

COMCOL

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

**Living Collections,
Living Communities**

Contemporary Practices of
Care in Collecting

OCT. 24-27, 2023

National Taiwan Museum, TAIWAN

**CALL FOR PAPERS
& PRACTICES**

Organizers



ICOM
international
committee
for collecting



國立臺灣博物館
National Taiwan Museum



中華民國博物館學會
Chinese Association of Museums

Under the
Auspice of



文化部
MINISTRY OF CULTURE



Living Collections, Living Communities

Contemporary Practices of Care in Collecting

On the occasion of COMCOL's 13th annual conference we will join forces with the Chinese Association of Museums (CAM) in Taiwan in 2023. For this conference we will focus on contemporary practices of care in collecting.

In the wake of the adoption of the new museum definition at the ICOM General Conference in August 2022, we would like to explore how we can look at the new aspects that were added, emphasizing the social role of the museum, but also its involvement in and with diverse societies.

The new definition is both a recognition of existing practices as well as opening new avenues. What does it mean for the act of collecting, but also for the ways collections are dealt with?

Critically reflecting on the field of collecting and collections care, we invite our members to join us in searching, rethinking, negotiating and creating new practices that connect collections to society.

What opportunities do we see for future processes of collecting and the requirements under which objects can be obtained or maybe left in-situ? Under what circumstances collectables can be shown and when not? How to create narratives that create space for conversations and different perspectives. What new possibilities can be imagined for safeguarding for future generations while also creating opportunities for accessibility for the current generation.

How can collecting practices be more human-centered, fostering care and well-being? What current hierarchies are at place about ownership and authority? How is institutional expert knowledge opposed to knowledge based on personal experience or oral traditions? So, what are the ethics of collecting we abide by? And whose ethics are they?

In this conference, COMCOL and CAM aim to bring all these questions to the forefront by asking the participants to reflect on their recent experiences and plan the next steps for their institutions and the collecting processes of today. What specific methodological approaches towards collection development do we like to imagine?

For this we welcome experiences, case-studies, and in-depth reflections that help us to empower and enrich our networks and push the frontier of our understanding about these issues. Over the course of the conference, we will collectively explore the following areas:

Key themes for the conference and framework

1 Connecting and reconnecting community-centered practices with intangible and tangible heritage

- Ethics of care of ourselves and of the collections – tangible and intangible
- Collections: ownership or stewardship?
- Exploring documenting and collecting living heritage practices that foster diversity and sustainability in collecting

2 Technologies and practices for greater accessibility

- Digital collecting practices: new technologies, sustainability, and contemporary collecting
- Privacy management challenges
- NFTs vs public accessibility
- Who defines metadata and their hierarchy?

3 Collections documentation and interpretation

- Intersectional perspectives
- Cross-disciplinary methodology and dialogue
- Indigenous knowledge systems and collections

4 Contemporary practices

- Collecting and crisis: how to document multiple voices
- Co-collecting with communities
- Exploring emotions and care for collections
- Collecting tomorrow: sustainable futures
- Intergenerational and interdisciplinary dialogue

5 Colonial histories, power, and inequities present within collections

- Decolonization praxis
- Provenance and biographical research, collecting, and trauma
- Racism in collections
- Reconciliation, unconditional repatriation, and restitution
- Equity based collecting practices

Call for abstracts

Abstracts (between 250 and 300 words) should be sent to:

secretary.comcol@icom.museum by **1 April 2023, midnight CET**. Approval of proposals will be announced by **1 May 2023**.

Additionally, we warmly welcome proposals that go beyond traditional paper presentations and also encompass panels, highlight sessions (20 images X 6 minutes), workshops, posters or other formats.

Proposals

The following information should be included with the abstract proposal:

- Title of submitted proposal
 - Please indicate if it is a paper, highlight session (20 images X 6 minutes), posters, workshop, panel contribution or other format.
- Name(s) of author(s) or presenters
- Affiliation(s), e-mail address(es), and full address(es)
- ICOM membership number (*membership is not required*)
- COMCOL member yes/no (*membership is not required*)
- Technical requirements for the proposed presentations

The abstract language must be submitted in English. The ICOM COMCOL conference will be translated in English and Chinese.

Conference publication

A conference publication is planned. Please inform us if you are not willing to be a part of the publication. Otherwise, a full paper and/or article for the publication should be sent to: secretary.comcol@icom.museum by **1 December 2023**.

Museums and Taiwan

With a population of over 23 million people, Taiwan has long been a unique place which celebrates and is home to diverse ethnic groups and cultures. Taiwan sustains more than 400 public and private museums around the island. The museum community has actively cultivated an innovative environment supporting the growth of cross-cultural understanding, dialogue, and creative ideas through international exchange, information sharing, and informal learning.

The Chinese Association of Museums

The Chinese Association of Museums (CAM) in Taiwan is a professional association organized by Taiwanese museums and museum professionals. There are 134 institutional members and over 200 individual members. The president is Hung Shih-Yu, Director of National Taiwan Museum. The main services provided by CAM to its members consist of providing information, organizing professional activities, training and consultation for personnel, and publications concerning the museum profession.

COMCOL

COMCOL is an International Committee of ICOM which aims to deepen discussions, and share knowledge on the practice, theory and ethics of collecting and collections (both tangible and intangible) development. COMCOL is a platform for professional exchange of views and experiences around collecting in the broadest sense. It aims to empower and inspire museum professionals. To promote growth in practices and thought. To support cross-cultural connections around topics that include collections care, collection accessibility, intangible/tangible heritage and collections interpretation with human-centered approaches. Aiming for respectful practices that affect the role of collections now and in the future.

