



NEWFIELDS

“To enrich lives through exceptional experiences with art and nature.”
STEWARDSHIP • INCLUSIVITY • SERVICE • EXCELLENCE

COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT POLICY

IV. DEACCESSION POLICY

Deaccessioning is the formal removal of an object from a museum’s accessioned collection. It is normally followed by disposition of the object by sale, transfer, or exchange. Deaccessioning is a best practice in the museum field used to improve overall collection quality through thoughtful assessment and redesignation.

Newfields, for any of the reasons described below, may find it necessary or desirable to amend its accessioned collections by deaccession.

A. Objects considered for deaccession may include but are not limited to the following:

- A1. Objects that are not appropriate for Newfields’ accessioned collections or are not consistent with the goals of Newfields.
- A2. Objects that are determined to be below the level of quality necessary to advance Newfields’ mission or possess little potential for display, research, scholarship, or educational purposes.
- A3. Objects that have been forged or misrepresented. A forgery is defined as a work that was intentionally made or sold for the purpose of defrauding buyers, or that has been altered in any way toward the same end. Forgeries may also include objects not made or used in their traditional contexts (i.e. as commonly occurs within the ethnographic art market and indigenous objects). Forgeries do not include studio works, copies, imitations, and similar works made without deceitful intent and sold in good faith by a reputable dealer. Objects misrepresented by the seller or donor may include, but are not limited to, objects that are either intentionally or unintentionally portrayed to Newfields as having falsified, incomplete, or dubious title, provenance, condition, attribution, date of creation, or edition of a series. Misrepresented objects may also include forgeries.
- A4. Duplicate and redundant objects. Redundant works include objects that are either duplicates, or similar variants, which includes works closely related in subject and style by the same artist or school but varying in quality, condition, and interest.
- A5. Objects damaged or deteriorated beyond reasonable repair.
- A6. Objects for which Newfields is not able to provide proper storage, care, or display.

- 1.) Indianapolis Museum of Art Collections Management Policy: Approved by the Board of Governors 29 November 2005 / Revisions Approved by the Collections Committee 24 September 2015
- 2.) Section IV Deaccession of Works of Art: Approved as Policy by the Collection Committee 06 July 2015
- 3.) Section VIII Care of Collections Policy, B. Preventative Care, changes were made to incorporate passes and drones procedures regarding B.7 Photography, Filming and Sketching in the Galleries, Gardens, and Park 04 July 2017
- 4.) Section IV Deaccession of Works of Art Policy: Approved as Policy by the Art Committee 20 May 2020
- 5.) Director approved updates of Section IV Deaccession Policy in tracked changes for approval by the Art Committee at the 27 August 2020 meeting



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A7. Objects in art historical areas or cultures that are no longer within the scope of Newfields' Collecting Plan.

B. Art Committee of the Board of Trustees Approval

The Board of Trustees has invested its power to approve the deaccession of an object in its Art Committee. Any object proposed for deaccession must be presented to the Art Committee of the Board of Trustees after the object is identified by the Curator and approved by the Director for deaccession. Final approval for any object proposed for deaccession rests with the Art Committee, which must be approved by a majority in person or by proxy.

C. Disposal

Each deaccessioned object will be disposed of in a means appropriate to the item. In many cases, this will be by public consignment with an auction house or a reputable dealer (either online or physical sale) or a private sale through an auction house or reputable dealer. However, some objects may best be disposed of by transfer to or exchange with another institution, retention by Newfields under a non-art status, or in cases of objects that are deemed forgeries or beyond reasonable repair, Newfields may wish to destroy them.

In the cases of stolen, forged, or misrepresented objects, the Curator and Director will determine their proper disposition, which may include restitution, repatriation, or destruction. For purchases, Newfields may seek additionally a refund, credit, or exchange from the dealer or auction house.

Disposal will not take place in a way that violates Newfields' Code of Ethics or otherwise creates a conflict of interest for Newfields. As is applicable to all staff, trustees, governors, and Art Committee members of Newfields, directly or indirectly purchasing an object that is being deaccessioned by Newfields is a violation of Newfields' Code of Ethics.

In general, the Curator in whose area the deaccession falls, in association with the Director, will recommend a means of disposal and supervise the disposal. The Registrar will implement the disposal and keep the Curator and Director informed.

D. Use of Proceeds

Per the Board-approved Collecting Plan, the funds received from the sale of objects will be used to improve stewardship of the collection through the acquisition or deaccession of objects or the direct care of the collection. Deaccession funds may be used on a case by case basis to cover the following:

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- D1. The purchase price of new objects for the accessioned collection.
- D2. Payment for specific costs directly associated with new acquisitions of objects, including, but not limited to, packing, shipping, conservation, and installation.
- D3. To support the direct care of collections, including, but not limited to, framing, research, cataloguing, connoisseurship, mounting, photography, conservation, installation, packing, transportation, evaluation, sales fees, and the associated salaries and/or fees of staff and/or consultants who perform these specialized tasks.

Objects purchased with deaccession funds will be publicly credited to the original donor(s) in a similar manner as follows, "Gift of [donor's original credit] by exchange" or "Through prior gift of [donor's original credit]" or "[fund name] by exchange." For objects originally purchased using unrestricted art purchase funds, the deaccession funds will revert to the general deaccession art purchase fund.

E. Documentation

The Registrar will document the deaccession in the permanent files, accession card files, and in the collections management database. A reference photograph must be on record prior to the object's disposal. The completed Recommendation for Deaccession Form (including the amount realized from sale) will become part of the object's permanent historical file. A deaccessioned object will be posted on the Newfields website after approval by the Art Committee of the Board of Trustees and it will include the method of disposal of the object. Funds realized from deaccessioned objects will be updated in the collections management database and on the website after each sale. In addition, the Internal Revenue Service 990 form will be accessible on Newfields' website.

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