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Parent Policy: [Museums and Collections Policy](#)

Art Acquisition and Commissioning Procedure

Office of Administrative Responsibility:	Museums and Collections Services
Approver:	Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Scope:	Compliance with University procedure extends to all members of the University community.

Overview

Since 1912, The University of Alberta has collected outstanding works of art for the purposes of teaching, research, community engagement, enhancement of the University environment and in support of the University's vision and mission. The University of Alberta Art Collection is a registered collection under the University of Alberta Museums and Collections Policy, and is the sole entity authorized to acquire **museum works of art** on behalf of the University of Alberta.

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is:

- To ensure that the University meets its fiduciary, legal, and moral obligations in maintaining a world-class collection of art in the **public trust**;
- To ensure the University collects and manages works of art appropriately, to avoid duplication of services and to involve the expertise necessary to acquire and care for works of art; and
- To ensure that faculty, staff, students, researchers and agents of the University of Alberta understand the established processes used by **Museums and Collections Services** to acquire museum works of art on behalf of the University of Alberta.

PROCEDURE

1. ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY

The University of Alberta's Museums and Collections Services will maintain the administrative responsibility to acquire museum works of art and manage the University of Alberta Art Collection, as authorized by and subject to the University's *Museums and Collections Policy*.

2. COMPLIANCE

All works of art acquired by the University, through either donation, bequest, purchase, transfer, exchange, commission, or Master of Fine Arts thesis presentation, are approved by the Executive Director, Museums and Collections Services, or designate, on the recommendation of the **University of Alberta Art Acquisition Committee**. This approval authority is distinct from the authority for signing contracts related to legal acceptance of works of art. These contracts are signed in accordance with the *Contract Review and Signing Authority Policy*.

The President or Provost, or designate, may provisionally accept a work of art on the University of Alberta's behalf in the event that acquisition of that work of art is time-sensitive. Works of art accepted in these circumstances will be

assessed by the Executive Director, Museums and Collections Services, or designate, as soon as possible to ensure compliance and processing within established policy and procedures.

Units or individual staff of units that wish to acquire a work of art by any mode of **acquisition** must contact the Curator, University of Alberta Art Collection.

All works of art acquired by the University will be **accessioned** into the University of Alberta Art Collection. To ensure acquisitions are consistent with the University's goals, works of art will be acquired according to the University of Alberta Art Collection's ***Acquisition Strategy and Management Strategy***.

3. COMMISSIONS

a. Works of Art for University Units

Sponsor units interested in commissioning works of art will contact Museums and Collections Services to determine the need for a **commission**.

If the need for a commission is confirmed, Museums and Collections Services will work with the sponsor unit to define the type and scope of the commission, strike an Oversight Committee for the commission, develop a call for proposals and develop a project plan and budget.

Oversight Committees will include representation from the Sponsor Unit, Facilities and Operations, External Relations, the Art Acquisition Committee, and others as appropriate to the nature of the commission.

Commission contracts with artists will be administered by Museums and Collections Services, in collaboration with the sponsor unit and any other units involved.

Commission costs, with associated framing and installation costs, will be borne by the appropriate unit or office, in consultation with Museums and Collections Services.

Administration, including the transfer of ownership and copyright to the University of Alberta, and installation of the commission, where appropriate, is the responsibility of Museums and Collections Services.

Once completed, all commissions will be accessioned into the University of Alberta Art Collection, which is administered by Museums and Collections Services.

b. Portraits

The University of Alberta will commission portraits of its presidents, and will consider commissioning portraits of its chancellors and other significant individuals, in the form of paintings, sculptures or photographs.

The procedure for commissioning portraits is as above section 3.a.

DEFINITIONS

Any definitions listed in the following table apply to this document only with no implied or intended institution-wide use. [[▲Top](#)]

Museum Works of Art	Works of visual art in any medium that meet criteria set out in the <i>Acquisition Strategy and Management Strategy</i> for the University of Alberta Art Collection and contribute to building a world-class art collection.
Public Trust	The obligation placed on trustees to maintain and preserve cultural and natural resources and to ensure that these resources remain in the public domain for the benefit of current and future generations

Museums and Collections Services	The unit charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the University of Alberta is in compliance with this policy and associated procedures.
University of Alberta Art Acquisition Committee	Supports the implementation of the University of Alberta Art Policy and the implementation and review of the University of Alberta Art Collection's <i>Acquisition Strategy</i> and <i>Management Strategy</i> .
Unit(s)	A designation used to denote academic and non-academic Departments, Faculties, Schools, Institutes and Centres at the University of Alberta.
Acquisition	The appropriately documented transfer of title (legal ownership and responsibility) which accompanies any object acquired by the University of Alberta, whether through commission, donation, bequest, purchase, transfer, exchange or any other method (e.g., Master of Fine Arts thesis presentation).
Accession	Any object or collection of objects acquired by the University of Alberta at one time from a single source as a permanent addition to its collections; or the process of formally accepting an object into the University's permanent collections.
Acquisition Strategy	A document required of each registered collection at the University of Alberta that describes the scope and uses of the collection and principles of acquiring museum objects.
Management Strategy	A document required of each registered collection at the University of Alberta that describes management strategies to ensure the collection complies with University policy.
Commission	A commission involves the creation of a work of art (e.g. a mural or a sculpture, etc.) by a selected artist for a specific location or purpose. A commission may require a competition, administered by a committee or jury, to select a suitable artist.

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