

2.1 Acquisition

All acquisitions are made by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for the educational, scientific, and research purposes of MIT Museum. In addition to the policies set forth here, acquisitions are subject to MIT's Archival Policy and Policy on Acquisition of Art and Artifacts.

2.2 Collecting Goals

The overall direction and goals of collecting activities are governed by the mission of MIT Museum.

The Architecture and Design Collection seeks to acquire significant examples of work by faculty members and alumni/ae, both as students and practicing professionals, as well as artifacts related to the creation of the drawings, and materials illustrative of MIT's Boston and Cambridge campuses.

The specific collecting goals of the **Hart Nautical Collections** include the acquisition of maritime technology and historical material that relate directly to or compliment existing collections. In addition, the Hart collection seeks to add material produced by or related to MIT (or MIT affiliated) activities associated with ocean engineering, naval architecture or ocean science.

The **Holography Collection** continues development begun by the Museum of Holography of the world's largest collection of holograms through the acquisition of important historical, technical, and artistic pieces, as well as works by artists and inventors breaking new ground in the field.

The collecting goals of the **MIT General Collection** are to document the intellectual, educational, and social history of MIT.

The **Science and Technology Collection** seeks to collect and preserve artifacts and related materials of historical interest and significance that document the intellectual, educational, and socio-cultural-political history of MIT and MIT's role in the history of science and technology.

2.3 Collections

The Permanent Collections contain those objects which directly support the mission of the Museum and help to achieve its primary collecting goals, as outlined above.

The Museum collects materials for its Permanent Collections in the form of apparatus, models, instruments, paintings, drawings, photographs, prints, decorative arts, memorabilia, audiovisual materials, and documentary written materials. Selected MIT publications are collected for internal reference and exhibition purposes; however, the **Institute Archives and Special Collections** is the repository for permanent copies of MIT's official publications. It is therefore the Museum's policy to retain no more than three copies of a publication: a reference copy, an exhibition copy, and, when deemed necessary, a loan copy. The Museum does not maintain the archives of the Institute, nor does it collect the papers or manuscripts of professors, faculty, or staff unless they have first been offered to the Institute Archives and then only if the material meets the Museum's requirements for acquisition.

2.4 Acquisition Decisions

Decisions as to the appropriateness of proposed acquisitions are made as follows:

A recommendation is made by MIT Museum's Collections Committee, operating in accordance with its Bylaws, to the Director, who, taking into account the Committee's recommendation, makes the final decision as

to whether the object should or should not be acquired.

Objects may be acquired from academic and administrative offices within the Institute, private individuals, or non-MIT related organizations in the form of bequests, exchanges with other repositories, gifts, purchases, and transfers of Institute property.

The Museum will not directly or indirectly acquire objects that have an unethical history of ownership. The Museum adheres to the archaeological standards of the Council of American Maritime Museums (article VI, section 3) and will not knowingly acquire or exhibit artifacts which have been stolen, illegally removed from their country of origin, illegally salvaged, or removed from commercially exploited archaeological or historic sites.

The Museum does not accept acquisitions on which restrictions or special conditions, other than donor recognition, have been placed. Exceptions to this policy must be considered by the Collections Committee and approved by the Director. Partial title will be accepted only under conditions pre-approved by the Director.

Due to limited exhibition space and periodically changing exhibitions, no commitments shall be made to exhibit objects acquired for the collections in the Museum's galleries for any duration of time as a condition of acquisition.

2.5 Acquisition Criteria

Potential acquisitions must meet three basic criteria:

- **Relevance:** the object must support the Museum's mission and fit within its stated collecting goals.
- **Use:** the object must have the capacity for use in exhibitions and/or for research and scholarly purposes.
- **Condition:** the object must be in reasonable condition and must not require significant expense for treatment in order to make it relevant or useful unless such funds are pledged in writing by a donor.

In addition, the following questions must be considered when evaluating a potential acquisition. If the answer to any one of these questions casts doubt on the ability of the Museum to properly care for or manage the object, serious thought should be given to declining the acquisition.

- Is the source the rightful owner of the object and are there any conflicts regarding property rights or legal title?
- Has the source requested that any restrictions or special conditions be placed on the acquisition? If so, is their acceptance justifiable given Museum policy?
- Are there any constraints in terms of intellectual property rights? Will all intellectual property rights be turned over to MIT? If the source is not the copyright holder, has the holder been identified and can copyright be transferred to the Institute or a licensing arrangement made?
- Has the provenance of the object been properly documented? Are there any concerns as to the authenticity of the object or its provenance?
- Does the object unnecessarily duplicate another object already in the collections?
- Does the Museum have the ability and intention to use and care for the object? Is appropriate storage space available? Are additional funds beyond the scope of the general collections budget necessary to make the object accessible? If the answer to any of these questions is no, the Museum should explore with the prospective donor the possibility of his/her establishing an endowment to support the extraordinary costs of care, storage, and/or access.

- Are there any safety concerns related to the object which might demand special handling, display, and/or insurance requirements?
- If the object is being purchased, is the price fair and reasonable? Could the object or its equivalent be acquired by gift or bequest rather than purchase?

2.6 Gifts

For all gifts, a Deed of Gift agreement must be signed by the donor or the donor's authorized representative at the time of donation. Objects will not be rehoused, preserved, cataloged, or made available for use by researchers until a Deed of Gift has been executed. The Museum does not accept donations in which legal title is not transferred to MIT. If a donor wishes to retain title to an object, the object shall be considered an adjunct to the Permanent Collections and processed as an extended loan. In this case, it is understood by the Museum that the donor's intent is to turn all rights and title in the object over to MIT at some future point and an agreement to this end must be entered into prior to acceptance of the loan.

Gifts to MIT Museum are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. If a donor wishes to take a charitable deduction, it is their responsibility to initiate IRS Form 8283 for Noncash Charitable Contributions. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology is responsible only for certifying receipt of the gift and is not allowed to establish any valuations, nor provide any recommendations as to appraisers. Under no circumstances will Museum staff appraise donations or make arrangements for an appraisal on the donor's behalf.

Unsolicited objects offered as potential acquisitions for the Museum's collections are considered to be in the **temporary custody** of the Museum. If the acquisition of an unsolicited object is approved, the object will be formally accessioned into the collections and the Temporary Custody Receipt will be retained in the object's accession file. Unwanted, unsolicited objects will be returned to the source, if the source is known. If the source is not known, Museum staff will attempt to locate an appropriate repository for the object and if unsuccessful, the object may be disposed of by witnessed destruction.

2.7 Bequests

Bequests will be considered for acquisition in the same manner as gifts. MIT Museum reserves the right to refuse bequeathed objects that do not meet its criteria for acquisition, or it may choose to accept only a portion of the bequest. For all bequests, copies of the will including all codicils shall be retained for the object's Accession File.

2.8 Exchanges

Exchanges are treated as two separate collections management actions. Incoming objects will be considered for acquisition in the same manner as other acquisitions and must be approved before the exchange takes place. Title transfer documentation appropriate to the type of acquisition will be retained in the object's Accession File. Outgoing objects must be deaccessioned in accordance with Museum policy. Deaccession Recommendation and Deaccession Action forms will be retained in the object's Accession File.

2.9 Purchases

MIT Museum maintains an acquisition fund, under the supervision of the Director, which is used towards the purchase of objects for the collections and for the direct care of collections, which is defined as the conservation of collections objects or the improvement of collections storage facilities. Funds for a purchase must be in hand or secured in writing prior to submitting an acquisition proposal to the Collections Committee. Objects purchased with funds from the sale of donated objects will be credited to the original donor. The bill of sale or signed

Receipt of Purchase will be retained in the object's Accession File.

2.10 Transfers of Institute Property

A transfer of Institute property will be considered for acquisition in the same manner as other acquisitions and in accordance with MIT's Policy on Acquisition of Art and Artifacts. Once an object has been transferred to the Museum, it cannot be returned or lent to the transferring office except in accordance with the Museum's policies. The Museum does not provide storage space, either temporary or long-term, for objects owned by other academic or administrative offices that have not been acquired for the collections. A Receipt for the Transfer of Institute Property will be issued for all transfers and retained in the object's Accession File.

The Collections Manager will provide a report on acquisitions to the collections at the close of the fiscal year.