UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
UNIVERSITY COLLECTIONS

Strategic Development Plan for 2009/2010 – 2014/2015

This Plan was adopted by a meeting of the University Court of the University of Edinburgh on 24th May 2010. It is the overarching developmental plan which covers the following collections and services:

Centre for Research Collections (CRC)
- Special Collections and Archives
- University Archives
- Lothian Health Services Archive
- Fine Art Collections and the Museum Heritage Collection

Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments (EUCHMI)
Talbot Rice Gallery

and those collections directly administered through the Colleges & Schools:

The Anatomy Resource Centre & Collections
The Cockburn Museum of Geology
The Chemistry Collection
The Natural History Collections
The School of Scottish Studies Archive
The Polish School of Medicine Historical Collection.

This Plan will be reviewed in 2012 against targets set for the period August 2009 to July 2012 through the workplanning process. Targets will then be set for the period August 2012 to July 2015.

Individual curators are responsible for writing annual Forward Plans for Accredited Collections in their charge, which inform the University of Edinburgh's Collections Development Plan, and which form the basis for future policy and decision-making. All of the plans are reviewed annually with in-depth reviews taking place every three years. Each plan includes a mission statement, a situation review and a list of strategic aims and current objectives. Other collections are managed using an annual workplanning process.

Mission Statement
Preserving, Promoting and Providing access to the University's Historic and Cultural Collections

To achieve this mission, the University is committed to expanding, maintaining and enhancing its collections in order to make the best possible use of them not only for scholarly research and teaching, but also as a valuable point of contact and knowledge exchange between the University and the wider community at local, national and international levels.

Strategic Objectives
1: Mainstream use of collections for University teaching, learning and research
2: Improved access to collections and the spaces that house them
3: Excellence in stewardship and collections development
4: Capacity building through fundraising and workforce development

5: Pursue collaboration and convergence opportunities across University Collections to maximise impact and produce efficiency gains

Objective 1: Mainstream use of collections for University teaching, learning and research

Strategies

- Exploit funding-streams, partnerships and technologies to improve knowledge of collections amongst academic staff and improve potential for multi-disciplinary initiatives based on the collections
- Develop CRC as the main hub of the University Collections, with spokes of constant communication to related museum and cultural spaces to disseminate University Collections aims and objectives
- Maintain and develop the Internship Programme and volunteer support
- Promote collections, services, spaces, resources and expertise

Objective 2: Improved Access to Collections and the spaces that house them

Strategies:

- Build projects with cross collection collaboration potential
- Maintain and develop CRC reading room and seminar room services to facilitate secure, supervised consultation of all types of cultural items including objects
- Build on existing cataloguing and conservation activities to recognised standards to support access to collections
- Expand digitisation of targeted collections, and develop website/online resources
- Focus on SCHMI (St Cecilia's Hall Museum of Musical Instruments) as an accessible visitor attraction
- Mainstream educational and outreach provision into museum and other collections services
- Develop exhibition spaces, programmes and associated personnel
- Develop integrated collections, images management systems and finding aids
- Provide suitable support and storage for digital media
- Develop framework Service Level Agreements with Digital Library Section / Information Technology colleagues for technical support and development

Objective 3: Excellence in Stewardship and Collections Development

Strategies:

- Expand collections in accordance with collections policies, legal requirements and recognised professional standards
- Manage and monitor strong room facilities, public and office accommodation spaces and systems to professionally recognised standards
- Undertake rolling review of security systems across University Collections
- Establish conservation function across University Collections
- Establish or gain access to trusted digital repository for preservation of 'born digital' corporate and other archival status collections
- Mainstream best practice with Disaster Response & Recovery (DR&R) and Accreditation-compliant collections management policies and procedures into daily operations
- Maintain full Accredited Museum status with MLA, The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries for the five collections which are currently fully accredited and to examine the feasibility of museum Accreditation for additional collections as considered appropriate and as resources allow

- Maintain Recognition status of EUCHMI

Objective 4. Capacity building through Fundraising and Workforce Development

Strategies:

- Expand percentage level of external fundraising through large scale donations
- Work with the relevant University departments to increase philanthropic giving to University Collections
- Invest in staff development and build on Intern Programme

Objective 5: Pursue collaboration and convergence opportunities across University Collections to maximise impact and produce efficiency gains

Strategies:

- Further develop the collaboration culture across University Collections by fostering appropriate projects, sharing expertise and skills, and valuing peer support
- Formalise the Centre for Research Collections as a hub for collaboration activity and planning across University Collections
- Where appropriate work towards the convergence of services and collections across University Collections

Dr John Scally
Director of University Collections
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