

COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Text in bold is an Accreditation¹ requirement.

Name of museum: Museum of Design in Plastics (MoDiP)

Name of governing body: the Arts University Bournemouth Corporation

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body: 21.4. 2016

Policy review procedure: the collections development policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years.

Date at which this policy is due for review: 21.4.2021

Arts Council England will be notified of any changes to the collections development policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of collections.

1. Relationship to other relevant policies/plans of the organisation:

1.1 The museum's statement of purpose is:

To increase understanding and appreciation of the use and significance of plastics in design during the 20th and 21st centuries. Our purpose is to collect, research, interpret and present artefacts made of, or including components of, plastics and material providing information on the plastics industry, and thus add unique value to the AUB as:

- A national and international learning and teaching resource.
- A resource for collaborative, experimental and interdisciplinary research.
- A gateway to participation at the AUB

1.2 The governing body will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.

1.3 By definition, the museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for the benefit of the public in relation to its 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.

1.4 Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.

1.5 The museum recognises its responsibility, when acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Museum Accreditation Standard. This includes using SPECTRUM primary procedures for collections management. It will

¹ The Accreditation Scheme sets nationally agreed standards for museums in the UK. - See more at: <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/supporting-museums/accreditation-scheme-0>

take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

1.6 The museum 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 The museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons.

2. History of the collections

2.1 The collection began to be formed by Kirsten Hardie in 1988 as a learning and teaching resource, known as the Design Collection.

2.2 By 2002 the collection had grown sufficiently, with additions contributed by other members of staff, for it to become a Registered museum entitled the Design Collection Museum.

2.3 In 2006 the collection was reviewed. It had considerable strength in objects made of plastics and the decision was taken to focus on the plastics materials group.

2.4 On 1 September 2007 the name of the museum became the Museum of Design in Plastics (MoDiP). At the same time the term 'Studio Collection' was coined to describe the objects excluded from the Plastics Collection, mainly objects not made of plastics.

3. An overview of current collections

3.1 The collection consists of approximately 13,000 items in total, of which 8,000 constitute the Plastics Collection and 5,000 the Studio Collection.

3.2 We define plastics as materials that can be moulded into required shapes by the application of heat and /or pressure, whether thermosetting or thermoplastic. All plastics are polymers: materials made up of many smaller base units, different configurations making plastics with different properties. The collection includes natural, semi-synthetic and synthetic plastics.

3.3 The Plastics Collection includes two long term loans:

3.3.1 A collection of some 500 artefacts made of horn, a natural plastic, dating from the 17th century to the present, on loan from the Worshipful Company of Horners.

3.3.2 A collection of some 400 plastic artefacts dating mainly from the first half of the 20th century on loan from the Plastics Historical Society.

3.4 The Plastics and Studio Collections include objects in the following classifications:

3.4.1 Animal and pet, including grooming equipment and saddles.

3.4.2 Audio visual, including radios, televisions, record players, tape recorders, personal stereos, records and picture discs.

- 3.4.3 Construction and building services including fixtures and fittings, plumbing services and street furniture.
- 3.4.4 Fashion and costume, including clothes, hats, footwear, hosiery, handbags and accessories.
- 3.4.5 Health, care and grooming including toothbrushes, glasses, razors and syringes.
- 3.4.6 House and garden including kitchen and tableware, furniture and furnishings, and lighting.
- 3.4.7 Office and workplace including IT and office equipment, desk furniture and uniforms.
- 3.4.8 Packaging and materials handling, including carrier bags and drink, domestic fluid and beauty product containers.
- 3.4.9 Photographic, including movie and video cameras and associated photographic materials.
- 3.4.10 Plastics and the environment, including products made from recycled plastics.
- 3.4.11 Plastics samples and industry, including sample swatches and photographs relating to the Plastics Industry.
- 3.4.12 Promotional material including posters and magazines.
- 3.4.13 Printed, written and drawn material, including an outstanding collection of photographs showing the manufacture and marketing of plastics products.
- 3.4.14 Smoking, including cigarette lighters, ashtrays and match box containers.
- 3.4.15 Sports, leisure and hobbies, including equipment and clothing.
- 3.4.16 Telecommunications including telephones and phone cards.
- 3.4.17 Toys and games, including dolls, construction toys, creative play and puzzles.
- 3.4.18 Travel and holiday, including transport, travel accessories, food and drink, and travel keepsake and ephemera.
- 3.4.19 Textiles, including fabric, dressmaking and needlework, haberdashery, and knitting and crochet.
- 3.5.** Both the Plastics Collection and the Studio Collection date predominantly from the 20th century and are especially strong post 1950.
- 3.6.** Both collections are international in remit.

4. Themes and priorities for future collecting

- 4.1 Our objective with the Plastics Collection is to build an internationally significant representative collection of, and research resource on, the use and significance of plastics

in design. To this end, to qualify for inclusion an item must meet two criteria: one relating to plastics and the other to its design, use or documentation.

4.2 To meet the plastic-related criteria it must conform to one of the following:

4.2.1 be made entirely of plastic.

4.2.2 have plastic components specifically designed for it.

4.2.3 have standard plastic components which contribute to its form.

4.2.4 have standard plastic components vital to the function of the product.

4.2.5 provide information on the manufacture, marketing or reception of plastic products.

4.3 To meet the additional criteria, it must conform to one of the following:

4.3.1 be a design of interest, for example:

- an especially good or bad design, or one that exemplifies an interesting design theme.
- a design that increases understanding of a particular manufacturing technique.
- a design that increases understanding of the potential of a particular plastic.

4.3.2 provide insight into the society of which it was a part, for example:

- reflect the way of life or taste of a certain period in a particularly evocative manner.
- raise issues relevant to the society of which it was/is a part, for example environmental issues today.

4.3.3 be documented in such a way as it adds to plastics history, for example:

- be designed by a known designer or manufactured by an identified factory.
- have a provenance that contributes to an understanding of the consumption of plastic artefacts.
- be precisely datable.
- be accompanied by production/sales facts and figures.

4.4 A priority for collecting is cutting edge developments of plastic in design.

4.5 The Studio Collection is a resource for AUB students. Teaching staff have made it clear that it is important that it reflects current time, thus it will continue to grow. Acquisitions will, however, normally be limited to donations from staff and students that are relevant to their teaching and learning. In exceptional circumstances gifts from external sources relevant to teaching and learning will also be acquired.

4.6 Duplicates will not be purchased but duplicates of objects in the Plastics Collection may, however, be acquired as gifts by the Studio Collection.

4.7 We aim to acquire a very few specimen examples of objects made from different plastic materials dating from before 1900 but most of our collecting will concentrate on objects dating from the 20th and especially the 21st century.

4.8 Design operates on a global level and thus we collect from all over the world.

5. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

5.1 The museum recognises 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. 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.

5.2 The procedures used will meet professional standards. The process will be documented, open and transparent. There will be clear communication with key stakeholders about the outcomes and the process.

5.3 In 2007 MoDiP re-focussed its attention on plastics. Therefore the plastics objects which fit the remit of the Collection Development Policy are the main focus of its exhibitions, loans and research. Consequently a considerable number of objects which form the Studio Collection are not being used to their full potential. Limited resources means that MoDiP is unable to care for these objects appropriately, and resources are being diverted away from the Plastics Collection.

5.4 In order to address these issues MoDiP proposes to undertake a collections review, using data collected over a 5 year period since 2010 to identify and to seek alternative new locations for those items in the Studio collection which are found to be under-used and inadequately cared for. All aspects of the disposal process would follow the Museum's disposal guidelines and be documented accordingly and any stakeholders kept informed of the process.

6. Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items

6.1 The museum recognises its responsibility to work within the parameters of the Museum Association Code of Ethics when considering acquisition and disposal.

7. Collecting policies of other museums

7.1 The museum will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. It 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.

7.2 Specific reference is made to the following museums and organisations:

British Museum, London; Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery; Bradford Museums, Galleries and Heritage; Design Museum, London; Fleet Air Museum; Gunnersbury Park Museum; Hampshire County Council Museum and Archives Service; Hereford Museum & Art Gallery; Imperial War Museum, London; Manchester City Art Gallery; Museum of Science and Technology, Manchester; National Museum of Media, Bradford; Portsmouth City Museum; Royal Cornwall Museum; Tate, London, Liverpool

and St Ives; Science Museum, London; Thackray Museum, Leeds; University of Southampton; Victoria & Albert Museum, London; Wakefield Museum.

7.3 These museums are all members of the Plastics Subject Specialist Network which is led by this museum.

8. Archival holdings

8.1 As the museum holds archives, including photographs and printed ephemera, it will additionally be guided by the Archive Service Accreditation Service 2014.

9. Acquisition

9.1 The policy for agreeing acquisitions is:

That proposed objects are reviewed by MoDiP staff against the criteria for acquisition described at 4 above. An account of acquisitions (gifts and purchases) is presented annually to the MoDiP Steering Group which reports to the Research and Knowledge Transfer Committee.

9.2 The museum 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).

9.3 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 November 1 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, the museum 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.

10. Human remains

10.1 The museum does not hold or intend to acquire any human remains.

11. Biological and geological material

11.1 The museum will not acquire any biological or geological material.

12. Archaeological material

12.1 The museum will not acquire any archaeological material.

13. Exceptions

- 13.1 Any exceptions to the above clauses will only be because the museum is:**
- 13.1.1 acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin**
 - 13.1.2 acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin**
- 13.2 In these cases the museum will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority. The museum will document when these exceptions occur.**
- 14. Spoliation**
- 14.1 The museum will use the statement of principles ‘Spoliation 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.**
- 15. The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains**
- 15.1 The museum’s governing body, acting on the advice of the museum’s professional staff, if any, may take a decision to return objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. The museum will take such decisions on a case by case basis; within its 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. Disposal procedures**
- 16.1 All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the SPECTRUM Primary Procedures on disposal.**
 - 16.2 The governing body will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Agreements on disposal made with donors will also be taken into account.**
 - 16.3 When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the museum 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.**
 - 16.4 When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined below will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale, exchange or as a last resort - destruction.**
 - 16.5 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. Other factors including public benefit, the implications for the museum’s collections and collections held by museums and other organisations collecting the same material or**

in related fields will be considered. Expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum will also be sought.

- 16.6 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 the museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of the curator or manager of the collection acting alone.
- 16.7 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.
- 16.8 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 MA'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).
- 16.9 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, the museum may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.
- 16.10 Any monies received by the museum governing body 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 Arts.
- 16.11 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.
- 16.12 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 Procedure on deaccession and disposal.
- 16.13 The museum will not dispose of items by exchange.

- 16.14** If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.
- 16.15** 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.
- 16.16** 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.
- 16.17** 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.
- 16.18** The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate member of the museum workforce. In circumstances where this is not possible, eg the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.