priorities for collecting and research change over time, the above listing will be subject to periodic review and change.

*Intermediate Areas*

Collections of provincial and national importance for which the ROM has some relevant curatorial expertise are considered "intermediate". These collections have the potential to become core areas through significant acquisitions of objects and development of curatorial research.

*Peripheral Areas*

Some areas of interest are not represented in ROM collections. Other areas have only small collections, with limited potential at present for research and public programming, and with few or no opportunities for growth. Such areas are considered "peripheral".

*Conditions of Acquisition*

Objects will be accessioned into the ROM's collections only under the following conditions:

- The objects must be consistent with and relevant to the ROM's mission.
- The ROM must be able to provide proper care and storage for the objects. No object should be considered for acquisition if its physical condition exceeds the ROM's financial ability for its proper care and preservation.
- The objects must be accompanied by warranties of good legal title.
- The objects must be accompanied by a good record of provenance and must be authenticated. Exceptions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Curators must demonstrate due diligence in proposing acquisitions whose provenance records are incomplete.
- The objects should be accompanied by valuations, where appropriate.
- Objects can be accessioned into a collection only by a curator who has expertise in the area.
- Donations must be free and clear of conditions and restrictions imposed by the donors regarding the ROM's use of the objects.
- All donations to the ROM's collections are irrevocable upon the formal transfer of title to the ROM.
- The ROM will acquire all economic rights necessary to permit anticipated exhibition and reproduction uses. The ROM will respect the creator's right to the integrity of the work. Where reasonable, the ROM will respect the creator's right to be associated with the work as its named creator.
- The ROM is satisfied that any object to be acquired, whether by

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donation, exchange, or purchase, is not stolen or otherwise illegally acquired or collected. The acquisition of cultural property which has been in foreign countries will comply with the Cultural Property Export and Import Act, which incorporates the principles and provisions of the UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970) into Canadian law. The ROM will use the date of adoption by UNESCO of the 1970 convention, November 14, 1970, as the landmark date after which all cultural property acquisitions require comprehensive provenance records.

*Care of the Collections*

The ROM will allocate an annual budget for funding the continuing care and preservation of objects in its collections. Proper storage and exhibition facilities along with adequate environmental-control systems must be top priorities for the ROM at all times.

The ROM will ensure that the collections are adequately protected against fire, flood, pests, theft, vandalism, and natural disaster. These issues are addressed further in the Risk Management and Emergency & Disaster Planning policies.

The ROM will establish and maintain a comprehensive system of records that will include the following information:

- Documentation pertaining to the provenance and legal title of an object.
- All correspondence, documents, and other materials pertaining to an accessioned object.
- Accessioning and cataloguing data.
- Photographic documentation.
- Condition and conservation history.
- Insurance records.
- Current location and loan records.
- Deaccessioning information.

Duplicate copies of all essential records pertaining to the ROM's collections will be made and stored off Museum premises in a secure and appropriate location.

*Deaccessioning*

The ROM reserves the right to deaccession any object under any of the following criteria:

- An object is no longer relevant within the collection, exhibition, or research programs of the ROM.
- An object was acquired illegally or unethically.
- An object has failed to retain its physical integrity or authenticity and

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- cannot be properly preserved, stored, and used.
  - For the purpose of upgrading the ROM's collections and their care.

The public relations impact must be carefully assessed prior to the approval of any deaccession.

Registration will continue to maintain all records pertaining to deaccessioned objects.

#### *Disposals*

*Disposal* of deaccessioned objects will be made by one of the following means (listed in order of preference):

- Exchange with another museum or charitable institution.
- Donation to another museum or charitable institution.
- Sale to another museum or charitable institution.
- Sale at public auction outside the ROM's immediate location without listing of the ROM's name or accession number.

Insofar as possible, deaccessioned objects should be disposed of in a manner that keeps them in the public domain. A deaccessioned object may be destroyed if it is not salvageable or no longer of interest to any party.

No member of the Board of Trustees, employee or volunteer, or their representative or immediate families may be given, sold, or otherwise knowingly obtain deaccessioned objects. Deaccessioned objects may not be directly sold to private individuals and corporations.

All monies realized from the sale of any object or collection will be used by the ROM only to upgrade the ROM's collections and their care, preferably in the curatorial department from which the sold objects were deaccessioned.

#### *Loans*

The ROM may borrow objects from other museums, galleries, and private sources for the purposes of exhibition, research, or public programming and education. The ROM may also lend objects from its collections to responsible institutions for the purposes of exhibition, research, or public programming and education. Outgoing loans are an important aspect of the ROM's mandate and allow the ROM's collections to be used and enjoyed more widely in Canada and elsewhere.

- All loans are subject to a formal written agreement between the lender and the borrower, which ensures appropriate coverage of all insurance obligations. The borrower will comply with all restrictions and conditions imposed on borrowed objects.
- Loan agreements will specify the purpose and time period of the loan.
- Loan agreements will address copyright and reproduction rights.

***Approval Levels***

Decisions regarding ROM acquisitions, deaccessions, disposals, and incoming and outgoing loans will follow the approval levels set by the Board of Trustees. Refer to the attached appendix for the current approval levels.

***Explanation of Terms***

*accession*: the formal process or procedure of recording an addition to the collections; the status assigned to the object. Not all objects acquired by the ROM are accessioned.

*acquisition*: the act of gaining legal title of an object or a collection of objects.

*collections*: refers to objects including artifacts, works of art, and biological and geological materials, sound and video recordings, and any other movable cultural or natural property that has been formally accepted and accessioned by the ROM.

*deaccession*: the formal process or procedure that records the permanent removal of an accessioned object or group of objects from the collections.

*disposal*: permanent physical removal from the collections of any catalogued object or specimen, usually by exchange, donation, sale, or destruction.

*loan*: an object that is lent or borrowed; the act of furnishing an object or a collection to another party for temporary use, for an agreed specific purpose, with specific conditions regarding the handling and care of the object, and on the condition that the object is returned by a specified date.

*safeguarding*: includes the conservation, preparation, and preservation of objects; collections management; and security.

**Date**

June 21, 2001

**Amended**

January 17, 2002

March 6, 2008

March 5, 2009

November 15, 2012

Next review 2015

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***MONITORING******Adherence to Policy***



## BOARD POLICY

### COLLECTIONS

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*Board:* The Collections, Engagement & Research Committee will periodically review management's adherence to the policy.

*Management:* The Director & CEO and the Deputy Director, Collections & Research will ensure that the Collections, Exhibitions & Research Committee has all the relevant information for determining adherence.

#### Policy Review

*Method* Internal Report

*Responsibility* Collections, Exhibitions & Research Committee

*Minimum Frequency* Every three years

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	Department Head	VP, C&R	Director & CEO	Board Committee	Board
<b>CCPERB Applications</b>					
<\$50,000	×	×			
\$50,000 – \$250,000	×	×	×		
\$250,000 – \$500,000	×	×	×	×	
>\$500,000	×	×	×	×	×
<b>Purchases:</b>					
<\$5,000	×				
\$5,000 - \$50,000	×	×			
\$50,000 - \$250,000	×	×	×		
\$250,000 - \$500,000	×	×	×	×	
>\$500,000	×	×	×	×	×
<b>Gifts-in-kind:</b>					
<\$50,000	×	×			
\$50,000 – \$250,000	×	×	×		
\$250,000 – \$500,000	×	×	×	×	
>\$500,000	×	×	×	×	×
<b>Unconditional Gifts</b>	×	×	×		
<b>Incoming &amp; Outgoing Loans:</b>					
<\$25,000	×	×			
\$25,000 – \$250,000	×	×	×		
\$250,000 - \$500,000	×	×	×	×	
>\$500,000	×	×	×	×	×
<b>Internal &amp; Outreach Loans:</b>					
<\$25,000	×	×			
>\$25,000	×	×			
<b>Deaccessions &amp; Disposals:</b>					
<50,000	×	×	×		
\$50,000 – \$100,000	×	×	×	×	
>\$100,000	×	×	×	×	×

All Repatriations go to the Board, through the CER Committee.

**Exhibitions:** Under \$500K, Director approval required (only).  
Over \$500K, CER recommendation to the Board for approval required.