



AB XX

Permanent Art Collection Management Policy

Classification:	Academic/Administration
Responsible Authority:	Director/Curator Art Gallery
Executive Sponsor:	Academic Vice President and Provost
Approval Authority:	Executive Committee
Date First Approved:	2025-02-25 (by the Art Gallery Committee)
Date Last Reviewed:	2025-05-03 (approved by EC)
Mandatory Review Date:	2030-07-01 (5 years for existing policies & 1 year for new policies)

PURPOSE

This Collection Management Policy (CMP) outlines the responsibilities and procedures for maintaining St. Francis Xavier University's permanent art collection, which is administered by the StFX Art Gallery (henceforth the Gallery). The policy ensures the care, effective maintenance, and ethical management of the collection, while also supporting the University's mission of education, research, and community engagement. The policy is aligned with best practices in the museum and art gallery sectors and complies with Canadian laws and regulations pertaining to cultural property and collections.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all art objects in the University's permanent art collection, including:

- Art works acquired through purchase, donation, or bequest
- Temporary collections (works on loan)
- Documentation related to the collection, including hard and digital collections

DEFINITIONS

Role of the StFX Art Gallery

- Foster intellectual and critical inquiry through art; provide educational experiences for students, faculty, staff, and the surrounding communities
- Promote access to art and support public engagement through exhibitions, outreach, and programs, such as artist talks, panels, etc.

- Maintain a diverse collection that reflects both historical and contemporary developments in visual and material arts
- Interpret and conserve the collection to ensure its long-term preservation and accessibility

POLICY

1. Governance and Responsibilities

The permanent art collection is a collection of art works held in public trust by the University.

The University charges the **Art Gallery Director/Curator** with the duty to report to the **Academic Vice-President and Provost** and the authority to maintain and manage the permanent collection, upholding the standards of the professional Canadian museums and art galleries as public institutions. Responsibilities include: day-to-day management of the collection, including acquisitions, care, cataloguing, and documentation.

The Art Gallery Committee advises and supports the Director/Curator on matters such as programming, policies, collection development, and fundraising.

2. Care and Conservation

The permanent art collection contains numerous cultural assets whose value is wholly independent from their fair market value or, more precisely, monetary worth. Acquisitions are made and gifts/donations are accepted with a view to permanency.

Art works accepted into the University's permanent art collection must be handled, stored, and displayed according to professional museum and art gallery standards.

Works of art on loan to the Gallery will be subject to the same care and conservation standards as works in the University's permanent art collection.

It is the responsibility of the Director/Curator to ensure that professional standards are met for all aspects of handling, transporting, and displaying art works. Only the Director/Curator is permitted to handle works of art in the University's permanent art collection and to train and designate staff to handle these objects. Any temporary/contract employees or Facilities Management employees involved in the handling of art works will be trained by Director/Curator to ensure the safe handling of these objects.

2.1 Exclusions

This policy does not apply to:

- Art held in any of the archives, buildings, or facilities of the University that are *not* recorded and catalogued in the University's permanent art collection database system, which is maintained by the Director/Curator
- Art purchased by individual staff or faculty of the University

- Art purchased by University departments or faculties for study, research, or display purposes
- Art commissioned by any University department or faculty without the consultation, knowledge, or endorsement of the Gallery Director/Curator

3. Acquisitions

Acquisitions can be made through purchase, gift, bequest, or exchange. All acquisitions must be reviewed and approved by the Art Gallery Director/Curator in consultation with the Academic Vice-President and the Gallery's Collections Management sub-committee.

The acceptance of an art work will be based on the following criteria:

- A. artistic merit and authenticity;
- B. relevance to the permanent art collection, present and future, to the University's mission, mandate, and to the Strategic Plan, present and future;
- C. physical condition and stability;
- D. relevance for exhibition;
- E. adequate resources for the maintenance, conservation, storage, access for research and display of the art work;
- F. unrestricted terms of donation, bequest, or sale; and unencumbered and clear legal title.

3.1 Purchases

Only art works of outstanding artistic merit and relevance to the University's permanent art collection will be purchased. All purchases of works will be approved by the Director/Curator in consultation with the Academic Vice-President and the Gallery's Collections Management sub-committee. There must be sufficient funds and resources to support all costs related to the purchase, including display needs, (i.e. framing), conservation, and storage.

3.2 Gifts, Bequests, and Donations

The Director/Curator will consider potential gifts and bequests and, following consultation with the Academic Vice-President and the Gallery's Collections Management sub-committee, decide whether to accept the gift and/or bequest.

The standard practice will be that:

- 3.2.1 The prospective donor pays for the appraisal(s) of the art work. For art works valued at more than \$1,000, in accordance with the University's [Gift Acceptance Policy](#), these gifts must be appraised by an arm's length, qualified, professional appraiser, either recommended by the Art Dealers' Association of Canada (ADAC) or selected by the Director/Curator. For gifts purported to be valued at over \$25,000, two arm's length appraisals are required.
- 3.2.2. The Advancement Department, with assistance from the Director/Curator, will make arrangements for appraisal(s) and shipping.
- 3.2.3. Upon receipt of all appraisals and the shipment of the art work to the gallery's permanent collection storage facilities (Bloomfield Centre, 103), and the Director/Curator's approval

of the work's acceptance into the University's permanent art collection, the University will issue the donor a deed of gift for review and witnessed signature. The Advancement Department will process and issue the tax receipt for the donation.

3.2.4 All donations to the University's permanent art collection are irrevocable upon the formal transfer of title to the University established by the date of the donor's countersigning the deed of gift.

3.2.5 Conflict of Interest Guidelines for the Art Gallery Committee

- No work of art made by a committee members or his/her immediate family may be acquired, be it by purchase or donation, by the University while that members serves on the Committee
- No committee member may sell a work of art to the University while serving on the Committee
- Committee members may not propose acquisitions while serving on the committee.
- The Director/Curator shall not deal in works of arts for personal profit or professional gain or advantage.¹

4. Care and Management

The Art Gallery Director/Curator, under the supervision of the Academic Vice-President and Provost, is responsible for the care, documentation, management, and maintenance of the University's permanent art collection for the purposes of education, research, preservation, and presentation to the public served by the Art Gallery and the University.

Records on the collection are entered, kept, and stored in a secure database system. This comprehensive system of records maintained by the Art Gallery includes but is not limited to the following:

- A. Documentation pertaining to the provenance and legal title of an art work;
- B. All correspondence, documents, and other materials pertaining to an accessioned object;
- C. Accessioning and cataloguing data;
- D. Photographic documentation;
- E. Condition and conservation history;
- F. Current location and loan records;
- G. De-accessioning information

4.1 Insurance

All works in the University's permanent art collection whose value can be established are insured under the University's Specialty Insurance Policy while on campus or in transit when on loan. The University provides for this expense in a specific budget line in the Art Gallery's operating allocation. Annual updating of the insurance list and occasional insurance claims are initiated by the Art Gallery and handled through the Risk Management Office.

¹ For more information, see <https://www.stfx.ca/university-policies-procedures/conflict-interest-policy>

The Art Gallery staff maintain inventory records required for insurance purposes. Each year, gallery staff will conduct an annual physical audit of the permanent collection, specifically art works on public display on campus grounds and in campus buildings. When works are reported to be missing, the President of the University, the Academic Vice-President and Provost, the RCMP, StFX Security, and the insurer will be notified.

4.2 – Loans

The Art Gallery Director/Curator alone may authorize the loans and/or exhibition of works from the University's permanent art collection to other exhibitors (i.e., museums and art galleries).

4.3 – Facilities Maintenance

When improvements and/or repairs are called for by members of the University's Leadership Team and/or Facilities Management, the Art Gallery Director/Curator will be consulted on all matters related to her/his professional custodial responsibilities pertinent to the work areas, art storage rooms, and display spaces managed by the Director/Curator. Consultation must take place at a minimum of 4 weeks in advance of the work schedule to ensure gallery staff can accommodate needs (i.e. the moving or removal of art works).

5. De-accession and Disposal

5.1 Definitions

This policy intentionally separates *deaccessioning*, which is a curatorial decision, from *disposal*, which is an administrative function. Disposal is the step in a process that follows de-accessioning.

De-accessioning is the formal removal of a work of art from the University's permanent art collection. In this policy, *deaccession* means that the appropriate authorities – the Director/Curator and the Gallery's Collections Management sub-committee – have concluded that an art work may be removed from the collection and furthermore selected for disposal by means outlined in section 5.5.

The removal of an object from the University's permanent art collection will be carried out with full awareness of the potential loss of public trust. Complete records will be kept of such processes and decisions reached.

5.2 Criteria for deaccession

Provided there is no legal impediment, works will be removed from the University's permanent art collection under any of the following conditions:

- A. The work is so damaged or deteriorated that it cannot be exhibited or usefully studied, or that its repair would falsify it, or that the Art Gallery can no longer properly preserve or care for the work.
- B. The work is no longer relevant or useful within the collection, exhibiting, and research programs of the Art Gallery.

- C. The work is a duplicate of another work in the collection or is positively identified as a copy or fake.

It may also be that the University is no longer able to care adequately for the work or may decide to deaccession a work of art for the purpose of repatriation, when it can be proven that other bodies or governments have a better right to the work.

In cases when an art work has accidentally been destroyed or permanently lost, the art work will be deaccessioned from the University's permanent art collection. Any funds derived from this loss, such as payment from insurance, will be credited to the Art Gallery for purchase of an art work/works or for use for conservation of art in the collection.

5.3 Ethics and Standards of Deaccessioning

- 5.3.1 Every proposal for deaccessioning should be approached with caution. Prior to deaccessioning, the work of art should be researched, documented, and photographed, and the process of deaccessioning thoroughly documented. The records will be maintained by the Director/Curator on a permanent basis.

- When disposal involves the transfer of ownership, appropriate legal documents will be obtained.

- 5.3.2 Prior to deaccessioning through sale, trade/exchange, or gift, the fair-market value of the work of art should be determined by an independent appraisal: for works valued under \$20,000, one independent appraisal is required; for works valued \$20,000 and higher, two independent appraisals are required.

- 5.3.3 In the case of an art work by a living artist, the Director/Curator will contact the artist prior to making any recommendations.

- 5.3.4 The deaccessioning of a work of art must adhere to the applicable provincial and federal laws and to international agreements and treaties.

- 5.3.5 When conditions attached to an acquisition restrict de-accessioning, the University will comply with these restrictions.

- 5.3.6 University employees, the Board of Governors, and/or families or close associates of these parties may not receive de-accessioned works offered through public auction, trade, gift, or private sale.

5.4 Steps for Deaccessioning

- 5.4.1 A proposal for deaccessioning must be initiated by the Director/Curator of the Art Gallery who will ensure the following steps are taken:

- A. Determining that there are no legal or time restrictions against disposal of the work and that the disposal will not contravene Cultural Property regulations or other legislation. Where there are no legal restrictions to deaccessioning, the University will consult with the donor or, if the donor is not living, with the donor's heirs or legal representatives.
- B. The recommendation for deaccessioning is presented by the Director/Curator to the Gallery's Collections Management sub-committee with a full justification to support the deaccessioning and a declaration of the intention for disposal.
- C. A complete record of the deaccessioning process must be documented, and the Gallery will maintain all records pertaining to the deaccessioned art work.

5.5 Disposal

The Director/Curator and the Art Gallery staff will recommend the means of disposal.

5.5.1 Means of disposal of a work of art may include:

- A. donation to or exchange with another public institution,
- B. sale,
- C. intentional destruction, or
- D. repatriation.

5.6 Ethics and Standards for Disposal

- 5.6.1 In circumstances other than accidental destruction or loss, the manner of disposal should be in the best interests of the University, the communities it serves, and the public trust placed in it.
- 5.6.2 With art works in suitable condition, efforts should be expended to ensure that they remain in the public domain. Therefore, the first option explored will be sale at fair market value to or exchange with another public institution that can care for and make appropriate use of the work. The University will endeavour to ensure that a deaccessioned work of art that is relevant to Canada's cultural heritage remains in Canada.
- 5.6.3 If disposal by outright sale is recommended, sale by public auction is preferable. All proceeds generated from disposal by sale will be credited to the Art Gallery to purchase an art work/works or used for conservation of art in the collection.
- 5.6.4 Art works can be intentionally destroyed if they are determined to:
 - A. Be inauthentic, such as forgeries or reproductions, and/or of no archival or documentary value; or
 - B. Lack physical integrity and cannot reasonably be preserved
- 5.6.5 Where disposal involves the transfer of ownership, appropriate legal documents will be obtained.

PROCEDURE

As outlined above

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Art Gallery Committee Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Art Gallery Committee is a standing committee and the sole recommending body with respect to the management of the University's permanent art collection.

Composition

- 5 ex officio members: the Academic Vice-President and Provost, Art Department Chair, an Advancement Department representative, the Gallery Director/Curator, and a representative from the StFX Student Union
- 3 faculty members
- 3 members from the surrounding communities

Faculty and community members are elected to the committee.

Members may serve for two consecutive terms. A term is a three-year period, and membership may be renewed once. One year must lapse before a member may be re-elected.

Procedure

Full committee meetings will be held twice annually and will be called by the Director/Curator in consultation with the Committee Chair, which is the Academic Vice-President and Provost.

Members will join working sub-committees, such as the Fundraising sub-committee and the Collections Management sub-committee. Additional sub-committees will be formed as needed.

RELATED POLICIES

- [Copyright Act \(R.S.C., 1985, c. C-42\)](#)
- [StFX Academic Plan](#), 2023 – 2028.
- [StFX Conflict of Interest Policy](#), 2021.
- [StFX Gift Acceptance Policy](#), 2017.
- [StFX – Nominations](#), 2024 – present.
- [StFX Research and Creative Works Plan](#), 2019 – 2025.

- [StFX Strategic Plan](#), 2023 – 28.

RELATED MATERIALS

BEST MUSEOLOGICAL PRACTICES

- [CMA Ethics Guidelines](#), Canadian Museums Association, 1999.
- [CMA Deaccessioning Guidelines, Canadian Museums Association](#), 2015, 2020.
- [Environmental Guidelines for Museums, Canadian Conservation Institute](#), 2017.
- [Certification of Cultural Property for Income Tax Purposes](#), Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board, Canadian Heritage, 2024.
- [ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums, International Council of Museums](#), 2024.
- [Guidelines on Deaccessioning of ICOM](#), International Council of Museums, 2019.
- [Code of Ethics and Guidance for Practice of the Canadian Association for Conservation of Cultural Property and of the Canadian Association of Professional Conservators](#), 3rd edition (2009), published jointly by the Canadian Association for the Conservation of Cultural Property, Canadian Association of Professional Conservators, Ottawa, 2000.

AB XX: APPENDIX 1