

**COLLECTIONS FROM A PEER
REVIEWER'S POINT OF VIEW**



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MISSION AND PLANNING

- The museum has a clear understanding of its mission and communicates why it exists and who benefits as a result of its efforts.
- All aspects of the museum's operations are integrated and focused on meeting its mission.
- The museum's governing authority and staff think and act strategically to acquire, develop and allocate resources to advance the mission of the museum.
- The museum engages in ongoing and reflective institutional planning that includes involvement of its audiences and community.
- The museum establishes measures of success and uses them to evaluate and adjust its activities.



THINGS WE REALLY DON'T WANT TO HEAR:



THINGS WE REALLY DON'T WANT TO HEAR:

Now what is our mission? Is it to collect local history or is it to collect baseball cards? Does it matter?



MISSION AND PLANNING IN PLAIN ENGLISH

- Know what you want to do
- And why it makes a difference to anyone
- Then put it in writing
- Stick to it
- Decide what to do next
- When you are deciding what to do, ask lots of people for their opinion
- Put it in writing
- Then do it again
- If it didn't work, don't do it again
- If it did work, do



COLLECTIONS STEWARDSHIP

- The museum owns, exhibits, or uses collections that are appropriate to its mission.
- The museum legally, ethically, and effectively manages, documents, cares for, and uses the collections.
- The museum's collections-related research is conducted according to appropriate scholarly standards.
- The museum strategically plans for the use and development of its collections.
- Guided by its mission, the museum provides public access to its collections while ensuring their preservation.



THINGS WE REALLY DON'T WANT TO SEE:



I know that collections file is in here somewhere.



THINGS WE REALLY DON'T WANT TO SEE:

Exhibits on dinosaurs
and fossils

Mission is aviation and
space flight



The National Air and Space Museum shall commemorate the national development of aviation and space flight, and will educate and inspire the nation.



THINGS WE REALLY DON'T WANT TO HEAR:

Even though our community prefers traditional and historical art, we only like to do contemporary art exhibits!



COLLECTIONS STEWARDSHIP IN PLAIN ENGLISH

- Know what stuff you have
- Know what stuff you need
- Know where it is
- Take good care of it
- Make sure someone gets some good out of it
- Especially people you care about
- And your neighbors



BUILDING A COLLECTIONS STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

- Make sure your mission and collections are in alignment.
- Make sure you have an inventory of your collections and some sort of record of them.
- Get an idea of what items are in need of conservation as well as what items do not align with your mission.
- Develop a schedule of checking the condition of your collections.
- Begin the process of improving the storage of your artifacts through the purchase of acid free boxes and materials.



OPTIONS FOR IMPROVING COLLECTIONS STEWARDSHIP

- Engage in a CAP Assessment
- Participate in StEPs through the American Association of State and Local History
- Develop a Collections Management Policy



STEPS

- A program specifically tailored for historic houses, historical societies and other history organizations.
- The American Association for State and Local History's StEPs program is a voluntary, self-assessment program designed see how well your institution is meeting professional standards.
- Museums that achieve a certain number and level of StEPs performance indicators can have a streamlined MAP assessment.



STEPS WORKBOOK SECTIONS

1. Mission, Vision and Governance
2. Audience
3. Interpretation
4. Stewardship of Collections
5. Stewardship of Historic Structures and Landscapes
6. Management



COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT POLICY

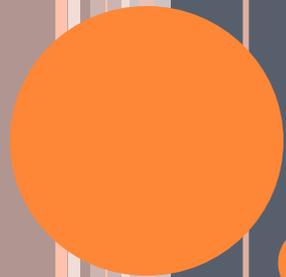
- A Collections Management Policy is a core document supporting a museum's mission and purpose.
- It is a set of policies that address various aspects of collections management.
- It defines the scope of the museum's collection and how the museum cares for and makes collections available to the public.
- It also explains the roles of the parties responsible for managing the museum's collections.



RESOURCES USED FOR THIS PRESENTATION

- AAM's *Characteristics of Excellence for U.S. Museums* White Paper
- Museum Assessment Program *Peer Review Manual*
- *National Standards and Best Practices for U.S. Museums*, The American Alliance of Museums
- The American Alliance of Museum website:
aam-us.org
- The American Association for State and local history website: aaslh.org





THANK YOU.

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