National Galleries Scotland
Collection Review

Principles

NGS is committed to maintaining, reviewing and developing the Collection as part of our mission and objectives, to expand our understanding of its significance, and to ensure that the Collection continues to provide long-term interest and relevance for all our audiences.

We actively appraise and review objects or groups of objects to ensure that they continue to comply with our Collection Development Framework, and to enhance our knowledge of them, and as opportunities to develop staff expertise and skills.

We constantly review the physical requirements of the Collection in the context of latest research and scientific advice and to ensure that the Collection remains manageable and sustainable.

We review objects to assess whether they are duplicates of another object that we own, whether we can provide adequate long-term care and access, and whether the objects might be better suited to being owned by another accredited museum, public body or group.

Definitions

Collections review: Managing and Documenting any formal assessment of the Collection that follows a stated methodology.

Legislation and ethics

Collections Review is an essential component of evidence required for audit and accountability, and of our commitment to sustainable and internationally recognised standards of best practice, including due diligence, the sharing of expertise, research and advice.

It ensures that the NGS Collection remains accessible, ethical and relevant for all our audiences, both actual and digital, and that the Collection continues to reflect and support the NGS commitments to learning and development, health and well-being and social inclusion.

Relevant statutory requirements and codes of ethics include:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended)
- National Heritage (Scotland) Act 1985
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended)
- National Heritage Act 1980: Section 16 (Government Indemnity) (as amended Museums & Galleries Act 1992)
- Return of Cultural Objects Regulations 1994
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended)
- Data Protection Act 1998
• Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
• EU Directive 2001/84EC on Artists’ Resale Rights 2001
• Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002
• Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulation (COSHH) 2002
• UNESCO Code of Practice: Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage 2003
• Human Tissue Act 2004
• Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005
• Charities Act 2006
• Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006
• Immunity from Seizure: Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Bill 2008
• UKRG Standard Facilities Report, 2008 (as amended)
• Code of Practice on Archives for Museums & Galleries 2009
• Equality Act 2010
• Arts Council England Accreditation Standard 2011
• PAS 198: Code of Practice for managing environmental conditions for cultural collections, 2012
• Aviation Act, 2012 and DfT/CAA Air Cargo Regulations
• Universities UK: The Concordat for Engaging the Public with Research 2012
• PD 5454: Guide to storage or exhibition of archival material, 2014
• Museums Association: Code of Ethics for Museums 2015
• British Standard 4971: Conservation and Care of Archives and Library Collections 2017
• UK Research and Innovation (UKRI): RCUK Policy and Guidelines on Governance of Good Research Conduct, updated 2017
• General Data Protection Regulation 2016
• ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums 2017
• BS 4971: Conservation and care of archive and library collections 2017
• British Standard EN 16893: Conservation of Cultural Heritage 2018
• ISO 45001: Guidance on Occupational H&S Management Systems Requirements 2018
• ISO 55000: Asset Management Standards 2018

Due Diligence, enacted by the following:

• 1970: UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and preventing the illicit import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property
• 1998: NMDC Washington Conference: Statement of Principles on Spoliation of works of art during the Holocaust and World War II period
• 2003: Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act
• 2005: DCMS: ‘Combating Illicit Trade’. Due diligence guidelines for museums, libraries and archives on collecting and borrowing cultural material.’
• 2009: Holocaust (Stolen Art) Restitution Act
• 2017: UN Security Council Resolution 2347 Article 17 (g) called on governments to engage with the museum sector and art trade on ‘differentiated due diligence’ and other measures ‘to prevent the trade of stolen or illegally traded cultural property.’
• 2019: The Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects) (Amendment) Act 2019
Standards

This policy is part of the Collections Management set of policies that form a requirement of PAS197 and Spectrum as part of the UK Museum Accreditation Scheme.

Control measures

We review potential additions to the Collection as part of the Acquisition process, informed by The NGS Collection Development Framework and the NGS Research Framework.

We apply Due Diligence legislation to all provenance research, including an obligation to ensure that there is valid Title to any objects in our care.

We have a rolling programme of collections management audits. In addition, we may arrange to audit specific objects or groups of objects, for example to resolve a location query or in response to an Incident report or as part of the Exhibition process. Audits are managed and documented on our centralised and secure, industry-standard data base (MIMSY). Audit progress is the reviewed at quarterly Leadership Team: Collection meetings. Local audits are co-ordinated and managed by the Head of Collections Management.

Specific objects or areas of the Collection are regularly reviewed to provide information for our core activities including Learning and Engagement, Loans and Public Programme; Digitisation of the Collection; Social Media; Publicity; Marketing; and the Trading Company.

NGS activities are focussed and driven by a number of strategic Frameworks:- Partnership, Audience, Research, Collection Development and Sustainability.

The Collection is a constant source of inspiration and information for NGS staff and for local, national and international individuals and audiences, and is constantly being consulted and reviewed by them. We respond to and analyse these interactions, and use them to develop and expand access to the Collections and to reassess our response to them.

We keep records of Collection reviews, with links to associated reports and decisions on our industry standard database (MIMSY). Only authorised persons have access.

Related policies

The following are related NGS policies:

01 Object Entry
02 Acquisition and Accessioning
03 Location and Movement Control
04 Inventory
05 Cataloguing
07 Loans in (borrowing objects)
08 Loans out (lending objects)
09 Documentation Planning
10 Condition Checking and Technical Assessment
11 Collections Care and Conservation
12 Valuation
13 Insurance and indemnity
14 Emergency Planning for Collections
15 Damage and Loss
16 De-accessioning and Disposal
19 Use of Collections
21 Audit

Also the following NGS documents

- NGS Audience Development Framework
- NGS Business Continuity Plan
- NGS Carbon Management Programme 2018-2022
- NGS Collection Care Framework
- NGS Collections Development Framework
- NGS Disaster Contingency Plan
- NGS Estates Management Strategy
- NGS Environmental Management Programme 2018-2022
- NGS Partnership Framework
- NGS Public Programme Framework
- NGS Risk Management Policy
- NGS Research Policy and Framework

For NGS Rights and Reproduction Policies: SEE NGS Trading Company Policies