

Culture and Communities Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 11 May 2023

Edinburgh Museums and Galleries: Policy Renewals 2023-2026

Executive/routine Wards Council Commitments	Routine All
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1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
 - 1.1.1 Approves the appended Museums and Galleries: Collections Development Policy 2023-2026;
 - 1.1.2 Approves the appended Museums and Galleries: Temporary Exhibitions Policy 2023-2026; and
 - 1.1.3 Notes that, subject to approval of the above recommendations, the next update to these policies will be submitted to the appropriate Executive Committee in 2026.

Paul Lawrence

Executive Director of Place

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Report

Edinburgh Museums and Galleries: Policy Renewals 2023-2026

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report seeks approval for two updated museums and galleries policies – Collections Development Policy and Temporary Exhibitions Policy. If approved, these policies will be valid from the date of approval until 2026.

3. Background

- 3.1 The previous Collections Development Policy (2018-2022), which was previously approved by the Culture and Communities Committee at its meeting on the [20 March 2018](#) has expired and the revised policy needs approval.
- 3.2 The previous Temporary Exhibitions Policy (2018-2022), which was previously approved by the Culture and Communities Committee at its meeting on the [20 March 2018](#) has expired and the revised policy needs approval.

4. Main report

- 4.1 **Collections** are at the heart of the museums and galleries service. They span different disciplines and are housed in a range of venues across the city. Aspects of the Council's collections are 'Recognised' as being of National Significance as part of a Scottish Government scheme (managed by Museums Galleries Scotland). As part of this Recognition, the service is eligible to apply for funding.
- 4.2 The proposed new Collections Development Policy is attached at Appendix 1. It provides a framework for responsible and ethical acquisition and disposal of collections.
- 4.3 The policy is structured in accordance with the National Accreditation Scheme's current guidelines and formal approval is a requirement to ensure that Accreditation status is maintained. The policy provides a synopsis of the history and scope of the Council's current collections and identifies priorities and themes for future collecting. It explains how acquisitions are made, lists those institutions with similar or related collecting policies, references existing legislation that governs aspects of what we collect, and outlines procedures relating to disposal.

- 4.5 **Temporary exhibitions** have been a key feature of MGE since the 1970s. They are shown in the City Art Centre, Museum of Childhood, Museum of Edinburgh, Queensferry Museum and Travelling Gallery, which has a national remit and is a Regularly Funded Organisation of Creative Scotland.
- 4.6 Temporary exhibitions fulfil several different functions. They attract diverse visitors to venues and promote public engagement on a range of subjects. They enable presentation of permanent collection items in new contexts and the display of loan material that might not otherwise be available to the public. Temporary exhibitions advance scholarship, knowledge and understanding in different disciplines and media. They serve a social function and act as a platform for education and learning activities. All major museums and galleries stage temporary exhibitions.
- 4.7 The proposed new Temporary Exhibitions Policy 2023-2026 is attached at Appendix 2. It defines the aims and programme focus across the museums and gallery service, including the Travelling Gallery.
- 4.8 A review of the previous policy was undertaken and it has now been updated in accordance with best practice, as stipulated by the Accreditation Scheme for Museums and Galleries in the UK.
- 4.9 The policy is structured in accordance with the national Accreditation Scheme's guidelines. It describes the methods used and people involved in planning the programme of temporary exhibitions and the criteria used in their selection. It explains how exhibitions are developed and implemented, the important role of public programmes and retail as part of the overall exhibition package, and outlines the processes involved in the evaluation and review of exhibitions.
- 4.10 Both policy documents have been informed by the recently approved Citywide Culture Strategy and the City of Edinburgh Council Business Plan, addressing its aims in relation to poverty, sustainability, wellbeing and equality. They also reflect priorities expressed in Scotland's Museums and Galleries Strategy (2023-2030) produced by Museums Galleries Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Government

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 If approved, the policy documents will be shared with staff and relevant bodies as requested, they will also be published on the Council website (as part of the Policy Register) and will inform service plan actions and outcomes.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 The costs involved in implementing the Collections Development Policy will be contained within the Culture and Wellbeing revenue budget.
- 6.2 Additional funding required to acquire new items for collections is secured through the Jean F. Watson Bequest Fund and through grants from the National Fund for Acquisitions, the National Art Collections Fund, the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Art Fund, the Friends of the City Art Centre and Museums, and other sources.

- 6.3 The costs involved in implementing Temporary Exhibitions Policy will be contained within the Culture and Wellbeing revenue budget. Additional funding to mount temporary exhibitions is secured through grants, sponsorship, ticket charges, retail items and partnership working.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 Integrated Impact Assessments have been produced to accompany each policy document and are available on request.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 None.

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1: Museums and Galleries: Collections Development Policy 2023-2026.
9.2 Appendix 2: Museums and Galleries: Temporary Exhibitions Policy 2023-2026.

Museums and Galleries Collections Development Policy 2023-2026

Implementation date 11 May 2023

Control schedule

Approved by	Culture and Communities Committee
Approval date	11 May 2023
Senior Responsible Officer	Joan Parr, Service Director Culture and Wellbeing
Author	Nico Tyack, Collections Information Officer
Scheduled for review	May 2026

Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Comment
0.1	08/03/2023	Nico Tyack	
0.2			

Subsequent committee decisions affecting this policy

Date	Committee	Link to report	Link to minute
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Museums and Galleries Collections Development Policy 2023-2026

Policy statement

This Collections Development Policy is designed to align with MGE's Service Plan for 2023-2026. The Service Plan, which covers all our work, is informed by the recently approved [Citywide Culture Strategy \(2023-2030\)](#). The Collections Development Policy is also informed by the [City of Edinburgh Council Business Plan \(2021-2024\)](#) and its aims in relation to poverty, sustainability, wellbeing and equality.

This policy is informed, and is a requirement of, the [UK Museums Accreditation Scheme](#), delivered in partnership across the UK, and in Scotland by Museums Galleries Scotland. It also conforms to standards and practice as set by Treasure Trove and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standards and Guidance.

This policy reflects the vision of [Scotland's Museums and Galleries Strategy 2023-2030](#) produced by Museums Galleries Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Government and its focus on the post-pandemic period, wellbeing, the climate crisis and decolonisation. It also speaks to the aims of the [Museums Association's Strategic Framework \(2020-2025\)](#), which aims to empower museums across the UK to positively change lives.

It is designed to sit alongside and reflect work being undertaken internally by the MGE Inclusion group, the Decolonisation working group and the Temporary Exhibitions group, as well as the Learning and Engagement Framework being developed by the service.

Scope

This policy sets out:

- Framework for future collecting, and limits to collecting practice;
- Framework for rationalisation and disposal;
- Ethical and legal context of acquisitions and disposals;
- Context, approvals and outline of acquisition and disposal procedures;
- Mechanisms to prevent the development of documentation backlogs; and
- Provisions for maintaining and backing up Accession Registers.

MGE is the City of Edinburgh Council's Museum Service. We enable people to connect with the city, its many histories and its role in presenting art from around the world. We

do this through our collections, temporary exhibitions and engagement activities, both physical and digital. We balance our responsibility to preserve, display and interpret collections with our mission to encourage debate, interaction, reflection and exploration.

The collections have developed from the original Corporation Museum founded in the late 19th century, and are now estimated at 200,000 items. Other than being selected for possible display in permanent and temporary exhibitions, offers of acquisitions are assessed according to strict criteria. These consider relevance to existing collections, collecting themes and priorities, and their potential relevance to any future research, educational or engagement opportunities (in person or digitally) as well as taking into consideration the particular condition of, or potential hazards presented by, individual items.

MGE is committed to developing collections which are representative of all of Edinburgh's communities. MGE's Service Plan highlights target audiences for the service, and will commit to developing consultative collecting practice with these audiences to ensure collections remain dynamic, relevant, accessible and inclusive.

Definitions

'MGE' denotes Museums and Galleries Edinburgh.

The Governing Body is the Culture and Communities Committee acting on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council.

Policy content

1. Guiding Principles

- 1.1 The governing body will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.
- 1.2 MGE has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for the benefit of the public in relation to our stated objectives. The governing body therefore accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons must be established before consideration is given to any acquisition to the collection, or the disposal of any items in the museum's collection.
- 1.3 Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.
- 1.4 MGE recognises our responsibility, when acquiring additions to our collections, to ensure that care of collections, information management and use of collections will meet the requirements of the UK Museum Accreditation Standard.

- 1.5 This includes using [SPECTRUM 5.1 primary procedures](#) for collections management. We will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.
- 1.6 MGE will undertake due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.
- 1.7 MGE will follow the principles and guidance of the Museums Association on disposal. MGE will review and monitor the condition of the collection, and collections will be subject to ongoing review as per the MA good practice guidelines. Disposal of objects will never be financially motivated.

2 History of the Collections

2.1 Museums and Galleries Edinburgh service

2.1.1 The City of Edinburgh Council manages 13 venues across the city. These venues in turn hold seven collections which together tell the story of Edinburgh's creativity, history, archaeology and diversity.

2.1.2 The collections are:

- applied art;
- archaeology;
- childhood;
- fine art;
- Lauriston Castle;
- social history (including Queensferry and Newhaven collections); and
- writers.

2.2 Development of the Collections

2.2.1 A detailed history of the various collections and documentation conventions can be found on the [Collections Management Procedures Manual](#).

2.2.2 The collections belonging to the City of Edinburgh Council have, like many municipal collections, evolved in various ways over many decades, and have developed as the service has grown.

2.2.3 Collecting by the Council began in the late 19th century. The earliest acquisitions were archival elements of the Burns and Scott collections now at the Writers' Museum. Acquisitions published in the Scotsman and the Council

Minutes show that the Corporation was acquiring three dimensional artefacts from the city's past. At this time, museums were concerned more with collecting items of municipal, institutional or national significance. The first publicly accessible Corporation Museum opened at the City Chambers in 1905. It subsequently moved to Lady Stairs House in 1913, and again in 1932 to Huntly House, now known as the Museum of Edinburgh.

- 2.2.4 The collection included historical items, fine and decorative art, and objects relating to Sir Walter Scott and Robert Burns, but eventually Fine Art, Decorative Art and the literary collections grew out as distinct collecting areas. The Museum of Childhood, Lauriston Castle and Queensferry Museum have always had discrete collections. Most recently, the opening of the People's Story in 1989 was the driving force for the development of the social history collections, focussing on the lives and work of ordinary people in the city.
- 2.2.5 The Museum of Childhood was founded by Councillor Patrick Murray in 1955. The museum has moved location several times but moved to the current location in 1957.

Implementation

3.1 Overview of current collections

- 3.1.1 The general intention of this policy is to strengthen the scope of our existing collections by acquiring new objects, including through purchase, which fill identified gaps in collecting practice. For most collections, it is the strong personal stories linking the objects to people, places and events which give the greatest meaning and long-term benefit.
- 3.1.2 Acquisitions may also be made of comparative material which complement or enhance our understanding of existing collections, such as associated events, people, contrasting materials, style and scope.
- 3.1.3 The policy also strengthens the care provision to collections by establishing ongoing monitoring and reviewing of collections to assess if they are in the best possible care. This may at times require responsible transfer to other museums whose collecting policies may be more relevant, or have the specialist resources to better ensure long term preservation of a specific item.

3.2 Applied Art

- 3.2.1 This collection is largely concentrated at the Museum of Edinburgh, with small groups of objects on display at The Writers' Museum, The People's Story and the Museum of Childhood.
- 3.2.2 The collection comprises five main elements:

- Edinburgh and Canongate silver from the 17th century to the present day;
- Edinburgh glass from the late 18th century to the present day;
- Scottish pottery, particularly from south-east Scotland dating from the late 18th century to the present day;
- Edinburgh and Canongate long-case clocks; and
- a small collection of Scottish jewellery from the 17th century to the present day.

3.2.3 The Applied Art Collection of silver, ceramic and glass at the Museum of Edinburgh has been Recognised as Nationally Significant (under the Scottish Government's National Recognition Scheme).

3.3 Archaeology

3.3.1 This collection comprises both archaeological material and the numismatics collection. The Archaeological collection currently spans over 10,500 years of human occupation across Edinburgh, from Scotland's earliest settlers in the Mesolithic period (c.8500-4000 BC) through to the 20th century.

3.3.2 The collection's strength lies in its comprehensive coverage of Roman Cramond, the medieval and post-medieval burghs of Leith and the Old Town, the remains of their medieval/post-medieval inhabitants, and 18th-20th century pottery from the Portobello Potteries.

3.3.3 The small numismatics collection complements the archaeological collection and includes coins recovered from excavations (from Roman denarii to late-Victorian/ Edwardian coinage) in addition to Scottish coins, Scottish medals and communion tokens and a few commemorative medals. The Collections strength is its important collection of medieval coinage including items struck at the Edinburgh Mint and also a 15th century coin hoard from Leith.

3.3.4 It is noted that the archaeology collections can, and do, complement many of the objects held in the social history collections in particular the material from the excavations undertaken across the Portobello Potteries.

3.4 Childhood Collection

3.4.1 Accommodated in the Museum of Childhood, as well as the Museums Collection Centre, the City Chambers and Murrayburn Archive Store, the collection contains around 70,000 objects concerning every aspect of the concept of childhood.

3.4.2 The main themes of the collection cover:

- **Community life:** health and wellbeing; nursery, primary and secondary education; organised leisure groups, such as the Scouts and Guides and specialist interest clubs;
- **Domestic and family life:** furniture, furnishings and tableware; clothing and household textiles; infant raising equipment; photographs and personalia. This category also covers a wide variety of toys, games and dolls (board, card, electronic and physical games; construction, optical, musical, occupational and transport toys, craft and hobby items, dolls' houses and miniatures, dolls, soft toys, puppets, automata) as well as over 20 000 books, comics and magazines. Items of particular note include a mid-18th century wooden doll, known as a Queen Anne doll, and the 18 room dolls' house, Stanbrig Eorls; and
- **Personal life:** costume, in particular, Christening gowns and costume for infants and young children from the late-19th century to the mid-20th century; school uniform; fancy dress costumes; uniform of organisations such as the Guides, Scouts, Boys' and Girls' Brigades; jewellery, fans and other dress accessories.

3.4.3 The collection ranges in date from the 18th century to the present day and continues to make contemporary acquisitions. The collecting focus is on British childhood experiences, including the reach into the British Empire and experiences abroad, and also includes some non-imperial international representation. The largest proportion of the collection is from the late 19th and 20th centuries representing the growth of manufacture of the subjects covered.

3.4.4 Contact is made frequently with other Scottish museums which acknowledge the Museum of Childhood as the country's leading repository for historical childhood items. In turn, the Museum of Childhood will direct items offered for sale or as donations which have a strong local significance to an appropriate local museum.

3.4.5 The Museum of Childhood now represents the only UK based Museum of Childhood with a comprehensive breadth of collections, as other childhood collections have become theme or date specific. Consultations with other UK based childhood related collection holders are regularly made and the Young V&A and National Trust refer researchers towards the Museum of Childhood specialist collections.

3.4.6 The nature of the Museum of Childhood collections mean they complement the social history collections and are often used for public programme joint projects. Community outreach and exhibition projects also often use the Childhood collections as they have a universal relatability. The History of Childhood is a growing academic field and increasingly researchers use the Museum of Childhood collections for examples of material culture.

3.5 Fine Art

- 3.5.1 The entire Scottish Art collection at the City Art Centre has been Recognised as a Nationally Significant Collection under the Scottish Government Recognition Scheme, managed by Museums Galleries Scotland.
- 3.5.2 The Fine Art collection comprises oil and acrylic paintings, watercolours, drawings, prints, photographs, sculptures, tapestries and installation works. Ranging in date from the 17th century to the present day, it consists mainly of works by Scottish artists, artists working in Scotland, and works with a strong Scottish connection. It covers a wide variety of subject-matter, including portraits and figure studies, landscapes, still lifes, genre scenes and abstract compositions.
- 3.5.3 Although the collection is cared for at the City Art Centre, works are also displayed in the Museum of Edinburgh, the Writers' Museum, the Museum of Childhood, the City Chambers and many other public buildings in the City of Edinburgh.
- 3.5.4 The collection has five principal components:
- Artworks that derive from the City's original civic collection of paintings. These include portraits of notable Edinburgh figures, such as former Lord Provosts, and topographical views of the City;
 - Artworks that have been transferred to the City's care from other art collections. These include works from the Scottish Modern Arts Association (presented in 1964), the Scottish Arts Council Collection (transferred in 1998), and the Edinburgh Schools Art Collection (transferred in 2011);
 - Artworks that have been acquired since 1962 with funds given, and later bequeathed, by Miss Jean F Watson. All acquisitions are approved by the Jean F Watson Bequest Committee;
 - Artworks that are accepted as donations from organisations and individuals; and
 - Artworks on long-term loan to the City for purposes of display and research (all long-term loans are subject to the terms and conditions of formal loan agreements).

3.6 Lauriston Castle

- 3.6.1 The Reid Bequest comprises Lauriston Castle, its contents and grounds, left in trust to the nation by Mr and Mrs W R Reid. Since Mrs Reid's death in 1926, the Trust has been administered by the City of Edinburgh Council. The collections at Lauriston in part consist of items brought from the Reid's former home in Edinburgh. These collections form the basis of the furnishing in the house, but many further items were purchased, with specific locations or

decorative purpose in mind, to create the outstanding Edwardian interior which characterises Lauriston Castle today.

3.6.2 The Reids furnished the entire property, including the servants' quarters, with items they considered appropriate, to create a unified decorative scheme. The Reid's Trust specifically states that the interior should be preserved 'as at the death of the survivor of us', and consequently the Castle today remains a remarkable example of Edwardian taste.

3.6.3 The collections comprise:

- British and Continental furniture, including a fine collection of Southern Italian commodes;
- Crossley Wool Mosaics;
- urns and vases made from the Derbyshire Fluorspar known as Blue John;
- Caucasian and near-Eastern rugs;
- Scottish, English and French clocks;
- a large collection of mezzotints and engravings;
- a group of Italian flower paintings; and
- an extensive collection of Sheffield Plate.

3.7 Social History (including Queensferry and Newhaven)

3.7.1 This collection tells the story of the people who have lived, or live and work in Edinburgh. It spans The People's Story, the Museum of Edinburgh, Queensferry Museum and the collection associated with the former Newhaven Heritage Museum.

3.7.2 The collection is limited to the geographical boundaries of the City of Edinburgh Council, which includes the Fife coastline from Joppa to South Queensferry, and the northernmost reaches of the Pentland Hills.

3.7.3 The material of which it is made up encompasses four main subject areas:

- **Community life** in Edinburgh (organisations such as Friendly Societies, cooperative movement, etc; political life in the city; local government and law enforcement; health, welfare and sanitation; education; entertainment, sport and public amenities; communications and currency; warfare and life in wartime; local cultural traditions, folklore and characters; faith and religious life; representation of all Edinburgh's communities including black and other minority communities; LGBTQIA+ people);
- **Domestic and family life** in Edinburgh (household life and work, furnishings and fittings; household management: food, drink and

tobacco; and hobbies, crafts and leisure activities) from post-medieval times to the present day;

- **Personalia and dress history** of Edinburgh people (personal records and photographs, personal souvenirs; dress; and personal care and well-being). A collection of historic tartan costume, portions of early tartan, prints, and items relating to the production of tartan were donated by J Telfer Dunbar in 1950; and
- **Industry and work** in Edinburgh (labour organisations; agriculture and fishing; energy and water supply; mining; engineering and metalworking industries; manufacturing industries including food and drink, textiles, leather goods, footwear and clothing, timber and wooden furniture, printing and associated trades; rubber and plastics; construction trades; transport operations and communications; wholesale and retail distribution; hotels and catering; banking, finance, and insurance services; business services; cultural and recreational services and personal and domestic services). The collections include an impressive holding of trade union, political and friendly society banners and regalia.

3.7.4 The Haig collection was donated by the second Earl Haig in 1960. It is based at the Museum of Edinburgh, and documents the life and military career of Field Marshal Earl Haig. It contains personal belongings (including uniforms, ceremonial costume, decorations, freedom caskets, manuscripts, books, paintings, drawings, prints and photographs).

3.8 The Writers' Museum

3.8.1 The Robert Burns collection has been Recognised as a Nationally Significant Collection under the Scottish Government Recognition Scheme, managed by Museums Galleries Scotland, and in partnership with other collections in the Burns Scotland group of museums.

3.8.2 The Writers' Museum collection comprises personal belongings, manuscripts, early editions, commemorative items, paintings, drawings, prints and sculpture relating to Edinburgh's literary life and key writers, authors and poets.

3.8.3 Historically the collections have been primarily associated with Robert Burns, Sir Walter Scott and Robert Louis Stevenson.

3.8.4 The Stevenson Collections contains photograph albums compiled by the author, his family and friends. The Scott section includes items relating to the Scott Monument and its architect, George Meikle Kemp. The material associated with Robert Burns forms part of the Robert Burns Collection (which is distributed across Scotland).

3.8.5 There are a small number of items and books relating to Muriel Spark, Dorothy Dunnett and other contemporary writers.

3.9 Handling Collections

- 3.9.1 A variety of objects are lent out in the form of handling collections. These are administered by the Learning and Access Service (currently based at the City Art Centre) and the Museum of Edinburgh. They are used for a variety of purposes including reminiscence with older people, handling sessions with children, informal learning sessions with a range of audiences, and community exhibitions. The handling collections offer hands-on sensory engagement for communities with our collections.
- 3.9.2 These are non-core collections and consist of non-accessioned duplicate items, specifically collected or purchased items and replicas.

4 Themes and Priorities for Future Collecting

4.1 Service-wide themes

- 4.1.1 Our future collecting will be guided by the primary themes of
- collecting material relating to contemporary Edinburgh and wider Scottish society, visual arts and crafts;
 - developing a collection which represents all of Edinburgh's communities and localities by understanding where they may be unknown or previously unexplored gaps in our collecting; and
 - strengthening existing collections.

Collecting Edinburgh and beyond

- 4.1.2 Not all collections are geographically tied to the City of Edinburgh Council's boundaries. Each collection's remit is stated below. Where a collection has a specific geographic boundary, we will seek to collect material from within that area only.

Representing Edinburgh's communities by filling known gaps

- 4.1.3 We will actively work with communities currently underserved by our Service, including those who face barriers to access (as identified in our Service Plan) to discern gaps in our collections and make plans to fill those gaps through strategic collecting.
- 4.1.4 The collections shall reflect the contribution made by all of Edinburgh's communities. Every effort shall be made to develop those parts of the collection where this is not the case.
- 4.1.5 This work may occur as part of outreach, exhibitions, or other project work, or may be undertaken as standalone projects. In every case, we will be led by communities in the development of our collecting goals.

- 4.1.6 As a public sector organisation, we are bound by the Equality Act (2010) and by Public Sector Equality Duty. We wish not to just meet our legal requirements, but to proactively go beyond them.
- 4.1.7 We have developed an EDI plan which outlines priority areas for development. We have also committed to ensuring that our work is included in Edinburgh and Lothians Equality Framework (2021-2025), and our own Anti-Racism Pledge.

Strengthening collections by making connections

- 4.1.8 Priority will be given to objects with strong connections to people, places and events.
- 4.1.9 We will seek to capture the stories that the objects we acquire can tell. This will allow us to see our collections holistically, and make connections across all collecting areas.
- 4.1.10 We will seek quality rather than quantity, and to acquire items of artistic, historic and cultural significance that can be interpreted for audiences in a meaningful and dynamic way.
- 4.1.11 We will acquire items only when we can guarantee that we have the capacity to ensure their long- term care.
- 4.1.12 In addition to artefacts, we will actively seek to acquire born-digital material.
- 4.1.13 We will seek to accession, catalogue and care for all items that are acquired as fully as possible within three months of acquisition.

4.2 Applied Art

- 4.2.1 The future development of the collection will concentrate on filling gaps in the subsections indicated above, extending the historical time periods covered by the existing collections. Emphasis will be placed on acquiring items made in, or closely associated with Edinburgh, except for Scottish pottery, which has traditionally been drawn from a wider geographical area and covers the East coast of Scotland.
- 4.2.2 The Applied Arts Section will actively develop a collection of contemporary silver, ceramics and glass produced by makers currently living and working in Edinburgh, or closely associated with the city. Through donation or purchase, the section will also seek to improve the collections of 20th century material, particularly late 20th century pieces.
- 4.2.3 Archival material relating to local potteries, glass factories and other manufactories, and the work of individual makers and studios will be collected to enhance the existing object-based collections.

4.3 Archaeology

- 4.3.1 Most future acquisitions will be the product of properly conducted archaeological excavations by external archaeological organisations,

undertaken as part of the Council's development control process, monitored by the City's Archaeology Service and acquired via the Treasure Trove process.

- 4.3.2 In addition, there may be some acquisitions from casual archaeological finds and private collections which shall be subject to the requirements of [paragraphs below](#).
- 4.3.3 The geographical scope of the collection is primarily focused on the area administered by the City of Edinburgh Council, except for items acquired for the purpose of comparison in display or for educational and research purposes or items with clear associations with Edinburgh discovered elsewhere.
- 4.3.4 As a comprehensive Scottish and international coin collection is held by the National Museums of Scotland, the development of the numismatic collection shall be restricted to coins and medals with a connection with the area of the City of Edinburgh, including types of coins known to have been used in Edinburgh in the past. Coins recovered during archaeological excavations shall continue to be acquired, subject to the requirements of [Section 13](#) below.

4.4 Childhood Collection

- 4.4.1 Within the tight constraints of storage and display space and curatorial staff resources, we will continue to add to the collection to extend our knowledge of childhood in the past, and to represent contemporary childhood for the benefit of future audiences.
- 4.4.2 The collection will be limited to items relating to childhood experiences within Britain or the reach of the British Empire. This includes an active collecting of migration stories.
- 4.4.3 Focus will be given to items with strong personal stories about experiences of childhood.
- 4.4.4 Recognised gaps in the collections actively being sought are:
- Pre- 1850 material;
 - World War II material;
 - Carefully selected material from 1980 to the present day;
 - children's furniture and household items;
 - photographs;
 - sports-related items (especially football-related); and
 - material relating to the working lives of children.
- 4.4.5 Items of which we already have a good representative collection and subsequently will not actively seek to acquire unless in exceptional circumstances are:

- christening gowns;
- late 19th – early 20th century baby clothes;
- highchairs;
- pre-1990 doll's prams;
- dolls' house;
- dolls in national costume;
- children's encyclopaedias; and
- items collected by adults, or made by adults, with no connection to childhood experience.

4.5 Fine Art

4.5.1 The main objective shall remain the building of a representative collection of Scottish art spanning the breadth of fine art practice from the 17th century to the present day. This will be achieved through the acquisition of artworks by purchase, commission, transfer, donation and bequest.

4.5.2 In terms of historic art, gaps in the collection relating to the representation of different artists will be filled when opportunities arise and funding is available. This includes acquiring work by artists who have traditionally been recognised as historically important, but also those whose significant contributions have sometimes been overlooked by art historians and critics, such as women artists and artists from marginalised groups or backgrounds.

4.5.3 In terms of contemporary art, there will be a continued focus on acquiring work by artists who were either born in Scotland, or who have trained, worked or lived in Scotland. There will be ongoing efforts to ensure that contemporary collecting reflects the diverse range of identities and backgrounds that make up the visual arts community in modern-day Scotland.

4.6 Lauriston Castle

4.6.1 The Reid's Trust specifically states that the interior should be preserved 'as at the death of the survivor' of the family.

4.6.2 Acquisition of items may be considered if they enhance our knowledge and interpretation of the history of the castle and its past occupants. This may include:

- items with a personal or family connection to the Reids;
- material relating to Mr Reid's company, Morison & Co;
- items that have associations with the house or any of the previous owners / occupants;

- items required to maintain the interior and collections in line with the terms of the Trust document; and
- items which can be used to enhance the interpretation of the house as part of a handling collection.

4.7 Social History (including Queensferry and Newhaven)

4.7.1 Chronologically, the Social History collection covers a time span from the beginning of the post-medieval period to the present day. Preference will be given to items with a strong local Edinburgh provenance or story.

4.7.2 Due to storage limitations, careful consideration will be given for all acquisitions to ensure MGE can continue to care for all items adequately.

4.7.3 A policy of collecting shall be adopted to fill existing gaps. In addition to physical artefacts, born-digital material shall be acquired.

4.7.4 The main emphasis shall continue to be on the acquisition of items owned, produced, or used in the City of Edinburgh Council area. Occasionally, items from outwith this area shall be collected for purposes of comparison, to illustrate an important point, or if they belong to categories of objects relevant to Edinburgh but unrepresented in the collection. This will be done after consideration of the interests of any other museums in the relevant area.

4.7.5 In addition to the acquired artefact, we will seek to collect supporting documentary material such as photography, documents (physical or digital) which may not be accessioned into the permanent collections but added to our collections information system for reference, research and publication.

4.7.6 Recognised gaps in the collections actively being sought are:

- the Early Modern period;
- Additions to the J Telfer Dunbar tartan collection shall be sought to reflect the interest and importance of this collection;
- Acquisitions may be made that strengthen the Haig collection, alongside our wider collections reflecting war and Edinburgh;
- Additions to the banner and regalia material shall be sought, covering the period from the 18th century to the present day;
- As an area rich in history charting changes in the industrial, social and economic life of the city, we will continue adding to our collections relating to Leith; and
- We will actively collect material from under-represented areas to the south and west of the city.

4.7.7 Items we will not actively seek to acquire are:

- future additions to our costume collection shall be confined to well-documented items with specific connections with Edinburgh. An important collection of historic costume and textiles already exists in the National Museum of Scotland; and
- a number of collections, such as the Field Marshal Earl Haig and Robert Louis Stevenson Club material, from single sources are split over multiple institutions. We will liaise with partners where relevant to ensure items are held by the most appropriate repository.

4.7.8 We will continue to add to the Queensferry Collections, following the same themes outlined above. However, the geographic spread of collections will be limited to the area around South Queensferry within the City of Edinburgh Council boundaries.

4.8 Writers' Museum

4.8.1 Acquisitions will be sought from contemporary Scottish writers, especially those from under-represented communities.

4.8.2 Emphasis shall be given to primary sources, or items of personal significance, to the collection's core authors (Sir Walter Scott, Robert Burns and Robert Louis Stevenson), in preference to commemorative objects or items of secondary source value.

4.9 Handling Collections

4.9.1 Future development would involve collecting to add to or complement the current handling collections.

4.9.2 Collections to develop would include:

- Material for themed schools loan boxes on existing and new topics;
- material for reminiscence/ handling with community groups - in particular, social history items from the 1950s onwards and collecting material to represent the diversity of the city and changes since the 1950s; and
- Items in handling collections are unaccessioned objects outwith the core collection. They are acquired through purchase or donation for this purpose and do not conflict with wider collecting practice. Unless specific conditions are in place, potential donations will always initially be offered to the core collections.

5 Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

5.1.1 By definition, MGE has a long-term purpose and possesses permanent collections for the benefit of future generations. As such, we recognise that the principles on which priorities for rationalisation and disposal are determined will

be through a formal review process that identifies which collections are included and excluded from the review.

- 5.1.2 The outcome of review and any subsequent rationalisation will not reduce the quality or significance of the collection and will result in a more useable, well managed collection.
- 5.1.3 Notwithstanding, MGE also recognises the need to balance long term preservation of the collection as a whole with retention of non-accessioned individual mass-produced objects of low uniqueness or historical value, in poor or actively deteriorating condition, and recognises that curatorially driven disposals and transfers can be of benefit to all collections provided due diligence and correct procedures are followed.
- 5.1.4 The procedures used will meet professional standards and within the Museums Association Code of Ethics and Disposal guidelines. The process will be documented, open and transparent. There will be clear communication with key stakeholders about the outcomes and the process.

6 Collecting policies of other museums

- 6.1.1 MGE will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. We will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialism, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.
- 6.1.2 Specific reference is made to the following museum(s):

All subject areas

Scottish Local Authorities

Archaeology

National Museums of Scotland

Applied Art

National Museums of Scotland

East Lothian Museums Service

Fife Museum Service

Glasgow Museums and Art Gallery

Aberdeen Museum and Art gallery

Perth Museum and Art Gallery

McManus Galleries, Dundee

Childhood Collections

Young V&A

The National Trust Museum of Childhood, Sudbury Hall, Derbyshire

Highland Museum of Childhood, Ross and Cromarty

Museum of Childhood, Lancaster

Glasgow Museums

Fine Art

National Galleries of Scotland

Glasgow Museums and Art Gallery

Aberdeen Museum and Art Gallery

McManus Galleries, Dundee

Fife Council Museum Service (Kirkcaldy Museum and Art Gallery)

Perth Museum and Art Gallery

Social History

National Museums of Scotland

Scottish Mining Museum

Scottish Maritime Museum

Scottish Fisheries Museum

Tartan Society

Bemersyde House (Earl Haig)

City of Edinburgh Council Archives and Libraries

Writers' Museum

Scottish Borders Council Museum Service (Sir Walter Scott)

Abbotsford House (Sir Walter Scott)

Dumfries and Galloway Museum Service (Robert Burns)

National Trust for Scotland (Robert Burns)

National Library of Scotland

National Museums of Scotland

Burns Scotland Partnership of Recognised Collections

7 Acquisitions not covered by the policy

7.1.1 Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in very exceptional circumstances, and then only after proper consideration by the governing body, having regard to the interests of other museums.

8 Archival holdings

8.1.1 This policy recognises a difference between ephemera and archives;

- **Ephemera** refers to paper-based items which were produced irregularly, designed to be thrown away after a single one-off use¹. They are of cultural value to museum collections principally through showing popular attitudes of a particular time, or the changing nature of Edinburgh. This may include pamphlets, brochures, tickets, programmes, menus, advertisements, posters, trade, greeting, and postcards; movie memorabilia and loose photographs.
- **Archives** are paper-based documents which are created for the purpose of record-keeping, often for long term retention by an institution or organisation. They are often of a repeatable type such as insurance contribution cards, property deeds or planning documents, ration books, and records of births, deaths and marriages. They are often retained as an assemblage, or *fonds*, and recorded in a standard hierarchical structure.

8.1.2 Photographs and paper ephemera have been, and will continue to be, accessioned as part of the permanent core collections. These will be managed as part of those collections and to the same standard of care. They will be documented following standard procedures for museum cataloguing as set out in the UK Museum Accreditation Scheme 2018 and SPECTRUM 5.1.

8.1.3 In addition, MGE contains some archival materials, including photographs, notebooks, correspondence associated with particular acquisitions but not accessioned into the collections. These are treated as collections information documents, and stored separately to the core collections. We aim to document them and make them available for the purposes of learning, research and enjoyment. Digitisation of archival materials will be considered alongside digitisation of collections themselves.

8.1.4 Donations primarily of archive in nature, as defined above, will be referred to the City of Edinburgh Council Archives Service at the City Chambers. MGE

¹ Definition and examples taken from Baird, Donald A. & Coles, Laura M. *A Manual for Small Archives* (Vancouver. 1988).pp. 136-49

would only accept exceptional donations of archival material where it adds to an existing collection.

- 8.1.5 In exceptional circumstances, MGE may acquire a larger archive relating to one of the collection areas. Where appropriate, these archives will be catalogued according to the General International Standard Archival Description (ISAD(G)) used in archives.

9 Acquisition Procedures

9.1 Restrictions to Acquisition

- 9.1.1 MGE will not acquire any object or specimen unless it is satisfied that the object or specimen has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned) in violation of that country's laws. (For the purposes of this paragraph 'country of origin' includes the United Kingdom).
- 9.1.2 In accordance with the provisions of the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which the UK ratified with effect from 1 November 2002, MGE will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The governing body will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2005.

9.2 Acquisition Authorisation

- 9.2.1 The Culture and Communities Committee acting on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council, as the governing body, has overall responsibility for the stewardship of the collections.
- 9.2.2 The Head of Service: Heritage, Cultural Venues, Museums and Galleries as the Council's senior museum professional, shall normally have delegated authority and responsibility for the acceptance or rejection of potential gifts or bequests to MGE, for soliciting gifts of material for the collections within the terms of this policy, and for making recommendations and taking action on the purchase of museum objects.
- 9.2.3 The Curatorial and Engagement Manager and Curatorial and Conservation Managers, in consultation with curatorial staff, and with reference to the Collections Care Officer, shall approve all potential donations, gifts or bequests to the social history, literary and childhood collections. Curators with responsibility for individual collections have delegated authority to acquire items provided they have written agreement from either another curator, the Curatorial and Engagement Manager or the Curatorial and Conservation Manager.

9.2.4 An acquisition will require approval from the Museum Management Team (or delegated authority to the Curatorial and Engagement Manager and Curatorial and Conservation Managers) where;

- is made by purchase over £500. Purchases of under £500 may be made by individual curators with delegated authority, and with retrospective approval from Museum Management Team;
- has an insurance or market value exceeding £5000 (total acquisition or individual item);
- takes up more than one standard shelf in store (0.5m²);

or

- consists of a quantity or complexity which would entail significant time and resource constraints to fully catalogue within reasonable a timescale.
- This excludes all purchases made by the Jean F. Watson Bequest (see below).

9.2.5 Approvals by the Museum Management Team or individual collection managers will be minuted for future reference.

9.2.6 The Archaeology Officer, in consultation with the Curatorial and Engagement Manager, shall authorise acquisitions to the archaeology collection.

9.2.7 The Committee on the Jean F Watson Bequest oversees acquisitions made to the city's fine and applied art collections using funds bequeathed to the Council by the late Miss Jean F Watson. The Committee, comprised of Councillors and external advisers, considers acquisitions proposed by curatorial staff via reports authorised by the Executive Director of Place.

9.3 Establishing Ownership

9.3.1 Attempts to establish legal true owner will be recorded on the Acquisition Report or relevant sections in the collections management system. This may include a record of previous transfers of ownership of an item, exhibition / catalogue history, or purchase history.

9.3.2 MGE will not acquire items where the true owner of the item cannot be established, or, in the case of field collection, intent to abandon or gift on the part of the true owner cannot be proved.

9.3.3 Where the owner of an acquisition is different to the depositor, MGE will seek written agreement from the owner that the named depositor can act on their behalf. No acquisition can take place without this approval.

9.3.4 In exceptional cases where an acquisition is being offered by a depositor acting on behalf of an institution, organisation or other corporate body which no longer

exists or is unable to confirm ownership, due diligence will be followed to ensure the depositor is legally authorised to act on behalf of the owner.

9.4 Pre-Acquisition checks and reports

- 9.4.1 All acquisitions will be subject to an Acquisitions Report or completion of relevant sections in the collections management system which set out the rationale for acquiring and records any considerations to be taken on storage requirements, condition or potential hazards.
- 9.4.2 The Acquisition Report will also allow curatorial and collections staff to assess the ongoing costs and/or risks of potential acquisitions in terms of storage, conservation and maintenance.
- 9.4.3 Approval of acquisitions will be based on the nature and size of item(s) being acquired. Potential acquisitions may be rejected on the grounds of significance, condition, or an inability to ensure their long-term care.
- 9.4.4 The Acquisition procedure will be explained verbally to all donors, benefactors and executors before the point of entry. They will receive a written copy of the terms of acquisitions at object entry. The [Terms and Conditions of Acquisition \(Object Entry\)](#) are stated in Appendix 2 of this policy.
- 9.4.5 All acquisitions will be subject to an Object Entry form establishing transfer of title, or where this is not possible, all attempts shall be made to establish an intention of gift with attempts recorded.

9.5 Post-acquisition

- 9.5.1 All additional rights and consent will be subject to relevant documentation to establish the limits of MGE use of acquired items. This includes Intellectual Property, Personal Data and image consent.
- 9.5.2 All potential donations, gifts or bequests are subject to a 28-day approval period. If deposited items are not required for accession to the collections, MGE will contact the owner to return them. Due diligence will be followed to ensure all attempts are made to make contact. If, after a further 28 days, there is no contact with the owner, MGE have full authority to dispose or transfer the items.
- 9.5.3 All new acquisitions will be accessioned and catalogued within three months of transfer of ownership.

10 Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items

- 10.1 MGE recognises our responsibility to work within the parameters of the [Museums Association Code of Ethics](#) when considering acquisition and disposal. See [Sections 12 – 15](#) below for specific collections.
- 10.2 General considerations should be based on point 2.1 of the Museums Association Code of Ethics; “Balance the museum’s role in safeguarding items

for the benefit of future audiences with its obligation to optimise access for present audiences.”

- 10.3 Due diligence and the correct application of acquisition and disposal procedures will ensure we will only acquire and dispose of items for which we have verified ownership.
- 10.4 We recognised that as stated in point 2.9, “collections should not normally be regarded as financially negotiable assets and that financially motivated disposal risks damaging public confidence in museums.”
- 10.5 We will safeguard curatorial integrity and resist attempts by particular interest groups to influence acquisitions or disposals of items which lie outside MGE’s established core collections as defined in this policy.

11 Human Remains

- 11.1 The archaeological collection in particular retains and will curate human remains derived from archaeological excavations carried out in Edinburgh dating to prehistory. Accordingly, as MGE holds or intends to acquire human remains from any period, we will follow the guidelines in the ‘Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Scottish Museums’ issued by Museums Galleries Scotland in 2011 and other relevant national standards and guidance.

12 Biological and geological material

- 12.1 MGE will not acquire any biological or geological material unless these are collected for other cultural significance. Where they do so, MGE will not acquire by any direct or indirect means any specimen that has been collected, sold or otherwise transferred in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty of the United Kingdom or any other country, except with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

13 Archaeological Material

- 13.1 MGE will not acquire archaeological material in any case where the governing body or responsible officer has any suspicion that the circumstances of their recovery involved a failure to follow the appropriate legal procedures.
- 13.2 In Scotland, under the laws of bona vacantia including Treasure Trove, the Crown has title to all ownerless objects including antiquities, although such material as human remains and environmental samples are not covered by the law of bona vacantia. Scottish material of chance finds and excavation assemblages are offered to museums through the treasure trove process and cannot therefore be legally acquired by means other than by allocation to MGE

by the Crown. However, where the Crown has chosen to forego its title to a portable antiquity or excavation assemblage, a Curator or other responsible person acting on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council, can establish that valid title to the item in question has been acquired by ensuring that a certificate of 'No Claim' has been issued on behalf of the Crown.

14 Exceptions

14.1 Any exceptions to the above clauses will only be because MGE is:

- acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin;
- acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin;
- In these cases, MGE will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority. MGE will document when these exceptions occur.

15 Spoilation

15.1 MGE will use the statement of principles 'Spoilation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period', issued for non-national museums in 1999 by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

16 The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

16.1 The governing body of MGE, acting on the advice of MGE's professional staff, if any, may take a decision to return human remains (unless covered by the 'Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Scottish Museums' issued by Museums Galleries Scotland in 2011), objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. MGE will take such decisions on a case by case basis, within our legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance. This will mean that the procedures described in 16.1-5 will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.

16.2 The disposal of human remains from museums in Scotland will follow the guidelines in the 'Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Scottish Museums' issued by Museums Galleries Scotland in 2011.

17 Disposal Procedures

17.1 General principles

17.1.1 MGE will follow the principles and guidance of the Museums Association on disposal. MGE will review and monitor the condition of the collection, and

collections will be subject to ongoing review as per the MA good practice guidelines. Disposal of objects will never be financially motivated.

17.1.2 All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the [SPECTRUM 5.1 Primary Procedures on disposal](#).

17.1.3 The governing body will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Agreements on disposal made with donors at the point of entry will also be taken into account.

17.1.4 When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined below will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, exchange or as a last resort – sale or destruction.

17.2 Authorisation for disposal

17.2.1 The decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the governing body only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal.

17.2.2 Other factors including public benefit, the implications for MGE collections and collections held by museums and other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered.

17.2.3 Expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by MGE will also be sought.

17.2.4 A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of the governing body of MGE acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of the curator or manager of the collection acting alone.

17.2.5 Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.

17.3 Communicating intention to dispose

17.3.1 If the material is not acquired by any Accredited museum to which it was offered as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material normally through a notice on the Museums Association's Find an Object web listing service, an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).

17.3.2 The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be

transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other Accredited Museums. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, MGE may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.

17.3.3 Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with [SPECTRUM 5.1 Procedure on deaccession and disposal](#).

17.4 Contacting donors about a disposal

17.4.1 When disposal of a museum object is being considered, MGE will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if the item is disposed of by sale.

17.4.2 Even if there are no legal restrictions, the Code of Ethics directs museums to consider the interests of those who gave items.

17.4.3 When a disposal is considered, MGE will make attempts to contact donors, benefactors, executors or other potential benefactor to return the item, or establish agreed outcomes. Attempts to contact owners will be made for items acquired since 2003.

17.4.4 Donors of acquisitions made prior to 2003, and for which no ongoing contact or relationship has been maintained, will not be contacted.

17.4.5 Due diligence will be taken to ensure every attempt is made to contact the benefactor, and all attempts recorded. The benefactor will be contacted via the last known address held on record, and by telephone and/or email.

17.4.6 A period of six months will be given for donors to respond to information relating to a proposed disposal.

17.4.7 MGE will keep records in relation to any disposal. This record may be useful if a MGE needs to defend itself where a person claims that s/he is the true owner of the object in question. If, unknown to MGE, we do not own the object but has transferred, sold or destroyed it, we may be liable in converting it.

17.5 Disposal by Sale

17.5.1 Disposal of objects will never be financially motivated. MGE will seek to dispose of items through sale in the most exceptional circumstances.

17.5.2 Any monies received by the governing body of MGE from the disposal of items will be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions. In exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of collections in order to meet or exceed Accreditation requirements relating to the risk of damage to and deterioration of the collections may be justifiable. Any monies received in compensation for the damage, loss or destruction of items will be applied in the same way. Advice on those cases where the monies are intended to be used for the care of collections will be sought from the Museums Galleries Scotland.

17.5.3 The proceeds of a sale will be allocated so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard. Money must be restricted to the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection.

17.6 Disposal by Exchange

17.6.1 The nature of disposal by exchange means that MGE will not necessarily be in a position to exchange the material with another Accredited museum. The governing body will therefore ensure that issues relating to accountability and impartiality are carefully considered to avoid undue influence on its decision making process.

17.6.2 In cases where the governing body wishes for sound curatorial reasons to exchange material directly with Accredited or non- Accredited museums, with other organisations or with individuals, the procedures outlined here will apply.

17.6.3 If the exchange is proposed to be made with a specific Accredited museum, other Accredited museums which collect in the same or related areas will be directly notified of the proposal and their comments will be requested.

17.6.4 If the exchange is proposed with a non-Accredited museum, with another type of organisation or with an individual, the museum will place a notice on the Museum Association's Find an Object web listing service, or make an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).

17.6.5 Both the notification and announcement must provide information on the number and nature of the specimens or objects involved both in the museum's collection and those intended to be acquired in exchange. A period of at least two months must be allowed for comments to be received. At the end of this period, the governing body must consider the comments before a final decision on the exchange is made.

17.7 Disposal by destruction

17.7.1 If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.

- 17.7.2 It is acceptable to destroy material of low intrinsic significance (duplicate mass-produced articles or common specimens which lack significant provenance) where no alternative method of disposal can be found.
- 17.7.3 Destruction is also an acceptable method of disposal in cases where an object is in extremely poor condition, has high associated health and safety risks or is part of an approved destructive testing request identified in an organisation's research policy.
- 17.7.4 Where necessary, specialist advice will be sought to establish the appropriate method of destruction. Health and safety risk assessments will be carried out by trained staff where required.
- 17.7.5 The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate member of the museum workforce. In circumstances where this is not possible, e.g. the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.

18 Accession Registers

18.1 Maintenance of Registers

- 18.1.1 MGE will keep a record of all items accessioned into the core collections in an Accession Register.
- 18.1.2 Since 2018, this has been created from an annual export of relevant data from the collections management system (EMu) and stored in PDF format.
- 18.1.3 One copy of the exported Accessions Register will be stored on the EMu server, and another stored on the Museum networked shared drive. All versions are password protected.
- 18.1.4 The Accession Register will be tamperproof; the collections management system keeps audit trails of all activity making it impossible for records to be deliberately deleted from both the live database and the exported Register.

18.2 Backup copies of Registers

- 18.2.1 A hard copy of each year's register will be printed, and every five years, a five-year cycle of registers will be hardbound and stored in a fireproof location.
- 18.2.2 Prior to 2018, two hard copies of all registers exist, although earlier backups of registers may only exist in microfilm.
- 18.2.3 The vast majority of Accession Registers to date have been digitised and transcribed, and can be consulted as transcription data or image files via EMu. MGE will complete full digitisation and transcription of Accession Registers by 2025.

Roles and Responsibilities

Museums and Galleries Edinburgh will:

- Ensure collections acquisitions, rationalisation and disposal practice follows this policy, and adheres to the SPECTRUM procedures as defined by the UK Museum Accreditation Scheme, the Museums Association Code of Ethics and other standards and requirements where relevant.
- Curators of each collecting area will have initial responsibility for adding to, and disposing from core collections, with the level of authorisation and approval defined in this policy from either the Curatorial and Engagement Manager, Curatorial and Conservation Manager, Museums Management Team or the Jean F. Watson Committee.
- Collections Care Officer will make recommendations about suitability of potential acquisitions/disposals for long term preservation, and provide guidance on anticipated long term associated costs and storage/display challenges
- Collections Care Officer and Collections Information Officer will advise and provide support on the appropriate procedures required for preparing for, and recording acquisition/ disposal.
- On occasion where they are working on projects with community groups, Learning and Access Managers can identify potential acquisitions to core collections, but the recommendation must be endorsed by the curator of the relevant collection.

Related documents

City of Edinburgh Council Planning

- [Citywide Culture Strategy \(2023-2030\)](#)
- [City of Edinburgh Council Business Plan \(2021-2024\)](#)
- [City of Edinburgh Council's 20-minute neighbourhood plan](#)

National Museum Strategy

- [Scotland's Museums and Galleries Strategy 2023-2030](#)
- [Museums Association's Strategic Framework \(2020-2025\)](#)

Sector standards and procedures

- [UK Museum Accreditation Scheme](#)

- Museums Association Code of Ethics
- SPECTRUM Standard for Acquisition and accessioning
- SPECTRUM Standard for Deaccession and Disposal

MGE Collections Management Procedures

- Collections Management Procedures Manual
(NB access to Museums shared file on G: required. 2023 revised manual to be published online.)

Equality and Diversity

- Equality Act (2010)
- Edinburgh and Lothians Equality Framework (2021-2025)
- Anti-Racism Pledge

Integrated impact assessment

All new and revised policies must be subject to an integrated impact assessment to ensure that the Council is compliant with legislation. The results of that assessment must be summarised within this section.

For further information: <https://orb.edinburgh.gov.uk/equalities/equalities-1/2?documentId=463&categoryId=200238>

Risk assessment

The risks associated with the non-compliance to this policy range from minor misapplication of procedures and authorisation to considerable reputational damage, potential litigation and expulsion from the Museums Association and loss of Accreditation.

Low Risk

- 19.1 Failure to follow the procedures and approvals of outlined in this policy may lead to;
- the acquisition of items which are not relevant to the collections;
 - the acquisition of items in such poor condition that MGE is unable to fulfil our duty for long term preservation;

- unauthorised and inappropriate acquisitions taking up valuable storage space and curatorial resources.

19.2 These risks, in the long term, will contribute to documentation backlogs and a lack of clarity and purpose for the collections.

Medium Risk

19.3 Failure to follow the procedures and approvals of outlined in this policy may lead to;

- the acquisition of items actively hazardous to other collection items or to people
- the acquisition of items for which MGE cannot prove legal ownership
- unrecorded disposal of items of low monetary value but potential historical/artistic significance

High Risk

19.4 The highest risks entailed by the misuse of this policy could include:

- the acquisition of items subject to wider controls and regulations without following due process (e.g., the unethical acquisition of archaeological or biological items).
- the disposal or destruction of items of high monetary value, historical or artistic significance or for which MGE cannot prove ownership
- the sale of items driven by financial gain

19.5 These risks can have serious consequences affecting MGE's reputation, costs associated to litigation and claims, and the destruction of significant cultural heritage.

19.6 The incorrect application of the policy, or failure to follow the acquisition procedure and associated cataloguing and location control procedures can easily result in a temporary, long term or permanent misplacement of collection items. Without prompt cataloguing on a central system, MGE cannot be truly accountable for items in our care, and unable to track items moving around the service, leaving the service, or in the worse-case scenario, provide evidence of theft.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years and expires in May 2026.

The City of Edinburgh Council Culture and Communities Committee is the approving committee.

Appendix 1; Numbering conventions

- A1.1 On entry, all Acquisition lots will be assigned a unique Object Entry number. As soon as possible, and within two months, all individual items will be assigned a unique Accession Number.
- A1.2 This will be clearly marked using agreed techniques as set out in the Acquisition and Accession Procedure.
- A1.3 This number will be used on all accompanying reference material allowing it to be traced back to the item.
- A1.4 The current numbering convention is
[COLLECTION PREFIX].[YEAR].[SEQUENTIAL NUMBER]
Numbers can be subdivided into part codes as
[COLLECTION PREFIX].[YEAR].[SEQUENTIAL NUMBER].[PART CODE]
All sequential numbers are minimum 3 digits with leading zeros (e.g. 005, 058).
- Examples;
 - CAC.2023.005
 - MC.2023.057.001-012
 - SH.2023.587.001

Appendix 2 ; Terms and Conditions for donors, vendors, benefactors and executors

GENERAL

The same care and precautions will be taken for the safe custody of this deposit as for the safe custody of items within the MGE's Edinburgh's Permanent collection.

The City of Edinburgh Council (hereafter the Council) will accept liability for all items in MGE premises. Items with a value in excess of £5,000 may require additional cover for which the Council will take responsibility.

Items brought on to MGE premises covered by this form may be subject to additional consent or agreements such as those regarding personal data or image consent. These additional agreements will be agreed and signed by both parties on separate documents.

The transfer of title to the Council does not include an automatic transfer of any active copyright or other intellectual property rights. These will be agreed on a case by case basis with the rights holder.

DONATIONS

If the item(s) is/are being offered as a gift, the owner understands that this is for the Council's benefit absolutely. There are no conditions attached to the gift such as display, access, or subsequent removal without agreement with the Council.

In the case of acquisitions by the Council, the owner (or depositor acting on behalf of the owner) confirms that they have the legal right to donate these items and that absolute ownership is permanently transferred to the Council.

Items offered as donations are accepted ON APPROVAL in the first instance. The Council may dispose of any items which remain unclaimed 28 days after written notification has been sent to the depositor.

PURCHASES

The depositor/vendor confirms that they are the legal owner of the item(s) or have the authority of the owner to sell the item(s) and that absolute ownership is permanently transferred to the Council.

In the event of the Council not wishing to proceed with the purchase of the item(s), the depositor/ vendor will be notified in writing. Any items not collected within 28 days of such notification may be disposed of.

LOANS

All loans into MGE must be subject to a separate loan agreement, previously signed by both an officer of MGE and the Owner. No loan can proceed without a signed agreement.

The depositor/lender confirms that they have legal right to enter into an agreement to lend the item(s) to the Council.

BEQUESTS

The depositor confirms that the item(s) is/are bequeathed to the Council at the wish of the deceased. Executors may be required to produce copies of the relevant will and confirmation.

Museums and Galleries Edinburgh Temporary Exhibitions Policy (2023-2026)

Implementation Date: 11 May 2023

Control schedule

Approved by	Culture and Communities Committee
Approval date	11 May 2023
Senior Responsible Officer	Joan Parr, Service Director Culture and Wellbeing
Author	Maeve Toal, Curator: Exhibitions
Scheduled for review	May 2026

Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Comment
0.1	23.03.23	Maeve Toal	
0.2			

Subsequent committee decisions affecting this policy.

Date	Committee	Link to report	Link to minute
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Museums and Galleries Edinburgh

Temporary Exhibitions Policy (2023-2026)

Policy statement

This Temporary Exhibitions Policy is designed to align with Museums and Galleries Edinburgh's Service Plan for 2023-2026. The Service Plan, which covers all our work, is informed by the recently approved [Citywide Culture Strategy \(2023-2030\)](#). The Temporary Exhibitions Policy is also informed by the [City of Edinburgh Council Business Plan \(2021-2024\)](#) and its aims in relation to poverty, sustainability, wellbeing and equality.

This policy reflects the vision of [Scotland's Museums and Galleries Strategy 2023-2030](#) produced by Museums Galleries Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Government and its focus on the post-pandemic period, wellbeing, the climate crisis and decolonisation. It also speaks to the aims of the [Museums Association's Strategic Framework \(2020-2025\)](#), which aims to empower museums across the UK to positively change lives.

It is designed to sit alongside and reflect work being undertaken internally by the Museums and Galleries Edinburgh Inclusion group, the Decolonisation working group and the Collections Management group, as well as the Learning and Engagement Framework being developed by the service. It takes into account the development of an Income Generation Strategy for implementation across museums and galleries.

The above strategies and policies have informed our prioritisation of audiences within this Temporary Exhibitions Policy.

Scope

This policy should be followed by Museums and Galleries Edinburgh staff and read by external partners in relation to the planning of forthcoming temporary exhibitions.

Definitions

'MGE' denotes Museums and Galleries Edinburgh.

'AS' denotes an Audience Spectrum segment, the details of which can be found on The Audience Agency website (see link in related documents).

'EDI' denotes Equality, Diversity, Inclusion.

'IIA' denotes Integrated Impact Assessment.

Policy content

Mission

MGE is the City of Edinburgh Council's Museum Service. It enables people to connect with the city, its many histories, and its role in presenting art from around the world. We do this through our collections, temporary exhibitions and public programmes, both physical and digital. We balance our responsibility to preserve, display and interpret collections with our mission to encourage debate, interaction, reflection and exploration.

Temporary and Long-term Exhibitions

The City of Edinburgh Council holds over 200,000 items and artworks in its permanent collections. Much of this is on display and free to access year-round in long-term, fixed displays across its museums and galleries, and by appointment in its stores. The aims and objectives of this policy apply both to these spaces, as and when displays are refreshed, and to those used specifically for short-term or changing exhibitions.

Policy Aims

1. To appeal to existing audiences and new visitors through provision of a diverse and inspiring range of exhibitions.
2. To demonstrate the value of public engagement with art and heritage as means of improving wellbeing, addressing inequalities and enhancing the quality of peoples' lives.
3. To champion creative partnerships with local artists and groups, prioritising those from under-represented communities to ensure inclusive programming.
4. To profile, raise awareness, and actively seek new perspectives on the city's nationally and internationally significant collections in both long-term and temporary displays.
5. To contribute to the resilience of the Museums Service through effective exhibition marketing, promotion and evaluation.

Objectives

1. Centre Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) principles in our approach to exhibition design, programming and delivery.
2. Work in partnership and through co-production.
3. Ensure physical, sensory and intellectual access.

4. Innovate in our use of digital skills and technology.
5. Develop our climate literacy and eco-friendly practice.
6. Develop and enhance our knowledge and understanding of our collections, and where relevant, seek to add to them.

Audiences

As a service, MGE has a strong record of creating, developing and maintaining lasting relationships with a diverse range of audiences. We put audiences at the heart of what we do, and this includes our temporary exhibition programme. We aim to not only maintain our existing audience relationships, but strive to build new ones, in line with our Service Plan, the [Citywide Culture Strategy \(2023-2030\)](#) and the [City of Edinburgh Council Business Plan \(2021-2024\)](#).

We have recently used The Audience Agency's segmentation model, Audience Spectrum, to identify our existing and potential audiences. Audience segmentation is a method of categorising people based on shared characteristics, whether demographic, geographic or behavioural. Understanding our audience segments allows us to cater to each of their needs more effectively. A full description of Audience Spectrum segments can be found on [The Audience Agency website](#).

An understanding of our existing audiences has been gained through the following surveys:

- 2019 survey of visitors to MGE sites
- 2019 survey of attendees at MGE public programme
- 2022 digital survey of MGE audiences

The Audience Agency has also provided us with information on audiences for cultural activities in Edinburgh and across Scotland. This data has enabled us to identify the following audience segments for development (note: 'AS' denotes an Audience Spectrum segment, the details of which can be found at the link above):

Existing audiences we hope to maintain, deepen our relationship with and develop new exhibitions/ activities for:

- Commuterland Culturebuffs (AS)
- Dormitory Dependables (AS)
- Tourists
- Schools
- Art lovers

New audiences we hope to create relationships with and develop ways of working together are:

- Frontline Families (AS)
- Kaleidoscope Creativity (AS)
- Experience Seekers (AS)
- People with access needs
- Young adults
- People from Black or Asian communities

We already reach many people in the categories above, but we recognise the need to focus on developing and maintaining these relationships. This focus is guided by the wider strategies and plans listed above.

Access

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

As a public sector organisation, we are bound by the [Equality Act \(2010\)](#) and by Public Sector Equality Duty. We wish not to just meet our legal requirements, but to proactively go beyond them.

We have developed an EDI plan which outlines priority areas for development. We have also committed to ensuring that our work is included in [Edinburgh and Lothians Equality Framework \(2021-2025\)](#), and our own [Anti-Racism Pledge](#).

EDI should be factored in at all stages of the exhibition planning process from development through to display. We will develop exhibitions which aim to draw diverse audiences to our venues and represent the multiplicity of experiences within the city through platforming, co-development and co-curation where appropriate. We will ensure that our exhibitions, digital presence and marketing are accessible and inclusive.

Inclusion is also progressed through digital content, outreach and public programmes, and through community exhibitions which enable the service to reach out to those out with the city centre, and to those unable to visit our venues in person.

An IIA has been carried out on these policy proposals and actions outlined.

Digital

MGE are aware of the potential of digital to help us connect with new audiences and deepen our existing audience relationships. We also consider targets within the [City of Edinburgh Council Business Plan \(2021-2024\)](#) to improve digital literacy and accessibility.

As a service, MGE take a 'digital first' approach. In practice, this means that when we make plans to reach audiences with exhibitions or other projects, we always think at an early stage about the ways in which digital activities might play a useful part. We assess

the exhibition's objectives and intended audiences and, where appropriate, develop digital approaches that can improve user experiences.

When we talk about digital, we do not simply mean online content and social media. Digital could mean introducing tablets with relevant content into in-person workshops, showing filmed content in a school classroom, live-streaming a museum event or providing an extra layer of interpretation in a gallery. It could mean using technology to start conversations or learn things from our communities. It includes making sure visitors to our website find the information and inspiration they need.

Our digital work has our audiences' needs and perspectives as its foundation. Our audience segmentation work assists with this, but we also continually collect data from our digital work and adjust our approaches to better serve our audiences, reach more people and improve accessibility.

Engagement

Public Programmes

MGE develops a dynamic programme of events to engage with a range of groups and to create diverse events.

The learning programmes encourage family groups to enjoy the buildings and collections together. A varied programme of workshops, historical lectures and special events is also aimed at adults. Community groups are encouraged to visit the venues, and MGE will tailor an event to suit these groups.

Public Programmes also work on a project basis with different communities across the city. Learning experiences are developed to reflect the needs and preferences of specific groups, such as the learning spaces in the galleries.

MGE cultivates partnerships with a variety of organisations to develop projects and events, with a particularly strong tradition of working with and developing programmes for schools and Higher and Further education institutions.

Public Programmes organise a variety of different activities to accompany select exhibitions including:

- British Sign Language tours and tours for the visually impaired
- Talks and lectures
- Adult craft events
- Family learning programmes
- School programmes
- Venue-based community programmes
- Programmes and project-based work with Further and Higher education institutions

- Programmes for children under five

Outreach

The aim of MGE's Outreach Programme is to work in partnership with Edinburgh's communities and to connect them with museum and gallery resources. Through our outreach work community groups can participate in, or co-create a wide variety of activities, exhibitions or events. The programme focuses on those who, for various reasons, face barriers to accessing MGE resources. This involves working in partnership with community and special interest groups across Edinburgh's different neighbourhoods.

Temporary exhibitions displayed in community venues such as libraries, schools, care homes and shopping centres are a key part of our outreach programme. This aligns with the [City of Edinburgh Council's 20-minute neighbourhood plan](#) and [Citywide Culture Strategy \(2023-2030\)](#), bringing cultural opportunities to local neighbourhoods across Edinburgh.

Spaces are also available for community organisations to mount temporary exhibitions within MGE venues, following approval of proposals submitted which fit with the requirements of this policy.

All proposed community exhibitions complement or enhance MGE's collections and the themes that they illustrate. They also either:

- Relate specifically to the Edinburgh area, or
- Explore topics relevant to the people of Edinburgh.

Priority is given to exhibitions which enable us to meet the aims of the Museums Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan and priority audiences identified for outreach.

Implementation

Programming and Decisions

MGE delivers an exhibitions programme across five of its 13 venues, all of which have a slightly different remit in terms of long-term and temporary exhibitions.

City Art Centre

The City Art Centre is home to the City's collection of Scottish art, one of the most comprehensive in the country. Its vision is to champion historic and contemporary Scottish visual arts and crafts within a diverse, innovative and ambitious exhibitions programme.

Museum Venues

Alongside rich and varied permanent collection displays, the Museum of Childhood, Museum of Edinburgh and Queensferry Museum have designated temporary exhibition spaces where a broad range of topics are explored.

Travelling Gallery

Travelling Gallery is a contemporary art gallery in a bus and is unique to Scotland. Its function and core mission is to take its exciting and experimental programme to communities across Edinburgh and beyond, allowing access and learning for all. Its exhibitions and learning programme cover diverse practices from local and international artists, which inspire and engage a wide audience and lead to conversation and healthy discussion.

Programming

The programme covers a broad range of subjects and allows for a combination of internally and externally curated exhibitions, and co-produced exhibitions, as well as touring shows for loan and hire. Across the service we stage an average of 11 shows a year, which include exhibitions that:

- Focus on or draw inspiration from our collections of fine and applied art, history, childhood, literary and archaeology collections.
- Use our collections as a starting point from which to explore wider aspects of Scottish history, art and design.
- Feature Scottish or Scotland-based artists and makers with links to our wider collections, including those who have been largely passed over by art critics and historians.
- Seek to engage with the artistic community within Edinburgh giving opportunities for collaboration and the display of contemporary work being produced within the city.
- Reflect diverse practices from local and international artists.
- Have a legacy of new perspectives and insights to our collections.
- Explore current debates and topical issues, including subjects related to the environment and climate change, and subjects related to social inequalities, inclusion and diversity.
- Celebrate Edinburgh's heritage and culture.
- Provide a platform for community-led display.
- Celebrate local or major events, where relevant.

- Are welcoming and family friendly.

To ensure the programme is relevant, achievable and complementary to the focus of each venue and that the widest audience can be reached, consideration is given to the service's engagement programme, availability of staff and resources, sustainability, security and insurance requirements.

The exhibition programme is planned two to four years in advance. The running time for temporary exhibitions varies from venue to venue. The majority of the exhibitions have free entry; however admission charges are levied at times to help cover costs and ensure MGE continues to provide excellence and variety for visitors.

Decisions

The City Art Centre, Travelling Gallery and Museum Venues hold regular exhibition meetings to discuss and agree the programming, budget and delivery at their sites. These meetings are chaired by the relevant museum manager or curator, where relevant, external stakeholders and an advisory group are in attendance. Advice and comments may also be sought from colleagues, senior management and independent experts. The various exhibition mandates are presented to the Museums Management Team for comment and approval.

Exhibitions will only be considered for selection if they demonstrate that they fulfil one or more of the aims and objectives of this policy and the remits of the various venues. For further guidance on how to submit an exhibition proposal, please contact the relevant venue. MGE reserve the right to refuse work that may be deemed controversial or offensive to its staff and visitors.

Roles and Responsibilities

MGE will:

- Provide the majority of our exhibition and event spaces free of charge once proposals have been approved by the appropriate forum and provide charged for exhibitions that support our cultural ambitions.
- Ensure our venues are open to the public at published times, and that adequate security measures are in place out with these times.
- Comply with Health and Safety and Fire regulations with regards to all aspects of exhibition design and construction.
- Provide curatorial, documentation, conservation and technical assistance in the preparation and delivery of temporary exhibitions.
- Provide welcoming and informed staff to deliver high quality visitor experiences across our venues.

- Adhere to the standards required by the [UK Museum Accreditation Scheme](#), the [Museums Association Code of Ethics](#) and follow our internal standard procedures of best practice in relation to the selection, handling and display of all exhibits.
- Ensure that all items on display, including items on loan, have been ethically acquired, in accordance with our collections' procedures, which in turn comply with the [Museums Association Code of Ethics](#), and due diligence has been undertaken.
- Ensure that all exhibits are inspected, and condition checked upon arrival at our venues.
- Provide editorial control of all text written by internal staff members or external partners.
- Provide high quality interpretative materials in a range of formats to enable audiences of all abilities and learning preferences to actively engage.
- Ensure that learning and public engagement are fully integrated into exhibition planning.
- Provide full insurance cover for all exhibits at agreed values where insurance criteria are fully met.
- Develop press and marketing campaigns in partnership with Council colleagues.
- Where feasible, work with external partners to develop a range of retail materials associated with exhibition proposals.
- Provide assistance regarding potential sale of works.

External partners will:

- Submit exhibition proposals in an agreed format. Proposals should include a short summary of the exhibition with an explanation as to how it meets the criteria described in this policy. The content of the exhibition should be described alongside a provisional budget and a description of how it might be funded. Proposals should also indicate the research and education potential of the project as well as identify target audiences.
- Abide by the terms of any contracts setting out agreements by which projects are to be delivered.
- Provide a final list of loaned exhibits within the timescale set out in the loan agreement. The list should include full object descriptions, insurance valuations, and any specific transport and display requirements.
- Arrange for any necessary conservation work to be undertaken of exhibits prior to delivery.

- Provide high quality images of a range of exhibits for use in promotional and publicity materials.
- Provide all written interpretative and publicity materials within agreed schedules.
- Ensure all necessary copyright clearances have been obtained.
- Develop proposals for public engagement and retail with relevant MGE staff.
- Undertake funding applications to help deliver and bring added value to exhibition proposals.

Evaluation

Evaluation is undertaken during and after exhibitions to ensure that the objectives of the Temporary Exhibitions Policy are being met. The evaluation process involves gathering both quantitative and qualitative data and may be carried out in conjunction with external partners.

A post-exhibition analysis is conducted at the end of each exhibition (or combined exhibition season). This provides an opportunity for staff from across MGE, who are involved in the delivery of each exhibition, to share and review findings. External project partners are invited to participate where appropriate.

Performance indicators may include:

- Visitor figures (including group visits and attendance at related events - both on-site and outreach).
- Income generation (retail, admission charges, events charges and donations).
- Visitor comments (in-person and online).
- Media coverage and reviews.
- Online engagement (website and social media).
- Audience research (surveys, focus groups and reports).
- Legacy outcomes (partnerships, research, publications, online resources, touring opportunities, collection acquisitions).

The post-exhibition analysis encourages staff to consider the impact and effectiveness of each exhibition project. This includes any unexpected outcomes and suggestions for improvements. The findings are used to guide future programming and audience development.

Related documents

[Citywide Culture Strategy \(2023-2030\)](#)

[City of Edinburgh Council Business Plan \(2021-2024\)](#)

[City of Edinburgh Council's 20-minute neighbourhood plan](#)

[Scotland's Museums and Galleries Strategy 2023-2030](#)

[Museums Association's Strategic Framework \(2020-2025\)](#)

[The Audience Agency website](#)

[Equality Act \(2010\)](#)

[Edinburgh and Lothians Equality Framework \(2021-2025\)](#)

[Anti-Racism Pledge](#)

[Museums Association Code of Ethics](#)

[UK Museum Accreditation Scheme](#)

Integrated impact assessment

The results from the IIA Summary Report show that this updated policy will better align with other Council policies, EDI and sustainability objectives in relation to MGE's temporary exhibitions programming and associated activities.

It will also explore better ways to evaluate exhibition outputs including consultation with staff from across the MGE's Service who are involved in the delivery of each exhibition, and where relevant, external project partners, to share and review findings and to ultimately improve what we offer to members of the public.

Risk assessment

The risks associated with the non-compliance or misuse of this policy ranges from low to high and are as follows:

Low Risk

- Damaged relationships with existing audiences and a failure to engage with new ones.
- Under-represented groups being further disconnected with the venues and the work of MGE Edinburgh.
- Community groups who cannot easily access MGE resources are further alienated.
- Knowledge and understanding of our collections is reduced.
- A reduction in funding from Creative Scotland for the Travelling Gallery.

Medium Risk

- The temporary exhibitions arranged by MGE are adversely compared to other visitor attractions within the city with regard to digital innovation and technology.

- Lack of variety, quality and reduction in cultural provision for Edinburgh residents and visitors to the city.

High Risk

- Reputational damage to MGE, and by extension, the City of Edinburgh Council among the museums, galleries and heritage sector and the wider public.
- Visitor numbers fall through lack of ongoing investment in our exhibition spaces, public and outreach engagement, and marketing capacity.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years and expires in May 2026. The City of Edinburgh Council Culture and Communities Committee is the approving committee.
