



Collections Management Policy for Permanent Collections

This Collections Management Policy establishes the policies and procedures that govern acquisition, care, management, preservation, use, and disposition of the Verde Valley Archaeology Center's (hereinafter referred to as "the Center") collections. The Center holds collections through a *Deed of Gift* process that transfers ownership from an outside donor to the Center. Collections held by the Center are recorded in the Center's Artifact Management System.

This policy also defines the ethical guidelines that govern all staff, trustees, and volunteers in any activity relating to the Center's collections and programs. To ensure currency and conformity with professional Center standards, this policy will be reviewed every five years, and will be revised as needed to reflect changes within the Center or in policies and standards of the profession.

ACQUISITIONS AND ACCESSIONING

Permanent collections or collection items are often referred to as "acquisitions" or as having been "accessioned" into the Center's collections. The term "item" is used as a generic reference to individual artifacts, documents, images, books, etc. The Center subscribes to a policy of selective acquisition. The significant costs of cataloging, storing, and preserving collections or collections items require that the Center be judicious in acquiring items. Each potential acquisition is evaluated with care, taking into consideration its value to the collection as well as its probable impact on the Center's resources.

Criteria for Acquisition

Acquisition to the Center's permanent collections, whether by purchase, donation, or other means, shall be in accordance with the following guidelines:

- Items must be relevant to and consistent with the Center's mission.
- All items must have cultural, historic, scientific, research, interpretive or aesthetic value.
- All moral, legal, and ethical implications of the acquisition must be considered.
- The Center will not knowingly or willfully acquire items that have been collected contrary to international, national, state, or local laws and regulations, treaties, and/or international conventions.
- When items of cultural or spiritual significance to ethnic groups or religious communities are considered for acquisition, the Center will make informed judgments as to appropriateness for acquisition, with sensitivity to subsequent care and/or exhibition of such items.
- The Center will comply with and support the tenets of NAGPRA, the federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, and will work to insure its ability to provide tribes with pertinent information about its NAGPRA and NAGPRA related collections.
- The Center does not accept or collect human remains and their associated funerary objects.
- The Center will draw on the expertise of other individuals for the evaluation of potential acquisitions when items fall outside the expertise of the Center collections staff.
- Whenever possible, items will be documented or documentable, including, but not limited to, provenance, artist/maker, date, use, and intellectual property rights (copyright, trademark, etc.). The appropriate Artifact Management Team must ascertain whether such intellectual property rights limit the use of an object.
- The Center does not guarantee the exhibition of any item.

- All donated items are accepted as free and unrestricted gifts, to be used at the Center's discretion. Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Director of Archaeology.
- The Center must be capable of providing for the storage, protection, and preservation of items under conditions that ensure access and meet professional standards.
- No item will be collected which constitutes a potential hazard to personnel, environment, facilities, or collections.
- No judgments as to appraisal or valuation of donations or potential donations will be provided by the Center other than for internal use.
- Accessioned items will have permanency in the collections as long as they retain their physical integrity, identity and authenticity, and remain consistent with the Center's purpose.

Donated items

- Potential donations will be evaluated by the Gift Acceptance Committee to determine whether or not they meet the Center's mission criteria.
- For artifacts acquired by donation, the Artifact Management Team will complete a *Deed of Gift* form. This establishes an immediate record of the acquisition and provides the information necessary for completion of the acquisition process. The Deed of Gift will include a list of the donated items(s) and be signed by the donor or personal representative of the donor and the appropriate member of the Gift Acceptance Committee.
- The *Deed of Gift* represents transfer of clear, legal, and unrestricted title to the donated items.
- The donor will receive a copy of the Deed upon its execution by the donor and the appropriate member of the Gift Acceptance Committee or as soon thereafter as possible; the Center maintains the processes for formally acknowledging the gift on behalf of the Center, and for assisting the donor with additional paperwork that may be required by the IRS.

General guidelines for processing permanent collections

- Acquisitions designated for the Center permanent collections will be promptly accessioned, i.e., a permanent record created upon determination that the object(s) meet(s) the Center's mission criteria; an accession number assigned by the Artifact Management Team; and said accession number attached to the collection or collections items. The accession record will include the accession number, date and nature of acquisition (e.g., donation, purchase), source, and a brief identification and description.
- Acquisitions designated for the Center permanent collections will be catalogued, photographed, processed for intake, cleaned and/or conserved as necessary, and prepared for storage or exhibition in accordance with current professional standards, and within a reasonable timeframe, as Center resources allow.
- Curation Staff will provide documentation regarding provenance and other relevant object history to the record file as is known, identified, or made available.
- A permanent record of all collection items will be maintained by Artifact Management Team, initially through entry into the Center's Artifact Management System. The record will document method of acquisition and provide a description, object information and current location. Auxiliary information, such as appraisal or research notes, will also be maintained as part of this permanent record.
- A permanent collections file will be maintained by Artifact Management Team. Copies of all original and pertinent legal documentation, as well as related notes and correspondence, will be kept in these files. Original *Deeds of Gift* will be stored in a secured location by the Center.

- The Center will not be held accountable for unsolicited gifts that have not undergone this procedure.

CARE OF COLLECTIONS

It is the responsibility of the Center to protect and preserve the integrity of the items in its collections. The goal of the collections care program is to ensure that items are stored, handled, used, and exhibited in such a way that the long-term preservation of the items is not compromised, and that items are cared for according to current professional standards.

The Curation Staff is responsible for overseeing the care of collections, including the care of Center items on loan to other institutions, as well as the care of items on loan to the Center. The Curation Staff develops and implements policies and procedures which provide guidelines for the care, management and preservation of the collections. The Curation Staff will maintain current knowledge regarding standards and developments in the field of collection care, management and preservation.

Preventative conservation is preferred to actual conservation treatment. When treatment is necessary, the goal is to preserve the object through the least intrusive means practicable. In all cases, professional staff will maintain respect for the integrity of the object, the history of the object, and the reversibility of the treatment.

The Center recognizes a special responsibility as steward of items related to or created by indigenous peoples. As a result of consultation with tribal representatives and others, the Center may develop special procedures for these collections to address cultural concerns for care of the items.

USE OF COLLECTIONS

Internal Use of Collections

Items from the collections may be used for exhibition, interpretation, research, and education. The appropriate collections staff will determine suitability of an item for use, dependent on condition of the object, availability of like objects, significance of the particular object, inherent risk to the object, or other concerns that may affect the preservation of a specific item. Permanent collection items may not be exhibited in individual offices or other non-public spaces, or used as long-term “decorative” features.

Access to Collections

The Center makes its collections available for research, exhibition, education, publication, and other appropriate purposes in concert with its mission. The type and conditions of such use must be consistent with the Center’s responsibility for care and preservation of its collections, and may be contingent on staff availability. The appropriate Curation Staff member facilitates access to collections. The primary considerations for access are condition and significance of the object(s) and availability of other sources for information such as duplicates, photographs, and written descriptions.

Guidelines for the Use of Collections

To provide maximum access to the collections while maintaining appropriate security and preservation standards, the following general procedures govern access. Additional forms, procedures and policies developed by the Center provide additional guidelines for the use of collections.

Physical Access to Collections

- A Request for Access form must be completed in advance and submitted to the appropriate Curation Staff member.

- The appropriate Curation Staff member determines extent of access and supervision.
- Appropriate Curation Staff member will advise proper use and handling of items, and provide appropriate supervision.
- Access may be revoked for the safety of collections; users may be liable for damage as stated in the Request for Access form.
- Access to certain types of items (e.g. culturally sensitive), and certain types of information (e.g. donor files, values, and locations) may be restricted based on specific circumstances and criteria, such as legal restrictions on the distribution of student information, confidentiality issues or protection of the collections.
- The appropriate Curation Staff member maintains a record of all collections use.

Public Display and Publication

- Access to and use of the collections and records must be credited in all publications, exhibitions, and other presentations.
- The Center will be given a copy of any publications or other products of research, which result from access to collections, and this will be a condition of use.
- No commercial or promotional use of the Center's permanent collections, or information or images resulting from their examination, will be allowed unless specific approval in writing is granted by the appropriate Curation Staff member and the Director.

Fees

- Access and use of collections may involve value-added fees
- Value-added fees may include staff time and any associated costs for photocopying, reproduction, etc.