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<b>Preamble</b>	<p>The Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) is dedicated to preserving, enhancing, interpreting, and communicating its <i>Collections</i> which document art, culture, and natural history from around the world. ROM's Collections are of international significance, supported by internationally recognized programs of curatorial research, and central to its mandate. The purpose of the collections policy is to establish ROM's guidelines for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• acquiring objects or specimens for the Collections including works of art, artifacts, and biological and geological specimens (hereafter collectively referred to as objects)</li><li>• the care of the Collections</li><li>• the establishment and maintenance of a comprehensive, accessible system of record-keeping for all Collections and Loans</li><li>• the deaccessioning of objects</li><li>• the lending of objects to or borrowing of objects from other museums, institutions, and private sources</li></ul>
<b>Policy</b>	<p>ROM will establish, maintain, and expand the Collections in its Core Areas of Collections and Research. Core Areas are subject to change as new opportunities arise. Collection development and the setting of priorities will be guided by the specialized knowledge and research expertise of qualified professional staff, in consultation with senior management.</p>
<b>Core Areas</b>	<p>ROM is committed to collecting, researching, and caring for Collections from the following Core Areas and diasporas:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Art and Culture</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• African art, culture and archaeology, including ancient Egypt/Nubia</li><li>• Ancient Greek and Roman art, culture, and archeology</li><li>• Canadian art and culture, post-contact</li><li>• East Asian art, culture and archaeology, specifically China, Japan and Korea</li><li>• European art and culture.</li><li>• Fashion and Textiles</li><li>• Indigenous art, culture, and archaeology</li><li>• Islamic World, Judaic, and Sikh art and culture</li><li>• Middle and South American art, culture, and archaeology</li><li>• Near East, Middle East and West Asian art, culture, and archaeology</li><li>• South Asian art and culture</li></ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Natural History</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Biodiversity, including mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians, fishes, invertebrates, insects and arachnids, fungi, and plants</li><li>• earth and space, including minerals and gems, meteorites, and rocks and ores</li><li>• Fossils, including vertebrate fossils and invertebrate fossils</li></ul>

### Library and Archives

- The Library and Archives collect materials that focus on or support Collections and Research. ROM is responsible for the ongoing care of this material, but it is not subject to the same requirements and conditions as Collections as detailed in this Policy; the Library and Archives manage collections according to Library and Archive standards and best practices.

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

### Conditions of Acquisition

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

- The objects must be consistent with and relevant to ROM's mission, Core Areas and current collections development plans
- ROM must be able to provide appropriate documentation, care and storage for the objects. No object should be considered for accession if it exceeds ROM's ability to provide for its access, care, documentation and preservation
- The objects must be accompanied by guarantees of good legal title
- The objects must be accompanied by a confirmed record of provenance. Curators must demonstrate due diligence if proposing acquisitions whose provenance records are incomplete
- Donations must be free and clear of conditions and restrictions
- All donations to ROM's Collections are irrevocable upon the formal transfer of title
- All proposed accessions must have been acquired legally and ethically
- The objects must comply with all applicable local, provincial, and federal Canadian laws including but not limited to; *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)* and the *Cultural Property Export and Import Act*, which incorporates the principles and provisions of the *UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970)* into Canadian law. The ROM will use the date of adoption by UNESCO of the 1970 convention, November 14, 1970, as the landmark date after which all cultural property acquisitions require comprehensive provenance records

Any exceptions to these conditions must be approved by the Director & CEO, and reported to the Board of Trustees, following ethical and legal guidelines and accepted Museum standards.

In addition to legal requirements for acquisitions, ROM follows: the Ethics Guidelines of the Canadian Museum Association; the Ethics, Standards, and Professional Practices and the Standards Regarding Archaeological Material and Ancient Art of the American Alliance of Museums; and the Code of Ethics, and Standards and Practices of the Association of Art Museum Directors.

### Care of the Collections

ROM is responsible for adequately funding the continuing care and preservation of objects in its Collections, including secure storage and exhibition facilities with adequate environmental-control systems.

ROM ensures that the Collection is adequately protected against fire, flood, pests, theft, vandalism, and natural disaster including the maintenance of insurance. Collections valuations are reviewed annually. These issues are addressed further in the Risk Management and Emergency & Disaster Planning policies.

### *Documentation*

ROM will endeavor to acquire all rights necessary to permit planned exhibitions or reproductions of Collections. ROM will respect the creator's right to the integrity of the object.

Registration is the Department of record for all accessioned objects in ROM's Collections. The department will retain in perpetuity documentation pertaining to the provenance and legal title of an object associated with identifying cataloguing data and proof of insurance. Curators, supported by technical staff, provide documentation at the time of acquisition.

### *Deaccessioning*

ROM maintains essential information in a centralized collection management system - this includes, but is not limited to, object number, object status, current location and location history. The department of Collections and Research is responsible for maintaining scholarly and culturally relevant information on Collections. Staff members with object handling permissions are responsible for maintaining current location data.

ROM reserves the right to deaccession objects according to the following criteria:

- An object is no longer relevant within the Collections, or exhibition and research programs of ROM
- The object is of lesser quality than other objects of the same type in the Collections
- An object was acquired illegally or unethically
- An object is identified as inauthentic or misattributed
- The condition of an object cannot be sufficiently restored to be useful within ROM's exhibition or research programs
- Documentation of the object is insufficient for ROM's exhibition or research programs
- The nature of the object makes it unduly difficult to care for or store properly
- An object has been legitimately claimed by a third party or community

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

Registration will maintain all records pertaining to deaccessioning.

### *Disposals*

Approved method(s) of disposal will be specified at the time of deaccessioning.

Disposal of deaccessioned objects will be made by one of the following methods:

- Donation to another museum or charitable institution
- Exchange with another museum or charitable institution
- Sale to another museum or charitable institution
- Sale at public auction
- Return to the community of record

- Transfer to education or hands-on collections
- Witnessed destruction – a last resort, this method may be required for hazardous materials or materials in exceptionally poor condition

When appropriate, deaccessioned objects should be disposed of in a manner that keeps them in the public domain. Ontario organizations will be given preference in transfers to external institutions, when all other factors are equal.

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

All monies realized from the sale of any object will be used to upgrade ROM's Collections and their care.

## Loans

ROM may borrow objects from other museums, galleries, and private sources for the purposes of exhibition, research, or public programming and education. Unless otherwise specified by the lender, all loans will be cared for in the same manner as ROM's Collections. No loan will be undertaken without the full confidence that ROM can maintain the lender's specifications.

Outgoing loans are an important aspect of ROM's mandate and allow ROM's Collections to be used and enjoyed provincially, nationally, and internationally. ROM lends objects from its Collections to institutions or communities for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, exhibition, research, programming and education. Borrowers must be able to provide appropriate standards of care.

- All loans are subject to a formal written agreement between the lender and the borrower, which ensures appropriate standards of care, shipment, and insurance. Both parties must agree in writing to all loan conditions
- ROM will apply the principles of reasonable due diligence to ensure that any object borrowed has not been either imported or exported in an illicit manner and that there are no potential competing ownership claims
- Loan agreements will specify the purpose and period of the loan
- All loans will be reviewed, and reauthorized, no less than every five years

## Approval and Reporting Levels

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

## Explanation of Terms

*Accession (v)*: the formal process by which an object is added to the Collections.  
*Acquisition(n)*: an object or group of objects for which the Museum has legal title. Not all acquisitions are accessioned.

*Collections (n)*: Unless preceded by a modifier (Library and Archive Collections, Education Collections) "Collections" refers only to objects that have been formally accessioned by ROM.

*Deaccession(v)*: the formal process by which an object is removed from the Collection.

*Disposal(n)*: Permanent physical removal from the Collections of any object, usually by exchange, donation, sale, repatriation, or witnessed destruction.

*Loan(n, v)*: an object that is lent or borrowed for use in a manner similar to Collections; the act of furnishing an object or a Collection to another party for temporary use, for an agreed specific purpose, with specific conditions regarding the handling and care of the object, and on the condition that the object is returned by a specified date.

<b>Date</b>	June 21, 2001
<b>Amended</b>	January 17, 2002
	March 6, 2008
	March 5, 2009
	November 15, 2012
	October 1, 2015 ( <i>no amendments</i> )
	October 17, 2017 ( <i>with amendments</i> )
	January 21, 2022 ( <i>with amendments</i> )
	March 26, 2025 ( <i>with amendments</i> )

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

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

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

### **Policy Review**

<b>Method</b>	Internal Report
<b>Responsibility</b>	Collections, Exhibitions & Research Committee
<b>Minimum Frequency</b>	Every three years. Next review March 2028.



APPENDIX: APPROVAL AND REPORTING LEVELS

COLLECTIONS

	<b>Collections Approval and Reporting Levels</b>	<b>Co-Chief Curator APPROVAL</b>	<b>Chief of Collections Care APPROVAL</b>	<b>Deputy Director, Collections &amp; Research, APPROVAL</b>	<b>Director &amp; CEO APPROVAL</b>	<b>CER Committee and Board INFORMED</b>	<b>CER Committee APPROVAL</b>	<b>Board APPROVAL</b>
	<b>Purchases and Gifts-in Kind</b>							
	<\$5000	X	X					
	\$5000 - <\$50,000	X	X	X				
	\$50,000 - <\$250,000	X	X	X	X	X		
*	\$250,000 - \$1,000,000	X	X	X	X	X	X	
*	>\$1,000,000	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	<b>CCPERB Applications</b>							
	< \$100,000	X	X	X				
	>\$100,000	X	X	X	X	X		
	<b>Deaccessions</b>							
	< \$5000	X	X					
	\$5000 - <\$50,000	X	X	X	X			
	\$50,000 - \$100,000	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	>\$100,000	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	<b>Repatriation</b>							
	All Levels	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
^	<b>Incoming Loans</b>							
	< \$5000	X	X					
	\$5000 - < \$100,000	X	X	X				
	\$100,000 - <\$250,000	X	X	X	X			
	\$250,000 - <\$15,000,000	X	X	X	X	X		
*	\$15,000,000 - \$25,000,000	X	X	X	X	X	X	
*	>\$25,000,000	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
^	<b>Outgoing Loans</b>							
	<\$5000	X	X					
	\$5000 - < \$100,000	X	X	X				
	\$100,000 - \$250,000	X	X	X	X			
	>\$250,000 - \$10,000,000	X	X	X	X	X		
*	>\$10,000,000 - \$15,000,000	X	x	X	X	X	X	
*	>\$15,000,000	X	x	X	X	X	X	X
*	In unusual circumstances where time is of the essence, the Director & CEO may approve acquisitions and/or loans at this level after having received approval from the Chair of the Board and the Chair of the CER Committee. Any such loan approval shall be reported and ratified at the next CER Committee meeting and/or Board meeting.							
^	All incoming loans that are included in a special exhibition organized by another institution shall be approved in accordance with the Exhibition Policy, rather than the Collections Policy.							