

# Collections Management Policy

---

The George Washington University Museum and The Textile Museum

Prepared by

- Rachel Shabica, Former Registrar
- Tessa Lummis, Registrar

Approved by Board of Trustees March 23, 2018

Revisions Approved on October 26, 2018

## Table of Contents

---

APPENDICES.....	3
MISSION.....	4
SCOPE .....	4
THE POLICY .....	4
1. Access to collections.....	4
2. The Collections .....	4
3. Acquisitions .....	4
4. Deaccession .....	10
5. Loans from the Collections (Outgoing Loans).....	13
6. Loans to the Museum (Incoming Loans).....	15
7. Insurance .....	16
8. Care and Use of the Collections .....	17
9. Photography and Photographic Reproduction Rights policy.....	19
EFFECTIVE DATE .....	21
GLOSSARY OF TERMS .....	22

# Collections Management Policy

---

## APPENDICES

**Appendix A** – The George Washington University Museum and The Textile Museum  
Collections Development Plan  
Collections Management Task Force Statement of Purpose

**Appendix B** – Definitive Agreement By and Among The Textile Museum and the George  
Washington University

**Appendix C** – Collections Loan Agreement By and Among The Textile Museum and the George  
Washington University  
Agreement Between the George Washington University and Albert H. Small  
(unsigned copy)

**Appendix D** – American Alliance of Museums (AAM), Code of Ethics for Museums, 2000  
Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD), Professional Practices in Art  
Museums, 2011

**Appendix E** – American Institute for Conservation of Historical and Artistic Works  
(AIC) Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice, revised 1994

**Appendix F** – Photography and Reproduction Policy

**Appendix G** – Collections Management Policy: GW and Corcoran Collections  
(Future Attachment)

## MISSION

The George Washington University Museum fosters the study and appreciation of art, history, and culture both within the university and throughout the global community, through its affiliation with The Textile Museum and through its University collections, including the Albert H. Small Washingtoniana Collection.

## SCOPE

This document governs collections in the direct care of The George Washington University Museum and The Textile Museum. In addition to the Textile Museum collections and the Albert H. Small Washingtoniana Collection, the museum may serve as guardian of other George Washington University collections, including objects in the university permanent collections (managed by the Luther W. Brady Gallery) and Corcoran Collection. Objects in these collections may be housed at the Avenir Foundation Conservation and Collections Resource Center (Avenir Center) and are cared for following the same standards outlined in section 8 of this document unless otherwise noted. These objects are tracked by the museum's collections management system. However, in all other aspects of collections management, these collections are governed by a separate collections management policy document. See Appendix G. The museum is not responsible for accessioning, deaccessioning, lending, digitizing, or performing conservation treatments for these collections.

## THE POLICY

1. **Access to collections.** It is fundamental to the museum's mission to provide access to the museum's collections and to promote appreciation of its significance. The presentation of exhibitions of its own collections and borrowed objects, together with ancillary activities associated with those exhibitions, is the primary means for achieving this goal.
  - 1.1. **Further access.** The museum shall provide additional access to and information about its collections through loans to other institutions, scholarship and research access,<sup>1</sup> publications, study and program rooms, and its library and website.
  - 1.2. **Objective.** Because of the strength and significance of its collections, drawing upon them will stimulate aesthetic engagement and promote familiarity with textile art and Washington D.C. history in their historical, cultural, and material contexts.
2. **The Collections.** The Textile Museum collects primarily vintage, antique, and historical handmade textiles from Near Eastern, Asian, African, and indigenous American cultures, as well as contemporary textile art. The museum also collects certain culturally associated objects, such as textile processing tools. The Albert H. Small Washingtoniana Collection collects primarily printed materials relating to Washington, D.C., and the surrounding region from the eighteenth through twentieth centuries.
3. **Acquisitions.**

---

<sup>1</sup> Access to collection objects not on exhibition may occur at the Avenir Foundation Conservation and Collections Resource Center (for Textile Museum objects) or the Center for National Capital Area Studies (for Albert H. Small Washingtoniana objects).

- 3.1. **Purpose.** The museum acquires objects to enhance the cultural, educational, artistic, historic, and aesthetic value of the museum's collections with a view toward their use in exhibitions, publications, research, and public programs.
- 3.2. **Means.** The museum may acquire materials through gifts, bequests, purchases, or exchanges. It also builds its collections as a result of field research and other projects of its staff.
- 3.3. **Selectivity.** The museum subscribes to a policy of selective acquisition. It is neither feasible nor desirable for the museum to allow indiscriminate growth of its collections. Those selective acquisitions must be in accordance with the guidelines in the museum's collections development plan. See Appendix A.
- 3.4. **Balance.** In the acquisition and disposal of museum objects, the museum must carefully balance the interests of the public for whom it holds the collections in trust, the donors' intentions in the broadest sense, the interests of the museum's constituents (members, scholars, cultural communities, visitors, and program participants), and the museum's own financial well-being.
- 3.5. **Proposals.** For accession to the collections, curators should propose exceptional objects that further the museum's stated mission. All objects should be in, or capable of being returned to, an acceptable state of preservation unless the deteriorated physical condition is integral to the meaning of the work or is commensurate with significant age or rarity. The museum must be able to house and care for any proposed acquisition according to generally accepted museum practices.
- 3.6. **Process.**<sup>2</sup>
  - 3.6.1. **CMTF recommendation.** Either upon its own initiative or upon the request of either the Board or the Collections Committee of The George Washington University Museum and The Textile Museum Board of Trustees (herein the "Collections Committee"), a majority of the Collections Management Task Force (herein the "CMTF") shall make written recommendations to acquire objects in the collections.
  - 3.6.2. **Collections Committee review and approval.** The Collections Committee shall review the recommendations of the appropriate curator and of the CMTF and act by consensus vote upon that recommendation in one or more of the following ways:
    - 3.6.2.1. Approve the recommendation in whole or in part;
    - 3.6.2.2. Request the CMTF to revise or amend the list of objects in a group to exclude objects;
    - 3.6.2.3. Require changes to any terms or conditions of the gift, bequest, purchase, or exchange.

---

<sup>2</sup> All objects proposed for accession must be approved through the process outlined in this document (section 3.6), with the exception of objects donated specifically by Albert H. Small. See Appendix C.

3.6.2.4. The approval of the recommendations by the Collections Committee may be made at any regularly scheduled meeting of the Collections Committee or by any electronic means at any other time, such as near year-end.

3.6.3. **Full Board approval and signature.** The Collections Committee presents all approved proposed accessions to the full Board of Trustees for approval and signature. A member of the full museum Board of Trustees must sign approval for all accepted objects.

3.6.4. **Textile Museum collections additional approval.** Objects accessioned specifically into The Textile Museum's collections must also be signed for by a representative of The Textile Museum Board of Trustees (a separate governing body), which has forty-five days to reject any proposals for accession, per the Definitive Agreement. See Appendix B, Section 5.4.

### 3.7. Collections Development.

3.7.1. **Standards.** The museum shall not accession or otherwise acquire objects for its collections unless the following standards are met:

- 3.7.1.1. Acquisitions are made in accordance with the standards set forth in established museum codes of ethics. See Appendix D.
- 3.7.1.2. Possession of objects is consistent with the current laws of the United States of America on cultural property. The accession or exhibition of culturally important material imported from another country requires adherence to certain procedures. The laws by which countries attempt to control the export of their cultural property vary considerably. In addition, those laws are often difficult to obtain or are vague. Nevertheless, the museum must avoid the violation of laws of the United States of America in the acquisition of objects.
- 3.7.1.3. Because absolute criteria applicable to all cases are difficult or impossible to formulate, the curator proposing an acquisition should consult, when appropriate to do so, with other museums or independent organizations to determine whether the proposed acquisition meets the museum's standards on cultural importance.
  - 3.7.1.3.1. The curator should have reasonable assurance or other grounds for belief that the object has not been exported from its country of origin, and/or the country where it is or was last legally owned, in violation of that country's law and/or any international law or treaty.
  - 3.7.1.3.2. Where serious research is inconclusive, or the weight of the evidence suggests that a proposed object is not stolen from its country of origin, the museum reserves the right to make its own determination in regards to acquisition.

- 3.7.1.3.3. Ultimately, the museum, not the vendor or donor, bears the responsibility of justifiable evidence and, in all such cases, subsequent information may make it necessary to affect an object's return.
  - 3.7.1.4. The quality and nature of the objects are relevant to and consistent with the mission, purposes, and activities of the museum, as described in the collections development plan.
  - 3.7.1.5. The museum is able to provide, both physically and financially, for the storage, protection, and preservation of the objects under conditions consistent with professionally accepted standards.
- 3.7.2. **Sale.** The museum will not accept objects for accession into its collections solely for the purpose of eventual sale.
- 3.7.3. **Gifts and Bequests.**
- 3.7.3.1. The museum is under no legal, ethical, or moral obligation to accept objects bequeathed or offered to it.
  - 3.7.3.2. In general, the museum will not accept an offer of a group of objects unless the museum is free to reject any objects which do not meet museum standards for accession set forth in this policy.
  - 3.7.3.3. While gifts to the museum are generally deductible for income tax purposes to the extent of the law, it is the museum's policy not to provide appraisals to donors. Under current IRS guidelines, the museum cannot act as a qualified appraiser because of the inherent conflict with its role as a donee.
- 3.7.4. **Purchases.** The curatorial staff of the museum initiates recommendations for purchase. The CMTF and the museum director must pre-approve funds spent while collecting in the field.
- 3.7.5. **Exchanges.** An object may be acquired through exchange for an object to be deaccessioned from the museum's collections. Exchanges are initiated by the professional staff of the museum and approved in accordance with the provisions of this policy.
- 3.7.6. **Title and Restrictions.**
- 3.7.6.1. Title to all objects acquired for the collections must be free and clear.
  - 3.7.6.2. All donations of objects are considered unconditional gifts to be used at the discretion of the museum. The museum generally does not accept restrictions on gifts or bequests, although exceptions may be approved in extraordinary cases. Any restrictions accepted by the museum shall be stated clearly on both the Accession Record and on the legal instrument by which the museum obtains title.

### 3.8. Collections Acquisition Documentation.

3.8.1. **Instrument of Conveyance.** Each legal instrument of conveyance by which the museum acquires title to an object or objects shall describe the object(s) so conveyed, any restrictions acceptable to the museum, and the consideration, if any. These will be kept in the appropriate accession file at the museum.

3.8.1.1. For each donation to the museum, the registrar will prepare a Deed of Gift or other appropriate instrument for execution by the donor and acceptance by an authorized representative of the university.

3.8.1.2. A Bill of Sale shall be obtained from the vendor for each purchase, if possible. If a Bill of Sale cannot be obtained, as may happen in field collecting, a statement of the circumstances of purchase shall be substituted.

3.8.1.3. In the case of a bequest, the registrar shall obtain such legal documents, instruments of conveyance, or decrees as fulfill or evidence the donor's bequest and convey title to the museum. Such a document shall be the basis for a credit line.

3.8.1.4. All correspondence, shipping receipts, and other documentation related to an acquisition shall be kept in the appropriate accession file.

3.8.1.5. Whenever possible or practicable, the museum shall obtain the provenance and/or provenience of each acquired object.

#### 3.8.2. Credit Line.

3.8.2.1. The museum will identify, through an appropriate credit line, the donors of objects and the donors of special funding for the acquisition of objects in wording provided or approved by the donor.

3.8.2.2. The credit line will appear on the label of such objects exhibited by the museum or lent by the museum for exhibition elsewhere.

3.8.2.3. The credit line will appear in all catalogue entries and illustrations of such objects published by the museum and by others as a condition of permission to publish such objects.

3.8.3. **Database.** Records will be created in the museum's computerized collections database for all accessioned objects to ensure tracking of object identification and use. Records will be maintained by the registrar and enhanced by the curatorial staff.

### 3.9. Collection Object Processing.

3.9.1. Upon Board approval and completion by the registrar of the acquisition documentation, the newly accessioned objects are assigned a unique object number, which is affixed by collections management staff in a manner deemed



most appropriate for the relative media. This number is reflected in the database (see 3.8.3)

- 3.9.1.1. Textile Museum objects are assigned a unique tri-partite number that reflects the year of accession, the group number, and the object number.
  - 3.9.1.2. Washingtoniana objects use a tripartite numbering system with either the prefix “AS” for objects given by Albert H. Small, or “GW” for objects given to the Washingtoniana Collection from other donors. Legacy objects from that collection use the format AS ## (example: AS 350; this was the collector’s numbering system)
  - 3.9.1.3. Other university collections have their own unique numbering systems that are not governed by this document. These numbering formats are different from Textile Museum and Washingtoniana collections. See Appendix G.
- 3.9.2. Objects are assessed for appropriate permanent housing. They are rehoused using archival materials and a permanent location in storage is assigned and recorded in the database. Objects are housed in a variety of methods including but not limited to:
- 3.9.2.1. Textiles
    - 3.9.2.1.1. Rolled on archival tubes and suspended
    - 3.9.2.1.2. Matted in blue board mats
    - 3.9.2.1.3. Flat on oversized trays
    - 3.9.2.1.4. Padded and stored in archival boxes
    - 3.9.2.1.5. Custom mounted
  - 3.9.2.2. Framed works
    - 3.9.2.2.1. Hung on appropriate racks
  - 3.9.2.3. Unframed paper-based works
    - 3.9.2.3.1. Matted or stored in folders in flat files
  - 3.9.2.4. Sculpture/Ceramics/3-D Works
    - 3.9.2.4.1. Stored on shelves with dust covers
    - 3.9.2.4.2. Padded and stored in archival boxes
- 3.10. **Objects not accessioned.** The museum may accept objects or property for any use in fulfilling its mission without accessioning such objects into its collections. Such objects may be used for public programming, demonstrations, or other purposes. These objects are considered to be a separate “hands-on” learning collection and are managed by the museum’s education department. They are not tracked in the museum’s collections management system. They are not stored with permanent collection objects.

3.11. **Found in Collection Objects.** Some objects in the care of the museum have been designated as “Found in Collection.” These objects have been found intermingled with accessioned objects, but have no identifying number attached.

3.11.1. Each found in collection object is assigned a temporary “FIC” number for tracking and documentation purposes. This number should be attached to the object in some manner.

3.11.2. Every effort should be made, within reason, to research the provenance of these objects to determine its legal status and depositor, and to reconcile records.

3.11.3. The museum is governed by the abandoned tangible property laws of the District of Columbia. There is no statute of limitations on abandoned property in Washington, D.C., so every effort will be made to legally convert object into museum property, to either accession or dispose of objects as outlined in this document.

#### 4. **Deaccession.**

4.1. **Purpose.** The term “deaccession” means that a work is removed from the collections and considered for disposal by sale or exchange or for other use by the museum in the fulfillment of its mission. The deaccession of an object should be solely for the advancement of the museum's mission.

4.2. **Policy.** It is the policy of the museum to acquire objects for the collections with care, so that deaccessioning of objects will seldom be necessary. However, the museum recognizes the importance of periodic evaluation of the collections and that judicious deaccessioning may strengthen the quality of the museum's collections. Objects are deaccessioned in accordance with the standards set forth in established museum codes of ethics. See Appendix D.

4.3. **Reasons for Deaccession.** The criteria for determining whether an object should be deaccessioned include, but are not limited to, the following:

4.3.1. **Relevance.** An object does not lie within the scope of the collections as stated in this policy.

4.3.2. **Quality.** An object is determined to have insufficient historical, design, aesthetic, ethnographic, or anthropological significance to warrant retention.

4.3.3. **Authenticity.** An object is determined not to be authentic.

4.3.4. **Condition.**

4.3.4.1. The museum cannot, at reasonable cost, provide for the maintenance, storage or treatment of an object at professionally accepted standards or if the object is otherwise unduly difficult or impossible to care for or store properly.

4.3.4.2. An object poses a threat to other objects in the collections.

- 4.3.5. **Redundancy.** An object is redundant or its type or category is determined to be over-represented in the collections. The quality of the object and its lack of use for research, study, or exhibition are among the factors to be considered in selecting redundant objects for deaccession.
- 4.3.6. **No use.** An object has limited potential for use in exhibitions, research, study, or publications in the foreseeable future.
- 4.3.7. **Strengthen collections.** Deaccessioning an object will directly or indirectly improve or strengthen the museum's collections and further the museum's mission.
- 4.3.8. **Title.** It is determined that the museum's possession of an object is not legitimate.
- 4.3.9. **Required return.** The museum is ordered to return an object to its original and rightful owner by a court of law; the museum determines that another entity is the rightful owner of the object; or the museum determines that the return of the object is in the best interest of the museum.

#### 4.4. Process of Deaccession.<sup>3</sup>

- 4.4.1. **CMTF recommendation.** Either upon its own initiative or upon the request of either the Board or the Collections Committee, a majority of the CMTF shall make written recommendations to deaccession objects in the collections.
- 4.4.2. **Collections Committee review.** The Collections Committee shall review the recommendations of the CMTF and act by consensus vote upon that recommendation in one or more of the following ways:
  - 4.4.2.1. Approve the recommendation in whole or in part;
  - 4.4.2.2. Request the CMTF to revise or amend the list of objects to include or exclude objects;
  - 4.4.2.3. Make specific amendments to those recommendations for the disposition of the objects, consistent with this Collections Management Policy.
  - 4.4.2.4. The approval of the deaccession recommendations by the Collections Committee may be made at any regularly scheduled meeting of the Collections Committee.
- 4.4.3. **Full Board approval and signature.** The Collections Committee presents all approved proposed deaccessions to the full Board of Trustees for approval and signature in writing, for final approval or disapproval, in whole or in part. A member of the full museum Board of Trustees must sign approval for all accepted deaccessioned objects. The Board may then delegate to the staff or independent parties the task of disposing of the objects.

---

<sup>3</sup> Objects donated by Albert H. Small that are proposed for deaccession are subject to the agreement between the George Washington University and Albert H. Small. See Appendix C.

4.4.4. **Textile Museum collections additional approval.** Objects deaccessioned specifically from The Textile Museum’s collections must also be signed for by a representative of The Textile Museum Board of Trustees (a separate governing body), which has forty-five days to reject any proposals for deaccession, per the Definitive Agreement. See Appendix B, Section 5.4.

4.5. **Disposal of Deaccessioned Objects.** Before disposing of any objects from the collections, reasonable efforts will be made to verify that the museum is entitled to do so.

4.5.1. **Title and Restrictions.**

4.5.1.1. Title. The museum’s clear and unrestricted title to the object shall be verified by the registrar.

4.5.1.2. Restrictions.

4.5.1.2.1. Mandatory restrictions will be strictly observed unless deviation from their terms is authorized by a court of competent jurisdiction.

4.5.1.2.2. Reasonable efforts will be made to comply with any precatory (non-binding) restrictions.

4.5.2. **Notification of the Donor.**

4.5.2.1. If precatory statements apply to an object the museum wishes to deaccession, the CMTF shall determine whether consultation with the donor or donor’s heirs is advisable.

4.5.2.2. The museum will comply with requirements for notification of the donor and the Internal Revenue Service.

4.5.3. **Manner of Disposition.** In considering its options for the disposition of deaccessioned objects, the museum will consider the best interests of the museum, the public, scholarly and cultural communities it serves, and the public trust it represents. The museum will also consider the reasons for which deaccession was recommended.

4.5.3.1. **Approved Methods of Disposition.**

4.5.3.1.1. Gift, exchange, or sale to an appropriate tax exempt institution will be given first consideration.

4.5.3.1.2. If objects are offered for sale to the public, preference will be given to that method of sale which is of the greatest overall advantage to the museum and that will best protect the interests, objectives, and legal status of the museum, while not presenting the appearance of a conflict of interest.

4.5.3.1.3. Destruction of objects may be considered when certain factors of

condition apply.

4.5.3.1.4. Objects may be used for possible research purposes (such as destructive analysis) within the museum.

4.5.3.1.5. If possession of an object by the museum is found not to be legitimate, the object will be given to the legitimate owner as determined by the appropriate authority.

**4.5.3.2. Restrictions on Disposition.**

4.5.3.2.1. Objects may not be given or sold to employees, officers or trustees of the museum, or to family or representatives thereof.

4.5.3.2.2. In general, no one acting on behalf of the museum in the sale of deaccessioned objects shall use the name of the museum to imply in any way that the value of such objects is supported or attested to by the museum.

4.5.3.2.3. A member of the museum staff may provide information about an object based on current curatorial opinion, but in no such case shall he or she represent the value of an object.

4.5.3.2.4. The name of the museum may not be used in any promotional material regarding the sale of deaccessioned objects without the prior approval of the director as to form and content.

**4.6. Proceeds from Deaccessioning.** All proceeds from the sale of deaccessioned objects will be deposited in a restricted account designated as the “Deaccessioned Objects Fund.” In accordance with guidelines published by the Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD), funds received for the deaccession of textiles, works of art, and objects in the Albert H. Small collection are only to be used for the purchase of new acquisitions. Use of funds received from the deaccession of historical and document-based collections may follow AAM’s guidelines for direct care. See Appendix D.

**4.7. Documentation of Deaccessioning.** All aspects of the conditions and circumstances of deaccession and disposition of objects will be recorded and retained with the museum’s collections records.

**5. Loans from the Collections (Outgoing Loans).**

**5.1. Application for Loans.**

5.1.1. The museum will consider lending collections objects to museums and other educational institutions for exhibition or research purposes. Loans to individuals will not be considered.

5.1.1.1. Requests of loans of Textile Museum and Washingtoniana collections to other GW exhibition spaces will be considered solely for temporary short-term exhibition purposes, and subject to the approval process outlined in section 5.2. These collections may not be borrowed for the purpose of

displaying works around campus (i.e. in offices, hallways, classrooms, or gathering spaces). Objects will not be loaned to other campus entities for research. See section 8.4.

- 5.1.1.2. University collections, including the Corcoran collection, are governed by separate lending policies outlined in Appendix G
- 5.1.2. Application for a loan must be made by written request to the director of the museum, giving full details of purpose, period, tour schedule (if applicable), insurance, security, and transit plans. A completed standard facilities report must be presented for review before a loan will be approved.
- 5.1.3. Prospective borrowers should be informed that a loan application must be submitted sufficiently in advance for the museum to evaluate all aspects of the request, including availability, and to prepare the object(s) for the loan.

## 5.2. Approval of Loans.

- 5.2.1. The CMTF evaluates and approves or rejects loan applications.
- 5.2.2. The following factors will be considered in evaluating a loan request:
  - 5.2.2.1. Condition of the object(s) and suitability for travel;
  - 5.2.2.2. Value to scholarship of the proposed exhibition or research project;
  - 5.2.2.3. Value of the requested object to the project;
  - 5.2.2.4. Adequacy of the facilities of the borrower;
  - 5.2.2.5. Future needs by museum curatorial staff.

## 5.3. Conditions for Loans.

- 5.3.1. The borrower must agree to all conditions for preparation, handling, and exhibition as specified by conservation, and all requirements for insurance, packing, and transportation as specified by collections management.
  - 5.3.1.1. If an exhibition will travel to venues other than the borrowing institution, the museum must approve all potential sites, crate specifications, and shipping and handling arrangements.
  - 5.3.1.2. All costs incurred by the museum in relation to the above will be borne by the borrower. A written cost estimate will be provided to the borrower upon conditional approval of the loan.
  - 5.3.1.3. Loans for exhibition purposes shall ordinarily be made for a period not to exceed a six month exhibition time. Loan periods for research will be determined in accordance with the needs of the project as outlined in the letter of application.

- 5.3.1.4. The museum's written Outgoing Loan Agreement shall have precedence over the borrower's loan agreement when possible. The museum's loan agreement will state all loan requirements and conditions.

## 6. **Loans to the Museum (Incoming Loans)**

### 6.1. **Short-Term Loans.**

- 6.1.1. Short-term loans of objects from other institutions or individuals may be requested by the museum for use in temporary exhibitions or for study for a specific period of time.
- 6.1.2. Objects shall be borrowed from other institutions or individuals only if the museum can meet all of the lender's loan requirements.
- 6.1.3. In borrowing objects, the museum shall comply with applicable law.
- 6.1.4. Loan objects will be returned to their lenders at the end of the specified loan period, in accordance with the museum's accepted procedures, unless written instructions directing other action are received from the lender and agreed to by the museum in advance.

### 6.2. **Long-Term Loans.**

- 6.2.1. The museum shall not accept loans of objects for indefinite periods of time.
- 6.2.2. The museum may accept long-term loans for a specified period of time, subject to renewal and annual review, for the purpose of eventual accession in the following instances:
  - 6.2.2.1. The lender has made a promise of future donation of the objects, supported by a letter of intent;
  - 6.2.2.2. The lender has promised the objects as a bequest, supported by a copy of the lender's will.
- 6.2.3. Objects offered to the museum for long-term loan and eventual accession shall be evaluated according to this policy and the collections development plan.
- 6.2.4. Any long-term loan must be documented with a written loan agreement, signed by the lender and an authorized representative of the museum, enumerating the conditions of the loan, the rights and responsibilities of the lender and the museum to the objects in regard to care, insurance, and the duration of the loan.
- 6.2.5. The museum reserves the right to terminate any long-term loan in accordance with the museum's governing policies and procedures.

### 6.3. **Temporary Deposits.**

- 6.3.1. Objects entering the museum for consideration as gifts or purchases, for

examination, for photography, or for research purposes will be documented as temporary deposits. Only curatorial staff are authorized to solicit donations. All temporary deposits, solicited or unsolicited, to The Textile Museum may only be received at the Avenir Center by collections management staff; temporary deposits to the Washingtoniana Collection may be received at the museum site by curatorial or collections management staff.

- 6.3.2. All temporary deposits will be processed according to accepted museum standards.
- 6.3.3. Temporary deposits are assumed to be of brief duration. Every effort should be made by the curatorial staff to move for accession of these objects or promptly return them to the donor. If that is not able to be done in a timely manner, the Collections Management Department works with the applicable curator to resolve the object status on a case by case basis.

## 7. **Insurance.**

### 7.1. **Permanent Collections.**

- 7.1.1. Objects in the permanent collections are covered under George Washington University's Fine Arts policy.
- 7.1.2. Objects from the permanent collections that are included in a traveling exhibition will maintain their GW coverage.
- 7.1.3. Outgoing loan objects will be insured by the borrower unless it is in the best interest of the museum to insure its own object(s). Insurance costs will be borne by the borrower, in accordance with this policy.

### 7.2. **Incoming Loans and Temporary Deposits.**

- 7.2.1. The museum will insure objects borrowed from other institutions or individuals (Incoming Loans) for exhibition or research purposes in accordance with the provisions of the written Loan Agreement.
- 7.2.2. The museum will insure objects deposited with the museum for examination, photography, proposed acquisition, or research purposes.
- 7.2.3. For incoming loans, it is the responsibility of the lender to provide the museum with an insurance value for objects prior to shipment or delivery to the museum if they desire insurance coverage.
- 7.2.4. Temporary deposits to the collection are covered under George Washington University's Fine Arts policy.

7.3. **Unsolicited Objects.** Unsolicited objects left at or sent to the museum will not be insured.

### 7.4. **Insurance Records.**



- 7.4.1. The provisions of the insurance policies under which objects are covered will be reviewed regularly by the university.
- 7.4.2. Reporting Loss or Damage. Any loss or damage to a museum object, whether on site, in a traveling exhibition, or while on loan, or any object from the collections of another while at the museum, must be reported immediately to the registrar.

## 8. **Care and Use of the Collections.**

### 8.1. **Collections Care.**

- 8.1.1. The museum undertakes the preservation and maintenance of its collections in accordance with professionally accepted standards.
- 8.1.2. Objects entering permanent storage areas, whether they are newly accessioned or returning from exhibition or outgoing loan must be inspected for condition changes and properly processed for storage according to museum procedures.
- 8.1.3. Conservation and collections management regularly monitor environmental conditions in exhibition and storage spaces.
- 8.1.4. The collections management staff performs monthly spot-check inventories using a database-generated randomized list of permanent collection objects and their locations. A full inventory of all permanent collection objects is to take place every 10 years.

### 8.2. **Differentiating between collections.**

- 8.2.1. Each collection managed by the museum and/or cared for on behalf of the university is differentiated in a several ways. Each different collection has a unique numbering system and unique numbers affixed to each object.
- 8.2.2. Each collection has specifically defined storage spaces. If collections intermingle in storage, they are clearly labeled with their collection affiliation.
- 8.2.3. Each collection is cataloged within one digital collections management system, with the specific collection denoted in each object record. Records can be sorted and searched on by collection.

### 8.3. **Use of the Collections.**

- 8.3.1. Collections objects may be used in exhibitions, public access, and public programs as permitted by this policy.
- 8.3.2. Museum objects may be exhibited for no longer than one year every ten years. Exceptions to this policy may be granted in special circumstances by the CMTF. The amount of light an object is exposed to during its display shall be monitored and recorded by conservation.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Not applicable to university permanent collections or Corcoran collections. See Appendix G.

**8.4. Public access.** The museum allows supervised access to its collections by members of the public for research or study at designated access locations at the museum and Avenir Center, provided the objects are not at undue risk.

8.4.1. Access will be granted by appointment only, and in accordance with procedures set forth by curatorial, collections management, and conservation departments.

8.4.2. Access may be denied if objects are physically inaccessible or in unstable condition, or if staff assistance cannot be arranged.

**8.5. Conservation Treatment.<sup>5</sup>**

8.5.1. The museum undertakes the treatment of its collections in accordance with professionally accepted standards as outlined by the American Institute for Conservation of Historical and Artistic Works (AIC) Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. See Appendix E.

8.5.2. An object may be proposed for treatment (cleaning and/or stabilization) by either the museum's Conservation Department or a curator. The written preliminary proposal must include the type of treatment proposed and the justification for the proposal.

8.5.3. A condition report and full treatment proposal must be presented to the curator by conservation before treatment is undertaken.

8.5.4. Conservation and the curator will co-sign the proposal to indicate joint understanding of the risks and benefits of the proposed treatment and joint acceptance of responsibility for the decision before treatment may begin.

8.5.5. All proposals must be approved by the chief conservator.

8.5.6. A treatment report will be prepared by conservation upon completion of treatment.

8.5.7. All conservation proposals, reports, and other records will be archived within the Conservation Department.

**8.6. Integrated Pest Management (IPM).**

8.6.1. The museum's collections are particularly vulnerable to damage by insects. Infestation will be discouraged through Integrated Pest Management (IPM) including adherence to strict object processing, facilities use, housekeeping and maintenance standards, and monitoring of pest activity. Reference is hereby made to the museum's collections procedures manual. It is the responsibility of conservation and collections management to administer the IPM regulations.

**8.7. Sampling Policy for Textiles.<sup>6</sup>**

---

<sup>5</sup> Not applicable to university permanent collections or Corcoran collections. See Appendix G.

<sup>6</sup> Not applicable to university permanent collections or Corcoran collections. See Appendix G.

**8.7.1. Approved Types of Sampling.** The museum recognizes two types of sampling:

- 8.7.1.1. Removal of a small fiber sample for routine fiber identification.
- 8.7.1.2. Removal of a larger fiber sample, thread sample, or cloth segment for research requiring additional types of tests.

**8.7.2. Approval of Sampling Requests.**

- 8.7.2.1. Fiber identification using a small fiber sample, when performed by the Conservation Department, is an essential part of object documentation, and as such does not require approval by the CMTF.
- 8.7.2.2. The CMTF must approve by unanimous vote all other requests for sampling, whether originating within the museum or by outside request.
- 8.7.2.3. For outside requests, at least one of the museum's curators must have expertise in the collections area of the object.

**8.7.3. Documentation of Samples.**

- 8.7.3.1. All sampling must be documented according to conservation procedures.
- 8.7.3.2. Fiber samples and the information gained from them will be maintained by the Conservation Department.
- 8.7.3.3. All samples, and the information gained from them, are the property of the museum.

**9. Photography and Photographic Reproduction Rights policy.**<sup>7</sup>

9.1. **Public.** The general public may take photographs with available light only (no flash) in the exhibition galleries. Loaned objects on exhibit may have different photography restrictions which should be reflected in gallery signage.

9.2. **PR purposes.** Photography for public relations purposes may be executed with available light only.

9.3. **Exceptions.** Permission for use of photo-floods may be granted in exceptional cases for installation photography with the consent of the curator and the Conservation Department. A member of the conservation or collections management staff will supervise such photography sessions.

**9.4. Record Photography in Collections Areas.**

9.4.1. Record photography of collections objects may be conducted by curatorial and conservation staff in the course of exhibition or treatment of an object.

---

<sup>7</sup> Not applicable to university permanent collections or Corcoran collections. See Appendix G.

- 9.4.2. Flash or photo-flood photography may be used at the discretion of the staff member for this purpose.
- 9.4.3. Collections objects held or stored in the area of the photography must be protected from harmful exposure to light.
- 9.4.4. Record photography by visiting researchers for personal use only may be conducted at the discretion of a curator or collections management staff member.
- 9.4.5. Use of auxiliary lighting by visiting researchers is discouraged, but may be authorized by attending staff.

#### **9.5. Documentation of Collections Photography.**

- 9.5.1. Registration “reference” photographs will be taken of all objects accessioned in a given year as time and ability permit. These images are solely for internal staff use, and are not intended for wider distribution.
- 9.5.2. Professional photography will be undertaken as funds permit to fulfill curatorial and institutional requests for exhibition, publication, and publicity purposes.
- 9.5.3. All professional photography will be archived per digital imaging and storage best practices.

#### **9.6. Non-Staff Use of Photographic Materials.**

- 9.6.1. Reproductions of photographic material will be offered free of charge whenever possible and provided in a timely fashion. See Appendix F.
  - 9.6.1.1. Requests requiring original photography are subject to staff and photographer scheduling, and may be subject to additional fees. Payment for new photography must be received in advance of photographic material being produced.
- 9.6.2. Images may be requested through the Collections Management Department, or, if available, downloaded from the museum’s online collections database.
- 9.6.3. Any reproduction in any medium must be made from photographic material supplied by the museum.
  - 9.6.3.1. Copyrighted material may be subject to additional permissions from the artist/copyright holder. It is the responsibility of the requestor, and not the museum, to obtain these additional permissions before publishing those images.
- 9.6.4. A Reproduction Application (this application may be either a print or online form) must be completed for each request for publication of photographic materials.
- 9.6.5. Further conditions and the approved credit line will be stated in the Reproduction Application.

9.7. **Publicity Use.** Every effort will be made to provide images from available materials at no cost to the publisher. Some images may be subject to copyright/licensing restrictions.

## **EFFECTIVE DATE**

This revised policy shall be effective immediately upon approval by the Board of Trustees and shall supersede all prior policies on the topics addressed.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

*Accession* – (n.) an object (or objects) acquired by a museum as part of its permanent collection; (n.) One or more objects acquired at one time from one source constituting a single transaction between the museum and a source or the transaction itself; (v.) the formal 2-step process of acquiring an object(s) and documenting an object(s).

*Acquisition* – Anything acquired by the museum. It only becomes an *accession* if it goes through the museum’s formal process for accepting objects into the permanent collection (see *accession*).

*Bequest* – The transfer of property to the museum under the terms of a deceased person’s will.

*Collections Management Task Force* – The staff body that governs the use, safety, accuracy, and integrity of the museum’s collection.

*Condition report* – A document created by the museum to record the physical state of the object, including attributes, defects, and damage, if any.

*Deaccession* – (n.) an object that has been removed permanently from the museum’s collection; (v.) Formal removal of accessioned objects from the museum’s permanent collection.

*Decree of Distribution* – The final court order distributing the probate estate.

*Deed of Gift* – A contract that transfers ownership of an object or objects from a donor to an institution.

*Disposition/Disposal* – The act of physically removing an object or objects from the museum collection.

*Exchange* – A transaction with another institution in which a deaccessioned object from the museum’s collection is given to that institution and in return a deaccessioned object from their collection is given to the museum.

*Gift* – A donation to the museum in which title passes to the museum during the life of the donor.

*Integrated Pest Management* – The selection, integration, and implementation of pest management methods based on predicted economic, ecological, and sociological consequences. A decision-making process which helps one decide if treatment is necessary and appropriate, where the treatment should be administered, when treatment should be applied, and what strategies should be integrated for immediate and long-term results.

*Loan Agreement* – A contract between a lender and a borrower of an object or objects, specifying the object(s) and outlining the conditions of loan and the respective responsibilities of each party.

*Long-Term Loan* – A long lasting three years or longer.

*Provenance* – For works of art and historical objects, the background and history of ownership.

*Provenience* – For archaeological objects, the context (including geographical location) of an archaeological find, giving information about its function and date.

*Sampling* – The removal of any material from an object for destructive testing, including but not limited to fibers, threads, or cloth segments.

*Short-Term Loan* – A loan lasting less than three years, being reviewed with the lender annually.

*Standard Facilities Report* – A form developed by the Registrar’s Committee of the American Association of Museums, completed by the borrower of objects to demonstrate suitability as a venue to lenders of objects.

---

<sup>i</sup> All definitions are taken from *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections* by Marie C. Malaro, 2012; *The New Museum Registration Methods* 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, edited by Rebecca A. Buck and Jean Allman Gilmore, 2010