

## Sample Collections Management Policy

A Collection Management Policy is required of every New York educational corporation that owns or holds collections, intends to own or hold collections, or has owning or holding collections as one of its charter purposes.

All Collection Management Policies must address five major issues:

- 1) Acquisition - the criteria that are used for determining what items may be included in the collections and the procedures that are used by the corporation for accepting items for the collections.
- 2) Loans- the criteria and process used for borrowing items and for lending items from the collection.
- 3) Preservation - the procedures and parameters to be used to ensure the adequate care of collections materials.
- 4) Access - the procedures by which the materials in the collections will be made available to persons with legitimate reasons to access them.
- 5) Deaccession - the criteria that are used for determining what items may be removed from the collections and the procedures for removing those items and the use of any funds therefrom derived.

Attached is a suggested model policy which your organization may adopt in its entirety or modify to meet your particular needs. Your modifications must remain within the scope of accepted museological and historical agency practice and conform to Regents rules on collections management. We can also provide reprints of articles to help your organization in the development of a policy. For additional help, we suggest that you examine the policies of similar organizations in your geographical area or subject field so that you can get a sense of how other organizations have addressed their collection management concerns. Lastly, regional and statewide museum and historical agency associations occasionally sponsor workshops and discussions about collection management, which we urge you to attend.

Once your organization has adopted a policy, or modified or revised an existing policy, you must send a copy of the new policy to our office at:

*New York State Education Department  
C/o Sarah Jastremski  
3023 Cultural Education Center  
Albany, NY 12230*

**Phone:** (518) 486-3843

**E-mail:** [charters@nysed.gov](mailto:charters@nysed.gov)

Please call us if you have questions about collection management policies or these requirements.

*This model policy was last revised October 26, 2018*

**Name of Educational Corporation:**

## **Collection Management Policy**

Purpose: To establish rules, guidelines and procedures for the acquisition, care, preservation, public access and deaccessioning of items in the collections of the above-named educational corporation, hereinafter referred to in this document the "Corporation."

### **I. Collections Committee**

The Board of Trustees of the Corporation shall establish a Collections Committee. Pursuant to the Corporation's By-Laws, the President shall appoint the members and chair of this Committee. The Committee shall recommend items for accession to and deaccession from the collections of the Corporation.

The Collections Committee shall include in its deliberations, whenever deemed necessary, the advice of professionals with the goal of making well-considered and timely recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

The final decision to accession, to acquire without accessioning, or to deaccession items to or from the collections of the Corporation shall rest with the Board of Trustees.

### **II. Acquisition**

A. Scope. The Corporation collects printed and manuscript materials, maps, photographs, motion picture film, video and audio tapes (oral histories), paintings, artifacts and other items which have been created or used in the following location, community or geographical area, or are relevant to the following subject area:

B. Guidelines. Acquisitions to the Corporation's collections by purchase, loan, gift, bequest or other means shall accord with the following rules:

1. The owner must have clear title and must sign a deed of gift transferring title to the Corporation. In the case of a bequest, the donor must also have had clear title.
2. A transfer or ownership file containing gift agreements and other proofs of the Corporation's legal ownership of acquisitions shall be maintained.
3. Acquisitions by purchase shall not exceed the annual budget for such purchases unless additional proper financing has been arranged.
4. No acquisition shall be appraised by a trustee, staff member, or any other person closely associated with either. (See U.S. Tax Reform Act of 1984 and Internal Revenue Service regulations relating to the act.)
5. The Corporation must be capable of housing and caring for the proposed acquisition according to generally accepted professional standards.
6. Proposed acquisitions shall be free of donor-imposed restrictions unless such restrictions are agreed to by the Collections Committee and the Board of Trustees.
7. Acquisitions approved by the Board of Trustees for accessioning shall be promptly accessioned upon receipt and acceptance under a system approved by the Collections Committee and the Board of Trustees.
8. Donors and prospective donors, whenever deemed appropriate, should be asked by the Collections Committee whether they would be willing to provide funds for the full or partial cost of accessioning and subsequent maintenance of materials gifted to the Corporation. Willingness or unwillingness to provide such funds should usually not be a determining factor in the Board of Trustees decision to accept or reject a gift for accessioning.

### **III. Loans**

The purpose of loaning artifacts to and from the Corporation is to support the mission of the Corporation.

- A. The Board of Trustees will decide if an item will be loaned to or be loaned from another organization with the recommendation from the Collections Committee.
- B. There is a loan agreement signed by both Corporations. The length of the loan will be determined by the Board of Trustees with recommendation from the Collections Committee, on an item by item basis with the option of an annual renewal.
- C. Loan item will be insured by the borrowing Corporation and must provide proof of insurance
- D. No conservation should be done on a loaned item without permission from the owner. Any damage that happened during the loan will be documented and noted to the loaning organization as soon as possible. Condition reports should be completed on all loaned items.

### **IV. Care and Preservation**

The Corporation realizes its obligation to protect its collections which are held in the public trust. Therefore, the Corporation shall act to the best of its ability, according to the following guidelines:

- A. A stable environment for items in storage or on display shall be maintained by protecting them from

excessive light, heat, humidity and dust. The environmental needs of different materials shall be considered.

B. All materials shall be protected against theft, fire, and other disasters by a security system and by a written disaster plan.

C. When possible, paper materials shall be copied on microfilm, photocopied on acid-free paper, or otherwise made redundant and stored in a separate location.

D. When deemed necessary conservation of materials shall be undertaken with the advice of a trained conservator.

E. Records shall be kept using appropriate forms for documentation: i.e., temporary receipt form, deed of gift, accession forms, relevant correspondence, conservation reports and deaccession records.

F. Inventories and location records shall be kept up to date to facilitate public access and to prevent loss.

## **V. Public Access**

The Corporation shall make research materials in its possession available to legitimate researchers with legitimate justification, but with the following stipulations:

A. Inventories, relevant files and the assistance of a staff member or trained volunteer shall be available to users.

B. A registration form listing rules for usage shall be read, filled out and signed by all researchers.

C. The Corporation may limit the use of fragile or usually valuable materials.

D. Hours of operation may be by designated hours or by appointment, depending on the availability of staff or trained volunteers.

E. Photographic and xerographic reproduction:

1. A Request for Copies form containing a notice of copyright restriction shall be signed by each user before copies are made.
2. Copies may not be used "for any purpose other than private study, scholarship or research." (United States Copyright Law, Title 17)
3. Reproduction by the corporation in no way transfers either copyright or property rights, nor does it constitute permission to publish or to display materials.
4. All prices for copying shall be determined by the Board of Trustees.
5. In some cases, the Corporation may refuse to allow copies to be made because of the physical condition of the materials, restrictions imposed by the donor, copyright law, or right-to-privacy statutes.

F. A fee may be charged for research work done to meet requests: the amount shall be set by the Board of Trustees.

G. The Corporation may refuse access to an individual researcher who has demonstrated such carelessness or deliberate destructiveness as to endanger the safety of the materials.

In addition, the Corporation is committed to bringing to the public information culled from its documents, photographs, artifacts and oral histories by presenting public programs, including slide shows, live acts, videos and films; mounting exhibits; and publishing newsletters, pamphlets, checklists and guides to the collections whenever possible.

## **VI. Deaccession**

No accessioned object or collection shall be removed from the Corporation's auspices except in conformity with the following rules:

A. A deaccession recommendation shall be prepared by the Collections Committee and approved by the Board of Trustees. Whenever deemed necessary, professional advice shall be sought before an item is deaccessioned.

B. The decision to deaccession should be cautious and deliberate and follow generally accepted museological standards. One of the following criteria must be met:

1. The item is inconsistent with the mission of the institution as set forth in its mission statement;
2. The item has failed to retain its identity;
3. The item is redundant;
4. The item's preservation and conservation needs are beyond the capacity of the institution to provide;
5. The item is deaccessioned to accomplish refinement of collections;
6. It has been established that the item is inauthentic
7. The institution is repatriating the item or returning the item to its rightful owner;
8. The institution is returning the item to the donor, or the donor's heirs or assigns, to fulfill donor restrictions relating to the item which the institution is no longer able to meet;
9. The item presents a hazard to people or other collection items; and/ or
10. The item has been lost or stolen and has not been recovered.

C. No donated material shall be deaccessioned for two years after the date of its acquisition. (See U.S. Tax Reform Act of 1984 and Internal Revenue Service regulations relating to the act.)

D. Ensure that collections or any individual part thereof and the proceeds derived there from shall not be used as collateral for a loan;

E. Ensure that collections shall not be capitalized;

F. A complete record of deaccessions shall be kept. A copy of this record shall be retained permanently.

G. Proceeds derived from the deaccessioning of any property from the collection of the Corporation shall be placed either in a temporarily restricted fund to be used only for the acquisition, preservation, protection or care of collections, or in a permanently restricted fund the earnings of which shall be used only for the acquisition, preservation, protection or care of collections. In no event shall proceeds be used for operating expenses or for any purpose other than acquisition, preservation, protection or care of collections.

H. Disposal may be by exchange, donation or public sale with scholarly or cultural organizations as the preferred recipients.

I. Materials de-accessioned shall not be privately sold, given or otherwise transferred to the Corporation's staff or trustees.

This Policy was formally approved and adopted by the Board of Trustees of the

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On \_\_\_\_\_

*Signed (officer):* \_\_\_\_\_

*Typed or printed name of officer:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Title:* \_\_\_\_\_