

Approved by the Board of Trustees of the Chicago Historical Society, April 23, 2014

**Approved by the Collections and Research Committee of the
Board of Trustees of the Chicago Historical Society, April 15, 2014**

**Revised September 18, 2015
(to reflect new staffing and organizational structure as of April 6, 2015)**

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(to reflect new staffing and organizational structure as of July 24, 2023)**

CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTION MANAGEMENT POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Mission, Vision, and History

Founded in 1856 and incorporated as a non-profit organization under the laws of the state of Illinois in 1857, the Chicago Historical Society (CHS) is the city's oldest cultural institution and home to millions of objects and documents, including personal papers and organizational records, books and other published materials; prints, photographs, and architectural drawings; costumes and textiles; and fine, decorative, and industrial arts. Nationally recognized for its holdings, CHS is devoted to collecting, interpreting, and presenting the rich multicultural history of Chicago, as well as selected areas of American history. CHS's collection is a rich resource for the study of this history and is integral to the fulfillment of its mission, purpose, and vision. In 2006, following an extensive building renovation and rebranding initiative, CHS created a new public identity for itself as the Chicago History Museum (CHM), which operates as the building and institutional public presence under the auspices and legal oversight of CHS.

CHM's mission, revised and adopted by the Board of Trustees in 2022, is to serve as the primary destination for learning, inspiration, and civic engagement to connect people to Chicago's history and each other. CHM's vision, revised and adopted by the Board of Trustees in 2022, is "to be one of the most trusted and inclusive cultural institutions of our collective history." Implicit within the current mission and vision is the recognition that CHM's collection is "a unique resource requiring our imagination and discipline to

reveal its potential” and challenges staff to “develop a more meaningful and usable collection by building our capacity and commitment to understand and interpret the historical materials in our care; developing a vigorous, purpose-driven collecting and deaccessioning program; and improving physical and intellectual access to our historical material,” As articulated in *Claiming Chicago, Shaping Our Future: A Vision for the Chicago History Museum*, approved by the Board of Trustees, 2007.

According to the American Alliance of Museums *Code of Ethics for Museums*, the stewardship of collections by museums “entails the highest public trust and carries with it the presumption of rightful ownership, permanence, care, documentation, accessibility and responsible disposal.”¹ CHM fully accepts and embraces its fiduciary duty to act as good steward for the collection in accordance with professional standards and practices and in fulfillment of its mission and non-profit status. By articulating institutional expectations for the management of its collection, this policy document will serve as the framework to ensure the museum upholds this public trust.

Statement of Authority

Governing authority: The Chicago Historical Society is governed by a 40 ~~38~~-member Board of Directors (Board). The Board has ultimate fiduciary responsibility for the management of the institution, its collections, and its physical and financial assets. As such, the Board is responsible for approving all institutional policies, which provide guidance for all collection management procedures and activities. The Board is also responsible for appointing a President, to whom it delegates authority to administer these policies, manage CHM’s staff and activities, and carry out the institution’s goals and objectives as established by the Board. The President is therefore ultimately responsible for all staff-level decisions and actions related to the collection.

Staff: The President, in turn, delegates day-to-day responsibilities for the collection to appropriate members of CHM’s staff. Primary responsibility for the collection rests with the staff in the Collections and Research Division under the supervision of the Executive Vice President,² who serves as chief advisor to the President in all matters related to the collection. Within the Collections and Research Division, the Department of Collections has primary responsibility for ensuring the preservation and accessibility of the

¹ American Alliance of Museums, *Code of Ethics for Museums*, adopted 1991, amended 2000.

² In the event that there is no staff member with the title of Executive Vice President, then the President shall designate the individual who shall exercise the duties delegated to the Executive Vice President in this policy.

collection, as well as its legal, administrative, and physical management, and the Department of Research and Access has primary responsibility for developing the Library collection and facilitating public access to the Architecture, Archives and Manuscripts, and Prints and Photographs holdings through the Research Center. Department of Curatorial Affairs has primary responsibility for the intellectual content of the collection and collection-related records, shaping the collection through acquisitions and deaccessioning, and interpreting the collection in fulfillment of the institution's educational and programmatic goals.

Standing collection committees: The Collections and Research Committee is a standing committee of the Board of Trustees mandated by CHM's bylaws. The committee will consist of not fewer than three members and is responsible for approving all of CHM's high-level, collection-related goals, objectives, policies, and deaccession recommendations, pending following approval by the Board of Trustees. The Staff Collection Committee is responsible for reviewing proposed collection acquisitions and presenting its recommendations to the President for final approval. It will also review deaccession proposals and make its recommendations to the President and, if approved, to the Trustee Collections and Research Committee. The Staff Collection Committee will consist of the Executive Vice President, Director of Collections (co-chair), Director of Curatorial Affairs (co-chair), Registrar, and other members of the Collections and Research Division designated by the President.

Future Review and Revision

Because good collection stewardship is essential to the museum's mission and fiduciary responsibilities, maintaining an up-to-date collection policy is equally essential. To ensure that this is done, CHM's Collection Management Policy will be reviewed in full every 5-6 years or updated as necessary to reflect organizational or staffing changes and evolving professional practices and standards. Any amendments to the Policy will require approval by the Board of Trustees.

ACQUISITION POLICY

(Adopted by the Board of Trustees, October 12, 1977, revised and approved in 1984 [and April 23, 2014, revised and approved July 24, 2023])

Scope of Collections

The history of Chicago and its suburbs is the primary focus of the Chicago Historical Society's collections, exhibitions, publications, and programs. The Chicago History Museum (CHM), operating under the auspices and legal authority of the Chicago Historical Society, collects materials documenting greater Chicago, with special emphasis upon the following:

1. Life in the Chicago area: This includes demographics, domestic life, family, community, neighborhoods, local history, religious life, sports, recreation, leisure, crime, and education.
2. Work in the Chicago area: This includes the changing economic base of the city, business, manufacturing, labor, transportation, and scientific and technological development.
3. Governance in the Chicago area: This includes electoral politics, citizen action movements, urban planning, and education.
4. Built environment in the Chicago area: This includes architecture in its broadest social and economic context, going beyond great buildings and architects.
5. Individuals and ideas in the Chicago area: This includes art, literature, music, and philosophy produced by individuals in the metropolitan area, particularly as reflections on and interpretations of this area.

The Chicago area is CHM's primary collecting focus. CHM also possesses unique, nationally significant legacy holdings related to American history. CHM will add to these holdings from time to time to improve the quality of exhibitions, with emphasis given to Lincoln, Civil War, and Reconstruction material.

Collection Status Categories

CHM's accessioned collection (often referred to simply as "the collection"), is the institution's primary collection, held in trust for the public and maintained in perpetuity in service of our core identity, mission, and purpose. Although the institutional

commitment to the collection, defined as the sum of its parts, is understood to be permanent, individual objects may be accessioned into or deaccessioned out of the collection over time, in service of CHM's public mission, and as regulated by CHM's Code of Ethics and Deaccession Policy, as well as the AAM's *Code of Ethics for Museums*.

In addition to acquiring materials for the accessioned collection, CHM also maintains other categories of material that are not considered part of the core collection. These categories of unaccessioned materials include Non-Accessioned materials and Education materials. In addition to these categories (which are used currently to identify newly acquired unaccessioned materials), CHM also retains legacy categories of unaccessioned materials to which new acquisitions are no longer assigned.

Institutional standards and expectations regarding the care, management, and use of CHM's various categories of materials will vary depending on the category. Understanding and maintaining the distinctions between the various categories is critical to CHM's ability to carry out its core responsibilities.

Accessioned: Accessioned materials are held in trust for the public for use in exhibitions, programs, and publications, and to support research and scholarship. By accessioning an object into the collection, the institution makes a commitment to care for the object for the foreseeable future, and for as long as it serves the public good to do so. Accessioned materials therefore demand the highest standard of care and documentation appropriate to their use. Staff within CHM's Collections, Research and Access, and Curatorial Affairs departments share primary responsibility for the day-to-day development and management of the accessioned collection. Accessioned collection materials are handled, stored, documented, and managed according to museum and library best practices to ensure that they are accessible for use and preserved for the long-term in fulfillment of CHM's mission and purpose. Accessioned materials may not be retired from the collection or disposed unless deaccessioned in accordance with CHM's Deaccessioning Policy and written deaccessioning procedures.

Non-Accessioned: Non-accessioned (NA) materials are not considered part of the core collection but are managed by the Collections, Research and Access, and Curatorial Affairs staff using the same record-keeping systems established for recording the provenance, legal and administrative status, and history of the accessioned collection. Materials are typically assigned NA status when they possess some historical significance or have a direct relationship to other, accessioned materials – and when

CHM is unable or unwilling, at the time of acquisition, to commit to the long-term retention or preservation of the materials. Examples of NA materials include object-specific mounts for displaying accessioned materials; non-original, supporting research material to be retained for CHM's authority files; or fragile or fugitive materials beyond CHM's current ability or existing resources to manage effectively (such as born digital material).³ Materials recommended for NA status must be approved as such by the Staff Collection Committee, with a record of their NA status recorded in the museum's permanent registration record. NA materials do not need to be stored in archival housing or in a museum-quality environment, but they should be stored in a secure environment. Major investment of resources in NA materials is generally not recommended; however, materials should be treated with reasonable care to ensure they are not damaged or actively destroyed. Disposal of NA materials must be approved in advance by the Staff Collection Committee and documented as part of the permanent record, though no formal deaccessioning or Board approval is required.

Education: Like other unaccessioned materials, Education materials are not considered part of the core collection. Managed by the Education Department and stored separately from the core collection, these materials are used primarily for hands-on or demonstration use in public programs. Although some Education materials may have some historic value or provenance, these materials are considered purely utilitarian and disposable, with no restrictions on their use. No formal approval by the Staff Collection Committee or President is necessary to acquire Education material, though the Department of Curatorial Affairs should be given "first right of refusal" to recommend original, historical materials for acquisition into the collection. Donations to the Education holdings will be documented as in-kind gifts per standard Institutional Advancement procedures, with no further documentation necessary except to ensure that Education materials are not mistaken for collection materials in the future. Because Education materials are maintained separately from collection materials, no prior approval from the Director of Collections or Registrar is necessary for the disposal of Education materials.

Other (Legacy Unaccessioned): In the past – and over the course of the institution's long history – CHM has acquired materials, with and without formal documentation,

³ As of 2014, per the recommendation of the Staff Collection Committee, all Library materials previously assigned Non-Accessioned (NA) status will be considered accessioned and may not be disposed or retired from the collection without first being deaccessioned in accordance with CHM's Deaccessioning Policy and written deaccessioning procedures.

that were assigned to various other categories of unaccessioned materials, including Costume Archive, Marx, Study, and Non-Collection. Because these various collection categories were never formally defined, over time the distinctions between these categories (and the associated expectations for their care and management) have been lost – although it is clear that they were intended as distinct from CHM’s accessioned collection and therefore held to a lower standard of care. Occasionally, these materials were acquired through donation and itemized on acquisition documents (e.g. deeds of gift, receipts, etc.). Where such documentation exists, it should continue to be maintained by the Registrar; otherwise, no formal inventory need be maintained for these materials – though they should be labeled with any identifying information and stored separately from collection materials whenever they are discovered. Because the original intent behind CHM’s acquisition of this material is not always known, material recommended for disposal should undergo thorough investigation, in consultation with the Registrar, and approved in writing by the Director of Collections and Director of Curatorial Affairs before disposal takes place. Disposal recommendations and procedures will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Director of Collections and, when necessary, in consultation with legal counsel.

Collection Holding Categories

For administrative purposes, the collection has been organized into seven holding areas: Architecture, Archives and Manuscripts, Costume, Decorative and Industrial Arts, Library, Paintings and Sculpture, Prints and Photographs.

Architecture holdings include architectural drawings and prints, models and building fragments, photographs, and business records documenting Chicago’s rich architecture and built environment, as well as the work of Chicago-area architects and architectural firms from the mid-19th century to the present.

Archives and Manuscripts holdings include documents and sound recordings produced by individuals, businesses, and organizations in the greater Chicago area that document significant aspects of life in the city, suburbs, region, and state from 1683 to present. The holdings also include important material documenting American history from the 1770s to the 1870s.

Costume holdings include clothing and accessories designed by Chicagoans, manufactured or sold in the Chicago metropolitan area, and/or worn by everyday as

well as prominent Chicagoans. Costume holdings also include clothing and accessories related to significant individuals and events in American history dating from the mid-18th century to the Civil War.

Decorative and Industrial Arts holdings include furniture, metalwork, ceramics, glass, textiles, and other household items, toys, vehicles, industrial tools and products, advertising materials, and political ephemera documenting Chicago's growth from trading outpost to major metropolitan area. Decorative and Industrial Arts holdings also include a number of significant American history materials dating from the 1750s to the 1870s.

Library holdings contain published materials and printed ephemera, including atlases, maps, menus, periodicals, and sheet music and comprise both primary and secondary source research materials that provide insight into the history of the greater Chicago area as well as key aspects of United States history through the Civil War.

Paintings and Sculpture holdings consist primarily of portraits of prominent Chicagoans and 19th century Americans, as well as landscapes, cityscapes, and city scenes documenting the Chicago metropolitan area from frontier days through the present. Paintings and Sculpture holdings include works on paper as well as paintings and sculpture, and also include works by Chicago and Illinois artists.

Prints and Photographs holdings include hand-made and mechanical prints, still photography, and moving images in a variety of formats and is the single largest source of pictorial information for the greater Chicago area from the early 19th century to the present. Prints and Photographs holdings document the work of the city's artists, photographers, printmakers, videographers, and filmmakers and include an extensive collection of photographic, print, and broadside images related to American history before 1870.

Because of the dual nature of CHM as a museum *and* library, the CHM's collection holdings described above are often characterized either as **research collections** (Architectural drawings and records, Archives and Manuscripts, Library, Prints and Photographs) or as **museum collections** (Architectural models and fragments, Costume, Decorative and Industrial Arts, Paintings and Sculpture).

In general, research collections are acquired with the presumption that they will be made available for hands-on use by the public under appropriate supervision in CHM's

Research Center – unless specific restrictions on public access are determined to be necessary and recorded in the online public catalog record for the corresponding material. In contrast, museum collections are generally acquired with the presumption that they will not be available for hands-on use by the public. Hands-on use of museum collections may be permitted on rare occasions when such interaction is considered essential to the use and understanding of the material and therefore necessary in order to serve the public’s best interest.

Collecting Authority and Responsibility (Non-Library Materials)

Materials acquired for the museum collections and non-Library research collections are accessioned into the collection on an ongoing basis in accordance with current best practices for museums and after judicious consideration by appropriate staff. Archivists, Collection Managers, and Curatorial staff take the lead in evaluating all non-Library materials for potential acquisition based on an assessment of their historical and informational significance and relevance to the museum’s mission; designated Collections staff work with them to assess the material in regard to practical, ethical, legal, and condition considerations.

Objects recommended for acquisition are presented to the Staff Collection Committee for discussion and review. The Staff Collection Committee is co-chaired by the Director of Curatorial Affairs and the Director of Collections and is comprised of representatives from the Collections, Curatorial Affairs, and Research and Access departments, along with the Executive Vice President. For the purposes of decision-making, a quorum is defined as one Co-Chair, one Collection Manager, one Registrar, and one Curator. All Collection Committee decisions are recorded in Collection Committee meeting minutes, to be retained as part of the permanent museum record, and distributed to the President, Executive Vice President, and Committee members.

Objects recommended by the Staff Collection Committee for accessioning must be approved by the President, to whom this authority has been delegated by the Board of Trustees. No further approval is required by the Board of Trustees (beyond existing accounting policies and protocols governing CHM purchases); however, collection purchases and acquisition-related expenditures over \$25,000 must be approved in advance by the President and subsequently reported to the Board of Trustees Collections and Research Committee.

In rare, time-sensitive situations, when it is not possible to convene the Collection Committee within existing time constraints, a collection acquisition may be recommended for accessioning, pending approval by the President, by mutual agreement of two of the following three staff: Director of Collections, Director of Curatorial Affairs, Executive Vice President. When this occurs, the decision must be reported out at the next Staff Collection Committee meeting and recorded in the minutes for that meeting.

CHM is under no obligation to accept materials bequeathed to the museum; however, when legally permissible under the terms of the bequest, CHM staff may choose to accept bequeathed material for sale or other non-collection use as long as the museum's intention is communicated to the executor of the estate.

Non-Library materials will be considered accessioned at the moment they are assigned a unique accession number by the Registrar, following approval by the Staff Collection Committee and the President. All acquisitions will be recorded in a permanent register, maintained by the Registrar and documenting how, when, and from whom the material was acquired, along with any donor-imposed restrictions.

On rare occasions, when hands-on use of accessioned material is determined to serve the best interests of the public, the proposed use (and any related or anticipated storage, handling, care, or management practices that are not in keeping with standard museum practices) must be approved in advance by the Staff Collection Committee, recorded in the Collection Committee meeting minutes, approved by the President, and noted in the permanent registration records and catalog record.

Collecting Authority and Responsibility (Library Materials)

Library materials are accessioned into the collection on an ongoing basis in accordance with current best practices for libraries and after judicious consideration by appropriate Research and Access staff, who evaluate all potential Library acquisitions based on an assessment of their historical and informational significance, their potential for use, and the resources necessary to store, manage, and provide access to the material over time. Collections staff work with the Research and Access Department as necessary to assess the material in regard to practical, ethical, legal, and condition considerations as they might arise.

Library materials recommended for acquisition do not require approval by the Staff Collection Committee. Instead, decision-making authority for Library acquisitions has been delegated by the Board of Trustees to the President, and by the President to the Director of Research and Access. No further approval (beyond existing accounting policies and protocols governing CHM purchases) is necessary, except for collection purchases and acquisition-related expenditures over \$25,000, which must be approved in advance by the President and subsequently reported to the Board of Trustees Collections and Research Committee.

Donated Library materials will be considered accessioned at the moment they are assigned a unique accession number by the Registrar. Donated Library acquisitions will be recorded in a permanent register, maintained by the Registrar and documenting how, when, and from whom the material was acquired, along with any donor-imposed restrictions. Library materials acquired through other means (e.g. purchase) will not be recorded by the Registrar or assigned a unique accession number and, instead, will be considered accessioned at the moment they are entered into CHM's online public access catalog.

Collecting Criteria

The following criteria will be applied when evaluating materials for potential collections acquisition to ensure that CHM develops a meaningful and useable collection that will support the institutional mission and best serve the public interest:

- New acquisitions must present opportunities to reveal or expand on a compelling and significant story or theme of Chicago or United States history through the Civil War; preference will be given to acquiring material documenting stories or themes that are not already represented in CHM's collection or the holdings of another public repository.
- New acquisitions must be legally and ethically acquired from persons or organizations with full authority to donate or sell these materials.
- New acquisitions must be appropriately documented and thoroughly researched to ensure that materials are authentic – that is, that they are what they purport or are purported to be at the time of acquisition.
- With the exception of Library materials, CHM prefers to collect original materials whenever possible; derivative materials will be considered for acquisition only when the original materials are believed to no longer exist.

- CHM does not collect human remains or sacred funerary objects.
- CHM prefers to acquire materials free of donor-imposed restrictions unless limited to a reasonable and finite period or in very rare situations where public benefit of accessioning the object is determined to outweigh the long-term negative impact of the restrictions on future operations or use of the materials.
- With the exception of Library materials, whenever possible at the time of acquisition, CHM will seek to obtain copyright or the right to reproduce copyrighted materials.
- Legal title to new acquisitions must be free and clear of any liens or other encumbrances, with no fractional interest retained by the donor(s).

In evaluating potential acquisitions, CHM staff will weigh the material's historical significance and value to the collection against the resources necessary to acquire, preserve, and provide access to the material for the benefit of the public. CHM should only accession material for which it can reasonably expect to be able to provide an appropriate level of care and accessibility for the foreseeable future.

DEACCESSION POLICY

(Adopted by the Board of Trustees, October 12, 1977, revised and approved by the Board of Trustees, April 23, 2014; revised and approved July 24, 2023])

Introduction

Deaccessioning is the formal process used to legally and permanently remove materials from the collection of the Chicago History Museum (CHM), which operates under the auspices and legal authority of the Chicago Historical Society. Disposal is the process of removing the materials from the physical and legal custody of the collection, usually by sale, transfer, or destruction.

A museum's stewardship of its collections entails the highest public trust.⁴ Therefore, all of CHM's deaccession decisions and activities must be informed and motivated by an awareness of CHM's fiduciary responsibilities. As such, CHM will ensure that any deaccessioning of collection items (both Library and non-Library) will be conducted in keeping with the American Alliance of Museums' *Code of Ethics for Museums* and the *Chicago Historical Society Code of Ethics* and in accordance with local, state, and federal law.

To ensure that deaccessioning is conducted in good faith and in an ethical manner in accordance with professional best practices, attention must be given to transparency throughout the process. To ensure transparency and accountability, documentation of the deaccessioning decision-making, authorization, and disposal process will be retained as part of the museum's permanent registration records and Board of Trustee minutes.

Deaccession Criteria

Accessioned objects may be deaccessioned from the collection when one or more of the following criteria are met:

- The object is determined not to be useful in carrying out CHM's mission and/or is outside the scope of collections as defined in Acquisition Policy.
- The object duplicates other material of better quality or stronger provenance within CHM's collection.

⁴ American Alliance of Museums, *Code of Ethics for Museums*, adopted 1991, amended 2000.

- The object has been determined to be inauthentic, misidentified, or misattributed.
- CHM can no longer adequately care for or preserve the object in accordance with professionally accepted standards as defined in the Collections Care Policy, or the object's condition has deteriorated beyond reasonable repair.
- The object poses a threat to other objects in the collection or to CHM staff.
- Removal of the object from the collection is mandated by local, state or federal law (e.g. the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act) or court order.
- The object is subject to contractual, privacy, or confidentiality restrictions that impede CHM's ability to fulfill its public service responsibilities.
- CHM does not have free and clear legal title to the object and therefore accessioned the object in error.
- A more appropriate repository has been identified for the object.

When a request is made for the return of an object donated to the museum, all records will be checked to ascertain clear title and ownership of the object. If it is determined that the museum holds legal title, the object can be deaccessioned only if it meets one or more of the above deaccession criteria.

Under no circumstances shall CHM deaccession material from its collection for the sole purpose of obtaining financial support for institutional activities or operations, including but not limited to collections care and management.

Authority for Deaccession

The final authority for the deaccessioning and disposal of the object(s) proposed for deaccession rests with the Board of Trustees.

The process of deaccessioning and disposal may be initiated by appropriate staff in the Collections, Research and Access, or Curatorial Affairs departments or by the Executive Vice President.⁵ Their recommendation(s), with full justification, will be presented to the CHM's President, who will review the proposed deaccession and disposal method. If the President determines that deaccessioning is appropriate, the proposal shall be presented to the Board of Trustees for formal approval – with the exception of

⁵ In the event that there is no staff member with the title of Executive Vice President, then the President shall designate the individual who shall exercise the duties delegated to the Executive Vice President in this policy.

secondary source materials accessioned into the Library collection, which may be deaccessioned following approval by the President, who is a member of the Board of Trustees and to whom the Board has delegated final authority for deaccessioning and disposal decisions for this category of materials.

As part of the deaccessioning proposal process, the staff must undertake a thorough review of all existing records to verify the chain of ownership and identify any possible restrictions. If, in the process of researching the object, any concerns arise regarding the legal title or restrictions that may affect CHM's ability to deaccession or dispose of the object, the museum will consult with legal counsel before taking any further deaccessioning action.

Disposal

The CHM will dispose of each object in a manner appropriate to that piece and in keeping with CHM's fiduciary responsibility and public interest.

Disposal methods may include:

- Public sale or auction
- Sale or transfer to another, more appropriate institution
- Trade or exchange
- Destruction
- Transfer to rightful owner

In general, donor notification of deaccession is not required by CHM's rules or regulations. However, CHM may choose to notify donors of the deaccession of material given to the museum. The museum will comply with all Internal Revenue Service regulations regarding notification.

If sale is deemed the most appropriate method of disposing of a deaccessioned object but an auction is not practical, consideration will be given to selling the object in the public market in a manner that will best serve the interest and objectives of CHM and the public. There will be no sales or gifts of any CHM collection materials to the staff, trustees, or members of their immediate families.

The museum will inform prospective recipients of all known hazards (e.g. toxicity, radioactivity, etc.) associated with deaccessioned materials, whether inherent or due to care of the object (e.g. treatment with toxic substances for pest control). Disposal of

hazardous materials will be conducted in accordance with all relevant local regulations and in a manner that is environmentally responsible.

Deaccessioned material will only be returned to the donor in situations where title to the object was never legally transferred to CHM, material is private or confidential in nature and therefore of no use to the general public, and/or the material is of such negligible historical and monetary value that it would otherwise be recommended for destruction. When deaccessioned material is sold at public auction, the original owner or legal heirs may participate in the sale to reacquire the object(s) if they so choose.

Use of Deaccession Proceeds

All funds received from the sale of materials from the collection will be utilized exclusively for the purchase of new collection acquisitions or to support the direct care of collection materials, including conservation of objects and costs directly related to obtaining or processing new acquisitions. Deaccession proceeds will not be used to pay for operating positions or the upkeep or improvement of collection storage facilities. Whenever practical and possible, the generosity of the donors of the objects sold or traded will be recognized as the donors of the new acquisitions purchased or received in exchange.

USE AND REPATRIATION OF NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURAL ITEMS POLICY

(Adopted by the Board of Trustees, July 21, 1999; revised and approved April 23, 2014; revised and approved July 24, 2023)

Introduction

The Chicago History Museum (CHM) collects, exhibits, and interprets collection objects for the benefit of present and future generations under the auspices and legal authority of the Chicago Historical Society and in a manner that respects the diversity of human cultures. Through its collection, exhibitions, publications, and programs, CHM has helped to underscore the inherent value and integrity of Native American cultures and is committed to working in direct consultation with Native American communities to help assure the survival of Native American traditions.

In addition to this broad commitment to respecting Native American culture, communities, and traditions, CHM also supports the specific purposes and objectives of the Treatment of Cultural Items Pursuant to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and is resolved to abide by and work within the framework of its provisions.

Guidelines

The following principles will govern CHM's policy in regard to culturally sensitive Native American materials.

1. The relationship between CHM and Native American peoples will be governed by respect for the human rights and concerns of Native Americans and the value of scientific research and publication.
2. CHM recognizes that respect for the human rights of Native Americans means it has a special fiduciary responsibility in the preservation, care, and exhibition of those objects in its collection that are considered funerary objects, sacred objects, or cultural patrimony under NAGPRA.
3. CHM will strive to resolve questions of the disposition and treatment of culturally sensitive materials consensually on a case-by-case basis through cooperative and timely discussions between CHM and all interested Native American tribes. In the event of competing tribal claims for the same material, CHM will contact the Federal Advisory Review Committee created by NAGPRA. One of the Review

Committee's responsibilities is to facilitate resolution of disputes. CHM agrees to abide by the Committee's recommendation.

4. CHM will not knowingly acquire any object whose ownership is contrary to Illinois or federal law or whose circumstances of collection are unethical or contrary to the goals and/or ethical practices of CHM and the museum profession in general.
5. CHM will not collect human remains or sacred funerary objects.
6. CHM will, to the extent possible, consult with the living cultural groups regarding ownership and treatment issues before deciding whether to acquire culturally sensitive material related to those groups. Any acquisition of sacred or culturally sensitive materials will be based on thorough consultation with culturally affiliated Native peoples and will be accompanied by documentation substantiating that the acquisition is related to CHM's institutional mission. CHM may consider assisting and acting as a conduit, when appropriate, for the return of non-CHM material to the culturally affiliated group.
7. CHM recognizes the obligation to interpret cultural items with accuracy, sensitivity, and respect for their relationship to the cultures of Native peoples. Dialogues with Native peoples will be conducted to represent fairly and objectively their beliefs and viewpoints. The need for meaningful dialogue is especially important when culturally sensitive materials are proposed for exhibition.
8. Public access to CHM's collection is essential to its mission, and it will strike a balance between safeguarding the collection from harm and encouraging its use in promoting awareness and appreciation of the rich cultural legacy of Native peoples. However, public access to culturally sensitive materials may be restricted if such access offends religious or cultural practices or beliefs.
9. CHM staff will consult with religious and tribal leaders regarding the care and handling of culturally sensitive materials, as well as the appropriate use of informational discoveries that may result from studies of these objects.
10. Subject to CHM policies regarding care, conservation, risk management, and security, access to sensitive artifacts will be provided, on an individual or group basis, to appropriate and recognized Native peoples who wish to perform rituals or ceremonies using collections in a specially prepared area. Any requests to alter the physical appearance of an object for religious or ceremonial purposes will be reviewed by the Director of Curatorial Affairs and the Director of Collections and must be approved in advance by CHM's President.

11. All negotiations concerning culturally sensitive materials shall be conducted with professional discretion. Collaboration and openness with concerned parties are the goals of these dialogues; and if publicity is desirable, then it will be carried out in collaboration.
12. CHM will strive to answer promptly inquiries requesting information about its collection to appropriate Native American tribal authorities and will provide physical access to existing records and documentation.
13. The repatriation of unassociated funerary objects, cultural patrimony, and sacred objects by CHM will be made in accordance with relevant NAGPRA provisions.
14. CHM recognizes that instances may arise in which materials are shown to be appropriate for repatriation but where the tribe, group, or individual requires additional time to facilitate repatriation to appropriate parties within the tribe. In such circumstances, and if appropriate, CHM will offer to maintain the materials in custody until such time as the tribe designates or will transfer the materials to a third party that the tribe designates as a repository in trust for them, upon such terms as are agreed.
15. In appropriate circumstances, CHM will request permission from the Native American tribal owners prior to repatriation to photograph, document, or commission a replica of the object.
16. Deaccessioning in accordance with CHM's existing policies and procedures is required prior to repatriating any collection materials. In circumstances of repatriation, CHM will also require a release from any subsequent claim from the tribe, group, or individual to whom the objects are repatriated, as well as an indemnification against any future claims on the part of another tribe, group, or individual.

INCOMING LOANS POLICY

(Approved by the Board of Trustees, April 23, 2014; revised and approved July 24, 2023])

Introduction

The Chicago History Museum (CHM), under the auspices and legal authority of the Chicago Historical Society, borrows materials from individuals, institutions, and other organizations for use in special exhibitions. Occasionally, and far less frequently, CHM may also borrow collection materials or their equivalent for scholarly research or use in developing other interpretive projects.

Unless otherwise negotiated in full transparency by CHM and authorized in writing by the lender, CHM will exercise the same degree of care for incoming loans as it does for materials in its own collection. Before assuming responsibility for an incoming loan, CHM must therefore ensure that it can store, protect, preserve, and account for the loan materials in accordance with professionally accepted standards.

The following policies will govern CHM's review, approval, and oversight of all incoming loans of materials for use in exhibitions or other projects as described above:

Guidelines and Conditions

1. All incoming loan material must be borrowed for a clear and specified use that will result in public benefit. CHM will not borrow or exhibit materials as a favor to the lender or solely for the purpose of enhancing their market value for the owner's resale purposes.
2. CHM will take reasonable and appropriate precautions to verify that requested materials have been legally and ethically acquired by the lender. CHM will not borrow material that is known to have been collected or imported in violation of state, federal, or international restrictions, or which may otherwise place the institution in a compromising legal or ethical position.
3. CHM will comply with all protective legislation, treaties, and state, federal, and international restrictions (including NAGPRA, the Endangered Species Act, and pertinent firearms, transportation, safety, and other regulations) in the administration of its incoming loans program.
4. In negotiating the terms of an incoming loan, CHM will only agree to loan conditions that are believed to be reasonable and achievable. Once incoming loan conditions

are accepted in the form of a signed incoming loan contract, CHM will make every effort to adhere to these restrictions.

5. In general, CHM's loan agreement shall be used to govern the incoming loan. The agreement will identify the specific exhibition or project for which the material is being borrowed; loan duration, venue(s), and dates for each venue; lender's insurance value; and any other special loan requirements or uses specified by the lender or requested by CHM.
6. Incoming loans are generally borrowed for a period of two years or less. Though CHM is currently custodian for a small number of long-term, indefinite, and "permanent" loans, CHM will not enter into any new loan agreements without stipulating an end date for the loan period. Long-term loans borrowed for a period of two years or more will be approved only when there is a compelling public benefit in doing so.
7. CHM will insure the loan material for the duration of the loan at the fair market value to be specified in the written loan agreement.
8. Damage or loss to incoming loan material will be documented in writing, and CHM will notify the lender of the material as soon as possible following discovery of this event.
9. No modifications to the loan materials will be made by CHM or on behalf of CHM unless approved in writing and in advance by the lender or an authorized representative of the lender.
10. No portion of an incoming loan may be transferred to a location or person that has not been approved in writing by the lending institution. Should ownership of a borrowed object come into question, CHM may, at its discretion, retain custody of the loan material until legal ownership can be determined.
11. Proper credit will be given to the lender as specified in the loan agreement, and the loan material will also be identified properly in all printed or electronic material in which the material appears or is described.

Evaluation Criteria

Because incoming loans require an institutional commitment of time and resources to manage – and because incoming loans also constitute an increased institutional liability in the event of their damage or loss – CHM will enter into an incoming loan agreement only after a thoughtful consideration of the following evaluation criteria:

- CHM’s ability to transport, handle, store, and exhibit the material safely, responsibly, within the project budget, and in conformance with the lender’s requirements
- The amount of lead time necessary and available to negotiate the loan agreement and prepare the material for the requested use
- The importance of the proposed loan material to the specific exhibition or project for which it would be borrowed
- The potential of the loan to raise reasonable concerns regarding possible conflict of interest on the part of CHM in regard to its borrowing of the material or its proposed use

In evaluating the merits of a potential incoming loan, CHM staff will strive to maintain an appropriate balance between developing meaningful and compelling scholarly and interpretive programs and products (which, depending on the subject, CHM’s existing collections may not always support) and the institution’s interest in showcasing its own collections for the benefit of the public. CHM staff will also be mindful of the institution’s risk in assuming responsibility for the loan material, the costs and staff time necessary to administer the loan, and the institution’s need to allocate its resources responsibly in service of its broader mission and purpose.

Authority and Oversight

Incoming loans may be initiated by CHM staff only after consultation with the Registrar or Director of Collections and with prior approval of the Director of Curatorial Affairs. Following approval by the Director of Curatorial Affairs, curatorial staff may issue a formal loan request – or, when requested by the lender or otherwise desired, a written loan request may be issued by the Registrar, Executive Vice President,⁶ or the President.

CHM’s Registrar is charged with administering incoming loans and will be responsible for creating and maintaining all loan records, including incoming and outgoing condition reports for each loaned object. The Registrar will work with appropriate CHM staff to negotiate the terms of loan in consultation with the Director of Collections, who must review and approve all proposed loan conditions and requirements, insurance values, and budgetary considerations before the written agreement is finalized.

⁶ In the event that there is no staff member with the title of Executive Vice President then the President shall designate the individual who shall exercise the duties delegated to the Executive Vice President in this policy.

When incoming loans are valued at more than \$500,000 per lender, the loan must also be approved in advance by the President. The written loan agreement will be signed by the Director of Collections or Executive Vice President on behalf of CHM, and the agreement must be countersigned by the lender or an authorized legal representative of the lender.

Any alterations to the contract must be approved and countersigned by authorized staff at both institutions, and any exceptions to the Incoming Loan Policy in the administration of an incoming loan must also be approved in advance by CHM's Board of Trustees Collections and Research Committee or Board of Trustees Executive Committee.

Should CHM be unable to return a loan to the lender at the address of record at the conclusion of the loan period, or if the lender refuses to accept the material, CHM's strategy for resolution of the loan (including possible disposal or acquisition of the material) will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Director of Collections in consultation with the President and, when necessary, with legal counsel.

OUTGOING LOANS POLICY

(Adopted by the Board of Trustees; revised and approved, April 23, 2014; revised and approved July 24, 2023)

Introduction

The Chicago History Museum (CHM), under the auspices and legal authority of the Chicago Historical Society, lends its collection materials as a professional courtesy to other institutions and to broaden access to its collection holdings through exhibitions and other projects that benefit the public. When lending its collection materials to another organization, CHM relinquishes physical custody of the loan material for a specific purpose and time period while retaining title to and responsibility for the material.

The following policies will govern CHM's review, approval, and oversight of all outgoing loans of collection materials.

Guidelines and Conditions

1. CHM lends only properly accessioned and cataloged material.
2. CHM lends only to institutions and government bodies, never to individuals. In general, CHM prefers to lend to peer institutions (e.g. museums, libraries, and archives).
3. CHM will approve an outgoing loan request only upon determining, to the best of its abilities, that the loan will not jeopardize the physical integrity and safety of the borrowed materials, give rise to commercial exploitation of CHM or its collections, present a conflict of interest, or discredit CHM in the eyes of the public and/or its peers.
4. All outgoing loan costs will be paid by the borrower (including but not limited to appraisal, conservation, insurance, packing, shipping, etc.). In addition to charging for these out-of-pocket costs, CHM will also assess loan fees, to be fairly determined and published in a separate loan fee schedule, to help defray the cost of administering the loan.
5. In general, no more than six objects will be approved for loan to one borrower at any given time. Requests for more than six loan items will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may entail a special fee to be negotiated between the two parties. For costume materials, the request is limited to no more than three ensembles.

6. In general, outgoing loan requests must be received at least twelve months in advance of the requested loan period. Longer advance notice may be required when additional time is needed to evaluate the loan request or prepare the loan materials (e.g. when several objects are requested at once, for international loans, or when requested materials require extensive conservation). If approved, loan requests received less than twelve months in advance may be subject to additional loan fees.
7. Outgoing loans are generally granted for a period of one year or less and are subject to annual renewals. After four extensions, the borrower must arrange for a CHM-approved conservator to examine and prepare condition reports on the loan material before CHM will consider another extension request.
8. Requests for long-term loans of five years or longer are subject to consideration on a case-by-case basis. Written agreements governing long-term loans will generally stipulate special requirements over and above standard terms for short-term loans (including but not limited to periodic examination of the loan material, additional security and preservation precautions, etc.). Under no circumstances will CHM agree to an indefinite loan of its collection material.
9. In general, the borrowing institution's loan agreement shall be used to govern the outgoing loan and must specify the venue(s), overall loan duration, and dates for each venue. The borrower's loan agreement will be modified as necessary to reflect any restrictions or special requirements deemed appropriate and necessary by CHM.
10. The borrowing institution will adhere to all packing and shipping specifications provided by CHM to safeguard the materials during transit. All loans returned to CHM must be packed and shipped in the manner in which they left CHM unless other arrangements are made and agreed upon in writing by both parties.
11. The borrowing institution will insure the loan material for the duration of the loan at the fair market value amount specified by CHM as part of the written loan agreement.
12. Damage or loss to the loan material during the term of loan will be documented by the borrowing institution in writing, and the borrower will notify CHM as soon as possible following discovery of the event.
13. No modifications to the loan materials by the borrowing institution will be permitted unless approved in writing and in advance by the Registrar or Director of Collections in consultation with other appropriate CHM staff.
14. To ensure the safety of the loan material, it may sometimes be necessary for the material to be accompanied and/or installed by a member of the CHM staff or

another CHM-approved courier. Under such circumstances, all costs related to the couriering of the material will be borne by the borrowing institution. Courier assignments will not be used as perks for CHM staff or to defray the cost of travel for other projects.

15. The borrowing institution will provide CHM with two complimentary copies of any exhibition catalog or other publication that features or mentions the loan object.
16. CHM will be the sole provider of all photography of the loan material for both publication and publicity purposes. Installation photography by the borrowing institution for documentary and publicity purposes is permitted.
17. Proper credit will be given to CHM as specified in the loan agreement, and the loan material will also be identified properly in all printed or electronic material in which the material appears or is described.
18. CHM reserves the right to recall an outgoing loan if the contract terms are violated or if the borrower provides inadequate security or care for the loan material.

Evaluation Criteria

CHM will approve or deny all outgoing loan requests based on a thoughtful assessment of each individual request. The following factors will be considered during this review process:

- The availability of the requested material during the proposed loan period
- The ability of the requested material to withstand the physical rigors of the loan (including packing, transportation, handling, exposure to light, fluctuating climatic conditions, etc.)
- The ability of the borrower to meet necessary environmental and security requirements appropriate to the requested material
- The ability of the borrower's staff to handle, mount, and install the requested material
- The amount of lead time given CHM staff to properly evaluate and prepare the loan material and negotiate the terms of the loan agreement
- The importance of the proposed exhibition or project (including anticipated public visibility of the project, whether or not a scholarly catalog will be published in conjunction with the project, and the importance of the requested material to the project)
- The loan history of the requested material

- The time and costs associated with preparing the requested material and administering the loan
- If necessary, the availability of appropriate CHM staff to courier, pack/unpack, and install/deinstall the requested material
- The borrower's history of adhering to CHM's requirements in regard to any prior loan agreements between the institutions

In judging requests for outgoing loans, CHM will strive to maintain an appropriate balance between its twin goals of sharing the collection with as broad an audience as possible and preserving the collection for use by future generations. In evaluating loan requests and establishing appropriate loan fees, CHM staff shall also be mindful of the need to allocate its resources responsibly in service of its broader mission and purpose.

Authority and Oversight

All loan requests must be submitted in writing by a person authorized to do so on behalf of the borrowing institution. Loan requests must stipulate the nature of the exhibition or project, the requested duration of the loan, a list of the objects being requested, and any other details pertinent to the request.

Loan requests will be reviewed and discussed by the Registrar, Director of Collections, Director of Curatorial Affairs, and Director of Research and Access, who will forward their recommendations to the Executive Vice President for approval (or, in his/her absence, by another CHM officer).⁷

Following approval by the Executive Vice President, terms of the loan will be negotiated by the Registrar in consultation with appropriate CHM staff. The written loan agreement will be signed by the Director of Collections or Executive Vice President on behalf of CHM, and the agreement must be countersigned by an authorized representative of the borrowing institution.

Any alterations to the contract must be approved and countersigned by authorized staff at both institutions, and any exceptions to the Outgoing Loan Policy in the administration of outgoing loans must also be approved in advance by the Executive Vice President (or, in his/her absence, by another CHM officer).

⁷ In the event that there is no staff member with the title of Executive Vice President, then the President shall designate the individual who shall exercise the duties delegated to the Executive Vice President in this policy.

CHM's Registrar is charged with administering the outgoing loan and will be responsible for creating and maintaining all loan records, including outgoing and incoming condition reports for each loaned object. No collection materials will be released from CHM's custody for outgoing loan purposes until proof of insurance has been obtained for the duration of the loan and the written loan agreement has been signed by authorized representatives from both institutions.

Special Outgoing Loan Policy for Digitization and Other Duplication Projects

From time to time, CHM may be asked to lend materials for digitization or other duplication purposes. Requests for the digitization or duplication of Non-Library materials (including Architecture, Archives and Manuscripts, and Prints and Photographs) will be handled per the above guidelines. For Library materials, however, loan requests for duplication purposes may be evaluated, approved, and administered by the Director of Research and Access in consultation with the Director of Collections and without any further approval by the Executive Vice President.

In addition to being evaluated per the above criteria for Outgoing Loans, all requests to borrow collection materials for duplication will also be evaluated based on an assessment of the copyright status of the material; the uniqueness and condition of the original material; the availability of the material in other formats, copies, or editions at other public institutions; and the appropriateness of the duplication and distribution method proposed by the borrower.

When a request to lend materials for duplication purposes is approved, the authorizing staff may waive loan fees if the digitization effort is determined to be of long-term public benefit and/or if the time necessary to administer a loan for this purpose is expected to be minimal. The borrower will, however, be required to pay for any out-of-pocket expenses including but not limited to conservation, packing, shipping, and/or duplication.

OBJECTS IN CUSTODY POLICY

(Approved by the Board of Trustees, April 23, 2014; revised and approved July 24, 2023)

Temporary Custody

The Chicago History Museum (CHM), under the auspices and legal authority of the Chicago Historical Society, is accountable for all objects solicited for acquisition, loan, or study at the moment they are received by CHM or a member of its staff. It is therefore imperative that all such materials be documented, handled, and stored professionally and appropriately from the moment CHM assumes custody of the materials.

Any solicited materials accepted into the custody of CHM for acquisition or loan consideration or for study purposes must be documented immediately on a Temporary Custody Receipt (TCR) signed by a member of the Collections and Research Division staff and countersigned by the depositor of the material. The TCR is used to document CHM's receipt of the material and govern its responsibilities in regard to the material until an Incoming Loan Agreement, Deed of Gift, or Seller's Warranty is executed or the deposited material is returned or disposed per the depositor's written instructions.

As a general rule, CHM does not accept unsolicited materials for acquisition, loan, or study purposes. Unless the unsolicited material is determined to be extraordinarily compelling, unsolicited material received by mail or shipper will be returned to the address from which it was sent as soon as possible following receipt of the material by CHM. When no return contact information is provided for unsolicited material, CHM staff may dispose of the material upon written approval of the Registrar and Director of Collections. On rare occasions, when unsolicited material is determined to be compelling enough to merit further consideration, the material may be retained on a TCR following approval by the Director of Curatorial Affairs, the Executive Vice President⁸.

Original, signed copies of the TCR will be retained in the Registrar's office and filed as "active" until they are accessioned, converted to loan, returned, or disposed. Materials received for acquisition consideration will be assigned to a Curator, Archivist, Librarian, and/or Collection Manager for follow-up. Responsibility for materials received for loan

⁸ In the event that there is no staff member with the title of Executive Vice President, then the President shall designate the individual who shall exercise the duties delegated to the Executive Vice President in this policy.

consideration and/or study will be assigned to the Registrar and additional Collections and Research Division staff as appropriate.

Staff assigned responsibility for materials documented on a TCR are strongly encouraged to ensure that the materials are accessioned, converted to loan, returned, or disposed in a timely manner. The Director of Curatorial Affairs and Director of Collections are charged with monitoring the progress of these materials and ensuring that their status is resolved as expeditiously as possible so that they do not become an undue burden on the institution.

Found in Collections

Like many other museums – especially those with a long history of collecting prior to the establishment of current professional best practices – CHM has in its custody a number of “found in collection” (FIC) objects for which the legal status and provenance have not been properly recorded.

FIC materials are defined as items presumed to be part of the collection – generally discovered within collection storage areas – that cannot be tied to a particular donor or accession number. In some situations, such material may have been accessioned and later separated from its accession number. In other cases, FIC material may have been offered for acquisition consideration, and the owner’s name was not recorded or was subsequently lost. In some cases, the FIC material may already be owned by CHM but was not formally accessioned or assigned an accession number. FIC material may also have been received for acquisition consideration and subsequently rejected, without the material ever having been returned to the owner or disposed.

Because there are a number of factors that can define something as FIC, FIC material should undergo thorough investigation before any action, such as accessioning, processing, conservation, or disposal takes place.

When FIC material is discovered at CHM, it should be brought to the attention of the appropriate Collection Manager or Archivist. At this time, the Collection Manager or Archivist may choose to assign the material a temporary inventory number (TIN) for location tracking purposes only, or he or she may add the material to a log of FIC materials to initiate their research and eventual resolution. It is strongly recommended that the material be recorded in the FIC log whenever existing information about the material would otherwise be at risk of being lost, since information discovered with the

material may be critical to the staff's investigation and resolution of the material's accession status.

Staff investigating the status of FIC material should work closely with the Registrar to ensure that all existing sources of information are consulted during this process. If no evidence of prior accessioning can be found after all investigatory steps are exhausted, the material may be recommended for accessioning or disposal following curatorial review. Where it is possible to track down the original owner of the material, the accession and/or disposal process is accomplished according to standard institutional procedures.

In situations where no provenance can be found, or when the owner of the materials cannot be contacted, the accessioning or disposal of these materials must be undertaken only after consultation with the Registrar, Director of Collections, and legal counsel (as necessary), and with the written approval of the President.

COLLECTIONS DOCUMENTATION AND CARE POLICY

(Approved by the Board of Trustees April 23, 2014; revised and approved July 24, 2023)

Introduction

The Chicago History Museum (CHM), acting under the auspices and legal authority of the Chicago Historical Society, holds its collections in trust on behalf of the public. CHM accepts the responsibility inherent in this trust, including the requirement to document the collection and protect it from damage, deterioration, theft, or other loss in order to promote the collection's long-term preservation, accessibility, and use.

Collections documentation and care is a collaborative and active process. Though all of CHM staff have a role to play in collections stewardship, primary responsibility for collections care is vested in the Collections, Curatorial Affairs, Research and Access, and Properties departments.

Up to date, reliable, and comprehensive documentation of the collection is essential to establishing physical, intellectual, administrative, and legal control over the collection so that CHM staff can know, understand, and locate the collection materials for which they are responsible – a prerequisite to making these materials available for use in fulfillment of CHM's public mission.

Collections care comprises a broad range of proactive and responsive activities, from collection-level risk assessment and preventative risk management to item-level conservation treatment. In allocating its resources, CHM recognizes that preventative care is the most effective and economical means of ensuring the long-term preservation of its collection. As such, CHM further recognizes that proactive collections stewardship must be an institutional priority to prevent damage or loss to the collection, rather than waiting to act after damage or loss has already occurred. Though item-level preventative or remedial conservation may be warranted under certain circumstances, CHM also recognizes that macro (or group-level) collections care is generally a more efficient use of resources than micro (or item-level) intervention.

Documentation

Legal and administrative records documenting accessioning, deaccessioning, incoming loans, and outgoing loans are maintained by the Registrar and retained in perpetuity as part of CHM's permanent record. Legal and administrative records shall be safeguarded

from hazards such as fire, water, and loss, and duplicate copies of critical records shall be maintained in an off-site location. Only trained staff, volunteers, and interns and supervised researchers are permitted to utilize original collection records; under no circumstances will original records be removed from the building without prior approval of the Director of Collections.

All known provenance and other relevant historical information related to the material will be documented by CHM staff at the time of acquisition in order to maximize potential use of the material by staff and the public. Curators, Archivists, Collection Managers, and Catalogers shall work with other Collections and Research Division staff as appropriate to ensure that this information – and any other relevant information discovered through subsequent research – is reflected in the catalog record and/or authority files for each object or accession group. Collections shall be cataloged according to professional cataloging standards, with local cataloging protocols documented and maintained by designated staff in the Collections and Research Division.

CHM's goal is to make all of its catalog records available through an online public catalog. CHM will also seek opportunities to share catalog information through other public web portals in order to increase discoverability of the catalog records and visibility of the collection itself. Electronic collection records (including collection images) shall be backed up on a regular basis, with back-ups stored off-site.

The following information is considered privileged and will not be shared with third parties unless required under the law or necessary to obtain insurance coverage:

- Names of donors or lenders who have requested that they remain anonymous
- Personal contact information for all donors and lenders
- Appraised or estimated values for collection and loan materials
- Collection storage locations

Preventative Collections Care

Staff Training and Awareness: The Collections Department shall bear primary responsibility for staff training to promote awareness of collections care, potential threats to the collection, and appropriate precautions to mitigate those threats. Collections Department staff will work with Properties staff and other departments as necessary to develop and implement an ongoing training and awareness program.

Pest Management and Housekeeping: CHM endeavors to preserve its collections, in part, through the implementation and periodic review of a proactive, integrated pest management program to protect the collection from infestation and pest-related damage. CHM's pest management program incorporates preventative housekeeping practices throughout the museum's facilities (with special attention to collection storage and exhibition areas); establishes protocols for controlling and limiting the presence of food, drink, plants, and other materials with the potential to harbor or attract pests; includes regular monitoring of the collections and facilities for signs of pest infestation or activity; and sets forth reporting and response procedures when signs of pest infestation or activity are discovered. Conservation staff will work with the appropriate Collections and Research Division staff and Properties Department staff to determine the appropriate course of action whenever pest infestation is suspected and will inform the Director of Collections, Director of Curatorial Affairs, Executive Vice President⁹ of all non-routine pest management activity.

Environmental Control: CHM understands that controlling the air quality, temperature, and humidity levels is a challenging but essential ongoing activity that is critical to the long-term preservation of CHM's collections. CHM's Conservators are responsible for establishing target environmental standards for all storage, work areas, and galleries where collections are likely to be present (and to identify portions of the collection that require special environmental conditioning); Properties and Collections staff shall work together to monitor and record environmental conditions on a regular basis; the Properties department is responsible for maintaining and adjusting environmental control systems to achieve recommended conditions within practical constraints including climatic conditions, existing facilities and equipment, and available resources; and Properties and Collections staff will also work together with the President, Executive Vice President, and Institutional Advancement staff to anticipate, identify, prioritize, and raise funds for necessary improvements to the physical plant.

Light Exposure: Conservation staff are responsible for setting reasonable limits on light levels and exposure; in doing so, Conservators will seek a balance between CHM's responsibility to preserve its collections while making them accessible to CHM staff,

⁹ In the event that there is no staff member with the title of Executive Vice President, then the President shall designate the individual who shall exercise the duties delegated to the Executive Vice President in this policy.

researchers, and the public. Whenever possible, fugitive materials should be protected from unfiltered natural or fluorescent light.

Collection Processing: New acquisitions shall be processed as soon as possible after accessioning. Using methods approved by the Conservators, collections materials will be marked with their accession number to ensure they can be properly identified at all times. Museum collections (Architectural models and fragments, Costumes, Decorative and Industrial Arts, and Paintings and Sculpture) and Library materials will generally be managed at the item level (i.e. each object will be assigned its own unique number, cataloged individually, and assigned its own unique storage location). Non-Library research collections (Architectural drawings and records, Archives and Manuscripts, and Prints and Photographs) – sometimes referred to as archival collections – may be processed to the item or group level depending on the size and other characteristics of the individual collection. Wherever possible and practical, archival collections managed at the collection level will be arranged in accordance with the principles of provenance and original order in accordance with professional best practices for archival management. Archival collections will be processed according to “More Product, Less Process” principles to ensure collections are discoverable and usable by the public while conserving institutional resources.¹⁰

Storage and Housing: CHM shall provide safe and appropriate storage of collection materials (including loan objects). Storage areas must provide adequate space for the orderly arrangement and safe movement of objects. CHM shall seek to provide collection storage solutions that minimize physical stress and exposure to harmful materials and environmental conditions while recognizing that individual housing and storage mounts are not always a prudent use of institutional resources. Collection Managers and Archivists will consult with Conservators to identify practical and appropriate equipment, housing materials, and storage methods that will support the long-term preservation of the materials within existing budgetary and space constraints and institutional priorities.

Handling and Transportation: CHM staff shall seek to limit handling and moving collections whenever possible, as these activities increase the risk of damage and loss. Only Collections, Research and Access, Curatorial Affairs, and Exhibitions department

¹⁰ Mark A. Greene and Dennis Meissner, “More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Archival Processing,” *The American Archivist*, vol. 68 (fall/winter 2005), pp. 208-263.

staff, contractors, interns, and volunteers, as well as the Executive Vice President, are permitted to handle collections materials unless authorized by the Director of Collections or unless necessary to protect the collections from imminent danger; all persons authorized to handle collections must be trained in appropriate handling techniques by CHM's Conservators. The Registrar shall be responsible for approving all packing and shipping arrangements for incoming and outgoing loans. Unless released into the custody of an approved contractor or borrower, two trained and approved CHM representatives must travel with and supervise any collections material being transported or used off-site; at least one of these people must be a member of the Collections and Research Division staff.

Inventory Control: The Collections Department, in consultation with appropriate Curatorial Affairs and Research and Access staff, shall establish and implement protocols for tracking collection movement to ensure that object locations are recorded accurately and in a timely manner. Ongoing inventories will be conducted by the Collection Managers and Archivists to establish and maintain physical control over the collection.

Security: CHM is committed to providing a safe and secure environment throughout all of CHM's facilities. Collections and Security staff shall work together to ensure the safety and security of all collection storage and work areas; Collections, Curatorial Affairs, Security, and Exhibitions staff shall collaborate to ensure the safety and security of collections while on display. Collections, Research and Access, and Curatorial Affairs staff, select members of the Properties staff, and senior administrative staff are granted unsupervised access to the collection storage and/or exhibition areas relevant to their job duties. Exhibitions staff are granted unsupervised access to exhibition areas and workrooms where collections are stored while they are prepared for display. CHM staff will exercise their authority to enter these areas only for legitimate, job-related activity. Researchers and other visitors to the museum must be accompanied at all times by a member of CHM staff while in a non-public area of the facility. Volunteers and interns working within collection storage and exhibition areas must be supervised by a member of the Collections, Research and Access, or Curatorial Affairs staff or their respective division heads. Contractors working in storage and exhibition areas where collections are present must be accompanied at all times by a member of the Collections staff, Security staff, or Director of Properties unless approved in advance by the Director of Collections. No construction, cleaning, movement of large equipment, or other work will

be permitted in collection storage or exhibition areas without prior approval of the Director of Collections, Registrar, or other designated Collections staff. Handling of collections material and movement or alteration of collections storage equipment by contractors is strictly prohibited without prior approval of the Director of Collections, Registrar, or other designated Collections staff.¹¹

Display: Exhibition installations shall integrate preventative conservation and security measures to guard against the damage or loss of collections while they are on display. Exhibition staff will consult with Conservators, Registrar, and designated Security staff in planning for exhibitions to ensure that the design and fabrication of exhibition elements (including display cases, mounts, and lighting) provide adequate safety and security for the collections to be displayed. Exhibition duration will be limited for fragile and light-sensitive collections based on Conservator recommendations.

Disaster Preparedness and Response: CHM has established a disaster preparedness and response plan to mitigate potential risks to the collection. The plan shall be maintained and updated by the Collections Department in collaboration with the Properties Department. The plan sets forth roles and responsibilities for disaster response and collections recovery and includes procedures and other information to enable staff to respond effectively to fire, power outages, bomb threats, and other possible threats to the collections, building, staff, and visitors. Collections recovery planning and training are the responsibility of the Conservation staff on behalf of the Collections Department, and general preparedness and training in evacuation and other emergency procedures are the responsibility of the Security staff on behalf of the Properties Department.

Insurance and Risk Management: CHM mitigates against risk to its collections by maintaining fine arts insurance to provide for the conservation or replacement of collection materials (and loans to the collection) in the event of damage or loss. Because insuring the entire collection for its fair market value is impractical and cost prohibitive, CHM shall seek to insure the collection (and loans to the collection) for an appropriate level of probable loss. In the event of an insurance claim, proceeds from the settlement will be used first to cover any damage or loss to incoming loans, with the remainder used for the conservation or replacement of CHM's own collections.

¹¹ Security-related access and handling restrictions described in this section may be waived in emergency situations when necessary to avoid or respond to serious imminent danger to CHM's collections, building, staff, or visitors.

Conservation Treatment

Although preventative care is CHM's first line of defense in preserving its collection over the long term, an object's condition, value, and/or anticipated use may justify remedial conservation treatment. Because conservation treatment is often time-consuming and resource-intensive, thoughtful prioritization of conservation activity is necessary to utilize CHM's resources responsibly and in a manner that best serves the public interest.

Collections to be considered for treatment must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Material is actively deteriorating or unstable.
- Material has been requested for exhibition, photography, or other use that will advance the institution's mission.
- Material is determined to be particularly significant or unique.

Treatment priorities will be set by appropriate staff in the Collections and Research Division in consultation with the Department of Curatorial Affairs, based on several factors including an evaluation of the historical value of the materials proposed for treatment and a risk/benefit analysis of the treatment proposed. When conservation treatment is recommended, stabilization will be prioritized over cosmetic work, and minimal intervention will be preferred over more invasive techniques to ensure objects are altered only as absolutely necessary and as little as possible. Conservation treatment will strive, first and foremost, to do no harm and will adhere, to the degree possible, to the principle of reversibility.

All conservation activity must adhere to the Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice of the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC). Treatment of any collection material shall be performed by a professionally trained conservator within the limits of his or her training and ability; contract conservators must be recommended by a CHM staff Conservator and approved by the Director of Collections.

In keeping with AIC guidelines, Conservation staff will consult Curators, Archivists, Collection Managers, and other knowledgeable staff in order to identify and prioritize materials for possible treatment and to determine the appropriate treatment approach for materials recommended for conservation. This review may result in materials not being treated for a variety of reasons, including:

- Resources (time, materials, expertise, and/or equipment) are not available for treatment.
- Benefits of treatment do not outweigh the risks.
- Potential use, value, or rarity of the object does not justify the proposed treatment.
- Treatment may interfere with provenance or future analysis.

When conservation intervention is needed to stabilize, repair, test, or clean an individual object, the conservator will prepare a treatment proposal prior to initiating work on the object. Treatment proposals are reviewed and approved by designated staff in the Collections Department and Curatorial Affairs Department. Treatment proposals are not required prior to routine activities such as dusting and/or minor repair.

All conservation treatments, whether performed by CHM staff or contractors, will be fully documented, and the records of such activity (including examination reports, treatment proposals and reports, and testing methodologies and findings) will be included in the object's permanent collection record and be available for use by CHM staff and researchers.

ACCESS AND USE POLICY

(Approved by the Board of Trustees, April 23, 2014; revised and approved July 24, 2023)

Introduction

As a non-profit collecting institution, the Chicago History Museum (CHM), acting under the auspices and legal authority of the Chicago Historical Society, recognizes its responsibility to provide public access to its collections and related documentation while safeguarding these materials for future generations. As such, the CHM Collections and Research Division, under the leadership of the Executive Vice President,¹² is responsible for establishing procedures to encourage the use of materials while incorporating appropriate measures to ensure preservation and control over the collection.

CHM makes its collections accessible to the public through exhibitions, programs, publications, online resources, and loans to other institutions. CHM also provides on-site and remote research and reference services and reproduction and licensing services.

In all of these endeavors, CHM staff will seek to provide the highest level of service to the public within available resources by eliminating unnecessary barriers to the museum's offerings; maintaining accessible, well documented, and well organized collections; implementing equitable service and access practices; seeking out and implementing appropriate technology solutions to increase the discoverability and usability of collections; and providing accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests for information or access to collections.

In keeping with the Code of Ethics of the American Library Association, CHM will uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor the museum's resources. To the extent permitted under the law, CHM will also protect each researcher's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted.¹³

¹² In the event that there is no staff member with the title of Executive Vice President, then the President shall designate the individual who shall exercise the duties delegated to the Executive Vice President in this policy.

¹³ American Library Association, Code of Ethics of the American Library Association.

General Research Guidelines

In making its collections available for use by outside researchers:

- CHM staff must supervise outside researchers at all times while they have access to collection materials and original documentation.
- CHM staff will establish object handling guidelines to ensure the safety and integrity of collections material, including limiting handling to CHM staff for certain categories of material.
- CHM staff may limit public access to the collections based on the material's condition, fragility, size, storage location, and other reasonable factors.
- CHM staff may limit the time allotted to assist each researcher in order to ensure that staff time and other resources are allocated reasonably and equitably.
- CHM staff will take appropriate measures to prevent privileged or restricted information from being made accessible to the public.
- CHM may implement a reasonable schedule of fees to offset the costs of providing access to collection materials and other research services.

Guidelines for Access to Research Collections

The vast majority of CHM's collection is available for on-site use by researchers. These materials are cataloged in an online public access catalog and, with the exception of fragile and extremely valuable materials, may be accessed through CHM's non-circulating Research Center. These materials include:

- Architecture (drawings and records only)
- Archives and Manuscripts
- Library
- Prints and Photographs

The Research Center is operated by staff within the Research and Access Department. The Director of Research and Access, in consultation with the Director of Collections, will be responsible for developing, promulgating, and enforcing rules and regulations governing public access to and use of the research collections to ensure the security and integrity of the materials, restrict access to confidential or restricted information, and protect intellectual property rights of the copyright owners.

Guidelines for Access to Museum Collections

The remaining, artifact-based portion of CHM's collection is made available to the public on a limited basis and includes the following collection categories:

- Architecture (models and fragments only)
- Costumes
- Decorative and Industrial Arts
- Paintings and Sculpture

Due to the extensive resources required to handle and retrieve this category of collections material, on-site, physical access to these holdings will be limited to researchers who are able to demonstrate that in-person access is required to support substantive research and that the results of that research will be disseminated widely and thoroughly.

The Director of Collections and Director of Curatorial Affairs are responsible for creating, promulgating, and enforcing rules and regulations governing public access to and use of the museum collections to ensure the security and integrity of collection materials, restrict access to confidential or restricted information, and protect intellectual property rights of the copyright owners while striving to increase the accessibility and usability of these materials and to expand the scholarship on and about these objects on behalf of the public.

Museum collections are cataloged to facilitate discovery and use of these holdings. CHM will seek opportunities to increase the number of online catalog records describing these holdings. As catalog records (and images) for the museum collections continue to be added to the public web portal, CHM anticipates that electronic records and digital surrogates will become the primary means by which the majority of researchers will access the museum collections.

Intellectual Property

CHM respects the intellectual property of others (including but not limited to copyright, personality rights, publicity rights, and trademark) and will take reasonable precautions to identify and document these rights so that they are not infringed.

CHM staff shall inform and educate applicable staff concerning the guidelines of Fair Use so as not to unduly restrict the use of materials while also protecting the rights of copyright holders.

CHM protects its own intellectual property as a valuable resource with the potential to be leveraged in support of ongoing collections care and other museum activities. CHM will, however, seek to strike a balance between protectionism and freedom of access and use by waiving or reducing licensing fees for usages related to the institutional mission (e.g. for non-profit or educational use).

CHM will exercise due diligence in informing researchers and licensees of use restrictions on copied materials and in providing appropriate citation and credit information for such material.

COLLECTIONS SAMPLING POLICY

(Adopted by the Board of Trustees, July 21, 1999; revised and approved, April 23, 2014; revised and approved July 24, 2023)

To fully utilize the potential of the collection held in trust by the Chicago History Museum (CHM), operating under the auspices and legal authority of the Chicago Historical Society, it may occasionally be necessary to remove samples from original materials for examination and analysis. Since all sampling is destructive, the procedure must be strictly regulated to ensure that damage is minimal and that the information gained is recorded and used to the best advantage.

All sampling requests by outside individuals or institutions must follow a formal application and approval process. Samples and the information they contain remain the property of CHM, which retains the right to approve the use, credit, and publication of this material. The applicant is responsible for all costs associated with sampling and testing; CHM has the sole authority to determine final tests.

Written requests for sampling should be submitted to the Director of Collections for consideration and processing. Approval is contingent on the evaluations of appropriate staff from the Collections and Curatorial Affairs departments. Written approval will become part of the permanent collection records. Should conflicts arise, a final decision will be arbitrated by the Executive Vice President.¹⁴

Requests to sample collection materials – whether submitted by CHM staff or an outside party – must meet the following criteria:

1. The applicant must be able to demonstrate that the sample and information needed from the sample does not already exist.
2. The applicant must show a justifiable need to remove a sample for analysis and that the information sought cannot be obtained through non-destructive means.
3. The requested sample must support substantive scholarly research and the results of that research must be disseminated widely and thoroughly.
4. The proposed research and analysis must be based on sound methodology and have a reasonable chance of success and completion.

¹⁴ In the event that there is no staff member with the title of Executive Vice President, then the President shall designate the individual who shall exercise the duties delegated to the Executive Vice President in this policy.

5. The technique of sampling, the amount of material to be removed, and the location on the specimen must produce as little damage to the object/document as possible.
6. A CHM-approved conservator must be present at the time of sampling and approve all procedures.
7. The method of analysis, laboratory, and proposed staff must be disclosed.
8. The applicant must agree to submit a full copy of all test results and conclusions to CHM following the sampling and subsequent analysis.
9. To the extent possible, unexpended sample material will be returned to CHM for future possible analytical uses.

APPRAISAL AND AUTHENTICATION POLICY

(Approved by the Board of Trustees, April 23, 2014; re-approved July 24, 2023)

CHM staff may not provide, and the institution shall not pay for, written or verbal appraisals of materials for donors, lenders, or any other third party. Rather, all outside requests for appraisal services should be directed to a professional appraiser. This policy has been established to protect the institution from potential conflicts of interest, accusations of ethical misconduct, or litigation; it also serves to protect potential donors and lenders from legal and financial harm, since monetary appraisals prepared by an interested party may be subject to disqualification.

CHM staff may provide verbal opinions regarding authenticity to other nonprofit or educational institutions for professional or educational purposes only. All other requests for authentication or identification should be referred to a professional appraiser.

CHM staff must take every precaution not to appear to promote or endorse the services of any specific appraiser. When referring members of the public or other third parties to a professional appraiser, CHM staff should direct the party to one or more professional appraisers' organizations to obtain a referral or provide the names of no fewer than three professional appraisers.

CHM staff may estimate values or obtain professional appraisals for internal use only, such as when determining the value of CHM materials for insurance or loan purposes. CHM staff may not share information on appraised values with a third party unless it is necessary for the institution to conduct its business (e.g. to obtain insurance coverage or settle an insurance claim). Information contained in appraisal and authentication reports – other than value – may be shared when doing so is determined to serve a legitimate institutional and/or public interest.

Contributions of collections materials to CHM may be tax deductible under Internal Revenue Service regulations. Upon request from the donor, the Director of Collections or an officer of the institution is authorized to complete and sign Part IV, Donee Acknowledgement of the IRS form 8283 for non-cash charitable contributions. By completing and signing this portion of the form, CHM acknowledges the date of receipt of the donation but does not endorse the valuation of the donated material.

Donors to the collection are responsible for determining the tax consequences of their gifts and securing the services of an independent appraiser (if necessary, under IRS

regulations). Under no circumstances may CHM pay for appraisals of donated property on behalf of the donor.

RESOURCES CONSULTED

- American Alliance of Museums. *Alliance Reference Guide: Developing a Collections Management Policy*, 2012. <http://www.aam-us.org/docs/continuum/developing-a-cmp-final.pdf?sfvrsn=2> (accessed December 12, 2013).
- American Alliance of Museums. *Code of Ethics for Museums*, adopted 1991, amended 2000. <http://www.aam-us.org/resources/ethics-standards-and-best-practices/code-of-ethics> (accessed December 3, 2013).
- American Alliance of Museums. *Collections Stewardship: Standards Regarding Collections Stewardship*. www.aam-us.org/resources/ethics-standards-and-best-practices/collections-stewardship (accessed December 12, 2013).
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- American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works. *AIC Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice*, 1994. http://www.nps.gov/training/tel/Guides/HPS1022_AIC_Code_of_Ethics.pdf (accessed March 7, 2014).
- American Library Association. *Code of Ethics of the American Library Association*, adopted 1939, last updated 2008. <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/proethics/codeofethics/codeethics> (accessed January 28, 2014).
- American Library Association, *Standards for Ethical Conduct for Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Librarians, with Guidelines for Institutional Practice in Support of the Standards*, 2nd edition, 1992. <http://www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=speccollections&template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=8969> (accessed February 2, 2014).
- Chicago Historical Society. *Chicago History Museum Code of Ethics*, adopted 2009, updated 2014. <http://www.chicagohs.org/documents/home/aboutus/CHM-CodeofEthics.pdf> (accessed December 12, 2013).
- Field Museum of Natural History. *Collections Management Policy*, September 2013.

Minnesota Historical Society. *Collections Management Procedures Handbook for Historic Sites*, November 2004.

Peabody Museum of Natural History, Yale University. *Yale Peabody Museum Loan Policy*, 1994.

<http://peabody.yale.edu/sites/default/files/documents/collections/loanpolicy.pdf>

(accessed March 7, 2014).

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. *Accessioning Policy, Ethics Statement, and Accessioning Procedures*, approved 1996, updated 1999.

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. *Loan Policies & Procedures*, approved 1996, updated 1999.

Simmons, John E., *Things Great and Small: Collections Management Policies*.

Washington, DC: American Association of Museums, 2006.

Strong Museum. *Collections Management Manual*, updated and approved 2004.

Whitney Museum of American Art. *Collections Management Policy*, approved 1996, last updated 2009.

[http://whitney.org/file_columns/0002/6177/collection_management_policy_final_4-13-09 .pdf](http://whitney.org/file_columns/0002/6177/collection_management_policy_final_4-13-09.pdf) (accessed March 7, 2014).