

## Collection Management

### Dealing with Collections Administration

The administrative side of managing collections can be daunting, especially for a volunteer organization or one that has not developed or used good collection management procedures in the past. A lot of terms are used to describe the various processes museums and archives use in order to manage their collection effectively. "Accessioning" an object, for example, simply means that you are recording the addition of a new item to your collection, which is separate from accepting a "donation." Sometimes this can be a recently acquired object or it can even be an object that was "found in collection." The latter would refer to any object found in your collection for which you have no information about or even know how it appeared in your collection. Sometimes this can also include old loans that no one has picked up or documented. "Deaccessioning," which is the removal of an object from a collection, can be a little tricky to navigate since museums, archives, and historical societies are generally thought of as holding objects in public trust. Additionally, taking the time to create a collection management policy for your institution will help guide all present and future collections staff/volunteers as well as establish collection care protocols to ensure the continued preservation of your collections. Tips on how to deal with these processes and create a collection management policy can be found below.

### Overall Guidance

*(Resources also include information on the subjects below)*

- Jodi Evans, State Historical Society of Iowa, Museum Registrar: [The Absolute Basics of Collection Management](#)
- Leo Landis, State Historical Society of Iowa, State Curator: [Collections Stewardship and Collecting Plans](#)
- American Association of Museums: [Museum Registration Methods](#)
- Connecting to Collections Care: ["Ethical Issues in Collections Management" Webinar](#) (Presenter: Sally Yerkovich, author of *A Practical Guide to Museum Ethics*)
- Daniel B. Reibel: [Registration Methods for the Small Museum](#)
- International Council of Museums: [Running a Museum: A Practical Handbook](#)
- National Park Service: [Museum Handbook, Part II - Chapter 1: "Documenting Museum Collections"](#)
- Timothy Ambrose and Crispin Paine: [Museum Basics](#)

### Accessioning

- American Association of Museums: ["Accessioning Activity"](#)
- Daniel B. Reibel: [Registration Methods for the Small Museum](#)
- National Park Service: [Museum Handbook, Part II: Chapter 2 - "Accessioning"](#)
- Western Australia Museum: ["Guide to Acquisition and Accessioning Procedures"](#)

## Deaccessioning

- Connecting to Collections Care:
  - [“The Deaccessioning Dilemma: Laws, Ethics, and Actions” Webinar](#) (Presenter: John Simmons, author of *Things Great and Small: Collections Management Policies*)
  - [“Why do we need this? Insights and Hindsight from Deaccessioning” Webinar](#) (Presenter: Leslie Jones, Curator of Decorative Arts at Cheekwood)
- National Park Service: [Museum Handbook, Part II: Chapter 6 – “Deaccessioning”](#)
- Oklahoma Museums Association: [“Deaccessioning Done Right”](#) (by Jennifer Holt)
- Society of American Archivists: [Guidelines for Reappraisal and Deaccessioning](#) (guidelines for archival repositories)

## Found in Collection

- Connecting to Collections Care: [“What is this? Solving Problems Found in Collection” Webinar](#) (Presenter: Jobi Okin Zink, Free Library of Philadelphia)
- Melinda Simms: [Found in Collections](#)
- State of Iowa: Iowa Code, Chapter 305B [“Museum Property”](#) (state code governing loans and undocumented property in the possession of a museum)

## Unwanted Donations

- Kansas Library Association College and University Libraries Section Proceedings, [“Gifts Nobody Wants: The State of the Art in Dealing with Unwanted Donations”](#) (2011, By Sheila O’Hare and Andrew Smith)

## Loans

- Connecting to Collections Care: [“Insurance 101: Practical Considerations for Protecting Institutional Collections and Loans” Webinar](#) (Presenters: Deborah Peak, Molly Slattery, and Sameena Merchant)
- National Park Service: [Museum Handbook, Part II – Chapter 5: “Outgoing Loans”](#)
- State of Iowa: Iowa Code, Chapter 305B [“Museum Property”](#) (state code governing loans and undocumented property in the possession of a museum)

## Cataloging and Inventorying

- Connecting to Collections Care: [“A Place for Everything and Everything in its Place” Webinar](#) (Presenter: Maureen McCormick)
- Museums Australia Victoria: [The Small Museums Cataloguing Manual](#)
- National Park Service
  - [Museum Handbook, Part II – Chapter 3: “Cataloging”](#)
  - [Museum Handbook, Part II – Chapter 4: “Inventory and Other Special Instructions”](#)

## Collection Management Policies

- American Alliance of Museums: [“Developing a Collections Management Policy”](#)

- Connecting to Collections Care: [“Essential Elements of a Collections Management Policy” Webinar](#) (Presenter: Bruce MacLeish, Newport Restoration Foundation\_
- Daniel B. Reibel: [Registration Methods for the Small Museum](#) (pp. 24 – 29)
- Museums and Galleries of New South Wales: [“Guidance on Developing a Collection Policy”](#)