

UA Museums and Collections Strategic Plan 2017 – 2021

Contributing to the Public Good

Introduction

This plan was developed by the UA Museums and Collections Services in conjunction with University of Alberta Museums' curators and staff and in consultation with Chairs, Deans and with our community of students, researchers, and our communities. The plan aligns with the University of Alberta Institutional Strategic Plan and its keywords – Excel, Experience, Engage, Sustain – For the Public Good.

As members of the University of Alberta and as strong advocates for the success of our University we believe that the UA Museums and Collections sit well within the University of Alberta Vision, Mission and Values. We also reviewed the Mandate for Museums and Collections Services and have updated it slightly to better align with the University of Alberta Institutional Strategic Plan.

On an annual basis, UA Museums and Collections staff develop action plans that look one-and-a-half to two years out, and which describe the activities that will support and advance the goals and strategies.

We thank all who have helped to shape the UA Museums and Collections Strategic Plan and look forward to all who will continue to assist us and the University of Alberta in further developing the plan as the needs of our communities develop and evolve.

Please note when reading this document that “UA Museums and Collections” refers to Museums and Collections Services, the 29 registered museum collections, and the faculty, staff and students associated with them, not just to the unit Museums and Collections Services. In a few instances, “UA Museum collections” is used and refers only to the collections of museum objects.

University of Alberta Museums and Collections Strategic Goals 2017 - 2021

Long Term Goals

Goal 1 – Excel

University of Alberta Museums and Collections excel at contributing to a University of Alberta sustainable culture that fosters and champions distinction in teaching, learning, research and service.

1. **Strategy – Academic Alignment:** Align UA Museums and Collections with established and emerging areas of signature research and teaching to ensure museum programs are prioritized to meet University of Alberta needs.

Outcomes:

- Chairs and academic staff able to articulate the value and use of UA Museum collections in their research and learning areas by 2021
 - Number of international researchers; new resources; new faculty and students increases in response to signature research projects/ programs related to UA Museum collections by 2021
 - UA Museums and Collections successfully implements priority programs and services in support of signature areas each year
 - **Activities: 2017/2018**
 - Review relevant signature research and learning needs for all UA Museum collections with Chairs/ Curators/others
 - Review/renew Curator designations
 - Review/ develop plans for priority programs and services
2. **Strategy – Training to Excel:** Proactively train Curators, professors, staff and students to excel at integrating UA Museum collections into teaching, learning and research activities.

Outcomes:

- Faculty, staff and students increase their ability to utilize collections in research and teaching following museum training programs
- Faculty, staff and students build on research contributions to the knowledge base of UA Museums and Collections across campus on an annual basis
- Faculty and staff improve skills and confidence in the use of museum collections management system by 2021
- **Activities: 2017/2018**
 - Develop / implement annual training plan
 - Evaluate program

3. **Strategy - Facilities Review:** Plan and advocate for multi-purpose museum accessible facilities that support strategic research and teaching areas across disciplines and programs.

Outcomes:

- UA Museums and Collections space and facility needs are prioritized with action plans in place by 2019
- Number of purpose-built museum facilities/spaces increases to support signature teaching and research and collaborations by 2021
- **Activities:2017/2018**
 - Review museums space needs with Chairs/ Curators

4. **Strategy – Innovate Online Catalogue Access:** Innovate online museum catalogue access to advance priority research and teaching areas (e.g., Biodiversity Interfaces).

Outcomes:

- UA Museums science collections lead in using museum informatics to excel in signature research and learning areas by 2021
- UA Museums and Collections leverages expertise from science informatics model to innovate humanities catalogue access by 2021
- UA Museums and Collections implements system to track use and citations of collection data by 2020
- **Activities:2017/2018**
 - Complete UA Museums and Collections search interface
 - Link search interface to other UA Museum collections
 - Review museums catalogue tools for ease of use

5. **Strategy – Respectful Acquisitions/Returns:** UA Museum collections are respectfully acquired, managed and returned (if appropriate) within our diverse cultural and scientific obligations, relationships and priorities with our communities.

Outcomes:

- University of Alberta administration and advancement staff increase understanding of museum acquisition and deaccession processes through communications and training by March 2018
- University of Alberta administration and advancement staff increase ability to describe diversity, strength and breadth of collections/disciplines to knowledgeably support appropriate acquisitions on an ongoing basis
- Our communities are proud to contribute to our UA Museum collections for the public good on an annual basis
- Community members and the University of Alberta are collaborative partners in the return process for cultural property and human remains on an ongoing basis

- **Activities: 2017/2018**
 - Implement training with advancement staff and administrators
 - Review/ revise policy and procedures
 - Update website content for internal/ external collaborators/ clients
 - Implement Medicine Hat Reburial

Goal 2 – Experience

University of Alberta Museums and Collections are integral to the learning experience at all stages of life through the development of inspiring opportunities that nurture talents, expand knowledge and skills, and enable individual success.

1. **Strategy – Volunteer Program: UA Museums and Collections Volunteer Program** is an integral part of the University of Alberta learning and development experience and the priorities of the UA Museums and Collections.

Outcomes:

- Volunteers participating in the program improve targeted skills within two months of their start date
- Community members rate UA Museums and Collections as preferred volunteer activity by 2019
- UA Museums and Collections increase output in collections preparation, management and data entry by 2021
- Volunteers participating in the program increase their commitment to the UA Museums and Collections from short term to long term by 2021
- UA Museums and Collections increase collaborations with Alumni/Senate to improve and deliver program by 2021
- **Activities: 2017/2018**
 - Complete pilot phase 2
 - Implement program and evaluation
 - Establish funding
 - Communication plan developed and implemented
 - Begin implementation Phase 2

2. **Strategy – Student Internship Program: UA Museums and Collections Student Internship Program** is a meaningful, paid program and aspirational learning experience that is accessible to all students and is sustained as a dynamic complement to the UA Museums and Collections strategic priorities.

Outcomes:

- Students attending the application training program increase their understanding of the UA Museums and Collections system upon completion of training

- Students accepted into the Internship Program improve their leadership and museum skills; employability; and understanding of career options by working in the program
 - Friends of the UAlberta Museums (FUAM) and other donors increase and solidify ongoing support for five interns by 2021
 - UA Museums and Collections develop outstanding learning opportunities that nurture individual success through the program
 - **Activities: 2017/2018**
 - Review Student Internship recruitment/ communication process
 - Negotiate long-term funding from the FUAM for multiple interns
 - Review and improve learning outcomes with Curators and staff
 - Annual implementation plan revised and implemented
3. **Strategy:** Use of UA Museum collections and exposure to UA Museum and Collections practices is an integral component to student learning at the University of Alberta.

Outcomes:

- Students, our communities and alumni have increased awareness of the value of museum objects for research and learning by 2018
- UA Museums and Collections increases active use of UA Museum collections for undergraduate and graduate learning by 2019
- **Activities: 2017/2018**
 - Develop/Implement annual survey of use of UA Museums collections in classes
 - Develop/Implement annual survey of graduate student projects directly related to UA Museum collections
 - Develop annual plan to collect student project data and disseminate through appropriate media

Goal 3 – Engage

University of Alberta Museums and Collections are fully accessible and engage individuals and communities by creating reciprocal, mutually beneficial learning experiences, research projects and collaborations.

1. **Strategy – Focussed Communication Tools:** UA Museums and Collections communication tools (e.g., website; social media; print media; presentations) are focussed and built to effectively engage our priority communities.

Outcomes:

- Staff increase delivery of consistent UA Museums and Collections messages across all programs and channels by 2018

- Community members using our website and interacting with our social media channels improve their use and understanding of UA Museums and Collections programs and on-line resources incrementally by 2021
- UA Museums and Collections implement community user feedback mechanisms to improve content and ease of access to website and associated tools by 2018
- UA Museums and Collections set and improve meaningful social media targets by 2018
- **Activities: 2017/2018**
 - UA Museums and Collections website renewed
 - Standard messaging revised
 - User feedback mechanisms developed/tested/ implemented
 - Social media plan renewed

2. **Strategy – Public Programs:** Facilitate and promote public research and aspirational information experiences through innovative and meaningful access to UA Museum and Collections on and off campus.

Outcomes:

- Target communities and individuals participating in UA Museums and Collections programs increase their use of museum objects/information to fulfill their aspirational goals within one year of program
- UA Museums and Collections revamp and improve annual planning process, evaluation process and implementation process by 2019 and then monitor continuous improvement through evaluation
- UA Museums and Collections increase proactive community outreach programs with USchool; Alumni Office; Campus Outreach by September 2018
- UA Museums and Collections revamp and improve on-campus and off-campus exhibition strategy and plan by 2019
- UA Museums and Collections increase public research (e.g., citizen science; community history; crowd sourcing activities) that will increase awareness of and data entry capacity for all collections by 2021
- **Activities: 2017/2018**
 - Investigate Mactaggart /Royal Alberta Museum exhibition
 - Complete Leverenz/ Mactaggart research project
 - Investigate Edmonton International Airport (EIA) exhibition plan

3. **Strategy – Public Art Program:** UA Museums and Collections **Public Art Program** is an inspiring learning program offered across all campuses for the public good.

Outcomes:

- Our campus clients who participate in the program increase their satisfaction with and advocacy for the program and service by 2018
- Our campus community and visitors improve their understanding and appreciation for public art incrementally each year
- University Administration approves (percent-for-art) funding to sustain the Public Art program by 2019
- UA Museums and Collections improve communication and education on the Public Art Program for our communities by 2018
- UA Museums and Collections renew coordinated approach to acquiring, placing, labelling, maintaining and celebrating public art by 2018
- **Activities: 2017/2018**
 - Complete Public Art Program policy and plan
 - Complete placement strategy with Facilities and Operations
 - Complete/implement labelling program
 - Implement new annual cycle for requests/loans
 - Install available art in priority locations

4. **Strategy – Relationship Building & Recognition:** Build strategic, meaningful reciprocal relationships and collaborations with our UA Museums and Collections communities.

Outcomes:

- Our community and collaborators increase understanding and become strong advocates for the UA Museums and Collections strategic priorities by 2021
- UA Museums and Collections increase number of collaborators who can assist in helping to achieve goals by 2019
- UA Museums and Collections increase collaborations through meaningful recognition programs and strategies incrementally on an annual basis
- **Activities: 2017/2018**
 - Re-establish operational/ strategic relationship with FUAM
 - Review and implement UA Museums and Collections recognition program and event
 - Relocate the Hall of Fame Wall

Goal 4 – Sustain

University of Alberta Museums and Collections people and their work are sustained and enhanced by attracting and stewarding the resources we need to deliver excellence to the benefit of all.

1. **Strategy – Best Practice/ Policy Compliance:** Implement continuous improvement in UA Museums and Collections practice and adherence to UA Museums and Collections policies campus-wide through training, communication, collaboration and best practice.

Outcomes:

- University of Alberta community improves compliance with UA Museums and Collections Policy and Procedures to ensure optimum management/best practices by 2019
- UA Museums and Collections implement regular and repeated campus UA Museums Policy and Procedures training and communications plan by 2019
- UA Museums and Collections and appropriate administrative units improve collaborative processes to ensure better delivery of policy and services for our community by 2019
- UA Museums and Collections provide streamlined access to strategic centralized services for registered UA Museum collections by 2019
- University of Alberta community improves understanding of roles and responsibilities related to UA Museums and Collections Policy, procedures and services by 2019
- UA Museums and Collections implement coordinated and seamless donor recognition services by 2019
- UA Museums and Collections implements best practices to comply with University of Alberta administrative policies and procedures annually
- University of Alberta increases strategic support to UA Museums and Collections to ensure delivery of excellent services as needs justified
- Curators improve in signature research and learning areas with increased technical help by 2021
- **Activities: 2017/2018**
 - Develop/Implement policy and procedure review
 - Meet key administrative offices to ensure alliance of UA Museums and Collections Policy with campus-wide policies
 - Complete/implement benchmarking survey tool
 - Review Emergency Management Plan
 - Assess Funding Needs program for UA Museums and Collections Registered Collections

2. **Strategy – External Resource Building:** Secure and steward financial and other resources to support the UA Museums and Collections goals and strategies.

Outcomes:

- UA Museums and Collections increase applications for grants to support key services and priorities by 2021

- UA Museums and Collections increase number of cash donations to support the UA Museums and Collections endowment
- Advancement increases support to assist UA Museums and Collections with strategic fundraising priorities by 2018
- UA Museums and Collections increase friend-raising capacity and programs
- External communities increase funding support to UA Museums and Collections strategic priorities by 2021
- **Activities: 2017/2018**
 - Develop multi-year grant strategy to support priorities
 - Change terms of Community Outreach Endowment to support broader and current priorities

Appendix One

The University of Alberta Museums and Collections support and adopt the University of Alberta's vision, mission and values:

Vision

To inspire the human spirit through outstanding achievements in learning, discovery, and citizenship in a creative community, building one of the world's great universities for the public good.

Mission

Within a vibrant and supportive learning environment, the University of Alberta discovers, disseminates, and applies new knowledge for the benefit of society through teaching and learning, research and creative activity, community involvement, and partnerships. The University of Alberta gives a national and international voice to innovation in our province, taking a lead role in placing Canada at the global forefront.

Values

The University of Alberta community of students, faculty, staff, and alumni rely on shared, deeply held values that guide behaviour and actions. These values are drawn from the principles on which the University of Alberta was founded in 1908 and reflect a dynamic, modern institution of higher learning, leading change nationally and internationally.

- Above all, we value **intellectual integrity, freedom of inquiry and expression**, and the **equality and dignity of all persons** as the foundation of ethical conduct in research, teaching, learning, and service.
- We value **excellence** in teaching, research, and creative activity that enriches learning experiences, advances knowledge, inspires engaged citizenship, and promotes the public good.
- We value **learners** at all stages of life and strive to provide an intellectually rewarding educational environment for all.
- We value **academic freedom** and institutional autonomy as fundamental to open inquiry and the pursuit of truth.
- We value **diversity, inclusivity, and equity** across and among our people, campuses, and disciplines.
- We value **creativity and innovation** from the genesis of ideas through to the dissemination of knowledge.

- We value the **history and traditions** of our university, celebrating with pride our people, achievements, and contributions to society.