

**PROCEDURE FOR SPECIALIZED COLLECTIONS DEACCESSION OR DISPOSAL**

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Issued: 11/24/2021

Last Updated: 05/29/2021

**Procedure Introduction**

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The USC Acquisitions procedure exists to ensure that decisions about acquiring objects are made via the Collections Advisory Committee in a thoughtful manner consistent with greater USC policies and aligned with USC Museums, USC Libraries, and other campus department best practices.

**Responsibilities**

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POSITION or OFFICE	RESPONSIBILITIES
Office of the Provost USC Advancement	1. Final approval for deaccession decisions 2. Records all financial information related to deaccession
USC Museums Registrars	3. Retains records of all USC Museums donations and tax forms in database and in paper records.
USC Libraries	4. Retains records of all USC Libraries donations and tax forms in database and in paper records.
Office of General Counsel	5. Prepares Deed of Gift forms for Acquisitions. Advises on acquisitions
USC Risk Management	6. Records all new acquisition values for up-to-date insurance

**Procedure Details**

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**Deaccession Procedures:**

Action #	Responsible Stakeholder	Details
1.0	Department or unit	<p>The process of Deaccession and Disposal must be initiated and recommended by the appropriate professional staff with a written proposal form outlining the applicable Deaccession criteria.</p> <p>The Deaccession Proposal Form should guide the process of verifying all documents and records to confirm legal title, donor intent, donor restriction and any copyright or trademark restriction that will not be transferred to a new owner automatically.</p> <p>During the process of preparing the Form, staff should conduct physical examination of the object and keep photo documentation of its condition to recommend method of disposal, including sale, exchange or destruction.</p>

		Outside opinions and appraisals must be obtained for objects of substantial value, unauthenticated objects, objects with uncertain provenance, objects required repatriation or sensitive cultural and religious objects such as human remains.
2.0	USC Museum or USC Libraries	The Deaccession Proposal Form will then be forwarded to the director of USC Museum or Dean of USC Libraries for review and approval. Deaccession proposal form, along with records related to ownership and provenance, will be submitted to the USC Museum or USC Libraries to ensure clear title and deaccession is appropriate and consistent with this Policy.
3.0	Collections Advisory Committee	The Deaccession Proposal Form will be presented to the Collections Advisory Committee for final approval which will present their recommendation to the provost for a decision.
4.0	USC Advancement, the department or unit	Upon final approval received to proceed with Deaccession, staff will proceed with sending courtesy notification to the donors or heirs of the donors when possible. Reasonable effort should be made to acknowledge donor credit of the deaccessioned objects on any materials disclosed to the public.
5.0	Department or unit	<p>Staff will follow the recommended method of disposition to process deaccessioned objects.</p> <p>If method of disposition is through public auction, competitive quotes from multiple auction houses must be obtained to ensure best possible firm is selected for the materials deaccessioned. Staff should also consider the auction house reputation and check client references from other museums, libraries, and universities. Designate staff such as the curator or librarian to be responsible in negotiating consignment contract with the auction house with terms on commission and fees, reserve price, unsold materials, insurance, date of sale, photography, marketing and publicity. Registrar should coordinate with the auction houses on packing, shipping, insurance, interim storage and courier logistics. Contract must be submitted to the Office of General Counsel for review and signature by the Office of Provost. In addition, if the deaccessioned object is a gift of substantial value with an estimated sale price of \$5,000 or more, the office of Financial and Business Services should be contacted to verify that the deaccessioned object was not capitalized when accepted, since that would impact how the sale proceeds may be used.</p>

		<p>If the method of disposition is through gift, trade or exchange with other public institutions or with the living artist, a detailed contract or agreement should be drafted and submitted to the Office of General Counsel for review and signature by the Office of Provost if needed.</p> <p>If the method of disposition is through transfer to an educational study collection for unrestricted use including study, research or use of campus loan program, consideration should be given to ensure the allocation of adequate resources to store and monitor the educational study collection, separate from the care and management of The Collection. Any proceeds raised from the loan of the educational study collection shall be restricted to use toward the direct care of The Collections.</p> <p>If the method of disposition is through physical destruction, special consideration needs to be given to objects with hazardous materials. Contact Environmental Health &amp; Safety (EH&amp;S) for information on safe and appropriate method to dispose hazardous materials. Physical destruction should be irreversible, and the process needs to be fully documented by the registrar, collection manager, librarian or archivist.</p> <p>If the method of disposition is through repatriation, staff will work closely with the Office of General Counsel to ensure applicable laws are followed and related legal agencies are consulted and notified. Seek help as necessary from experts of the field or related cultural groups to assist with repatriation of culturally sensitive materials including religious materials and human remains.</p>
6.0	USC Communications	<p>The process of Deaccession should be fair, thorough, and well-documented. The decision of Deaccessions should be transparent to the staff, USC communities, any members of stakeholders and the public. Inform the related staff at the earliest possible time, and inform the public through press release targeted to members, donors, funders and the general public. Full disclosure of information including object description and photographs of the deaccessioned objects should be made available online. An official statement from the director or collection holder should accompanied the online materials and/or the sales catalog disclosing the</p>

		rationale for Deaccession, the decision making an approval process, and the proposed use of proceeds.
7.0	The Registrar, the collection manager or the collection management staff are responsible for keeping records of the deaccessioned objects and the deaccession process.	<p>The following records should be maintained permanently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any provenance materials regarding the deaccessioned object – purchase receipt, import and export documents, shipping receipts, photographs and previous publications, etc.</li> <li>• Any legal documents – gift agreement, deed of gift, gift receipt, letter of intent from donor, correspondences outlining any restriction on gift, trust agreement, bequest instruments, copyright agreement, etc.</li> <li>• Appraisals, treatment reports, examination and authentication reports, forms submitted to the Internal Revenue Service, etc.</li> <li>• Deaccession proposals, meeting minutes from the Collections Advisory Committee meetings, voting and final recommendations made by the Collections Advisory Committee including recommended method of disposition.</li> <li>• Documents, agreements, receipts and contracts reflecting the change of ownership/titles according to the method of disposition, whether through trade, exchange, sale or destruction.</li> <li>• Checks, transaction records documenting the proceeds of sales from the deaccessioned objects. Information of restricted account set up from the proceeds of sales, with attribution from the original donor.</li> <li>• Any future purchase or acquisition of new work with proceeds of sales from deaccessioned objects shall be credited to the original donor. Transaction shall be documented and attached to both the new object record and the deaccessioned object record.</li> </ul>

## Definitions

Term	Definition
Collections Advisory Committee	Governance group of museum leadership, collections school deans, and support / advisory subject matter experts and / or regulatory department representatives (e.g., General Council, Risk Management, etc.)

## Compliance

Compliance to be reviewed and reported regularly to the Office of the Provost and the Collections Advisory Council

**Relevant Forms and Tools**

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USC Acquisition Form  
USC Deed of Gift Form

**Contacts**

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Please direct any questions regarding this procedure to:

OFFICE	PHONE	EMAIL
USC Museums		infoatpam@usc.edu