

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)
Dr. Indirapala Archaeological Museum and the Laboratory
Faculty of Arts, University of Jaffna.

1. Purpose and Scope

- This standard operating procedure intends to guide the work of all stakeholders involved in the management of the Dr.Indirapala Archaeological Museum and the Laboratory.
- This document describes the practices and procedures relating to Dr.Indirapala Archaeological Museum and the Laboratory in a manner that will ensure all stakeholders can access the relevant information to ensure consistency and continuity of practice.

2. Collections

- Accessioned, documented, and catalogued objects of artistic, cultural, scientific, or historical significance, comparative materials, and objects of high quality that are representative of the diversity inherent in the mission of the Museum.
- These collections are used for interpretation, participatory exhibitions, educational programs and research. They are owned by the Archaeological Museum, Department of History, Faculty of Arts, University of Jaffna.
- These collections are given the highest level of care and protection. Procedures for acquisition, accessioning, documenting, cataloguing, care, and protection are outlined in this manual.

3. Accessions

- It is entered into the Museum's register and assigned an accession number. An accession record is initiated by the Head in coordination with the appropriate curator.

- A brief description and accession inventory of the object(s) in the collection and all background information are recorded on the accession record in the computerized accession database.
- The collection object(s) normally is marked with its accession number in an approved, archivally-safe, reversible manner unless immediately catalogued.
- The accession number is alphanumeric, consisting of the Museum's identifying prefix (IAM), then the calendar year of acceptance written in full, followed by a dash and then a sequential number that represents the order of acceptance for that year (e.g., IAM2005- 036).
- The accession number includes the IAM prefix to identify the number from the accession numbers of other institutions. As each object is catalogued, the accession number may be removed and replaced by the catalogue number. The accession number must be recorded on the catalogue record.
- Accession processing continues with the production of an initial condition report (see Forms), including conservation and treatment needs.
- A written procedure manual for the generation of records and marking of objects is kept in the museum with the supervision of the Head.

4. **Catalogue**

- After accessioning, the curator (in the absence of him/her, the Head) of the museum creates the catalogue records when the collection is catalogued. The curator is provided with the range of catalogue numbers associated with each accession number. The Head updates the accession record by adding the catalogue numbers.
- Catalogue records are produced in both paper and electronic format and are housed in the collecting division.
- The Museum practices computerized cataloguing using a relational database. The catalogue number of each object is cross-referenced to its collection accession number and to the database record from which a catalogue sheet is printed, using acid-free, lignin-free, buffered paper.

- The Museum's unified cataloguing system has standard data fields required for all its objects regardless of the collecting division. These data fields are:
 1. accession number (for the collection to which the object belongs);
 2. catalogue number (of the object);
 3. identification (of the object);
 4. provenience or provenance (of the object);
 5. name of collector (person who collected, excavated, captured, and procured the object);
 6. date collected;
 7. name of identifier (person who identified the object/provided the description);
 8. date of identification;
 9. name of cataloger (person who catalogued the object);
 10. date catalogued;
 11. condition (of the object); and
 12. location (of the object in the collections room, e.g., drawer and cabinet, shelf and bay; or temporary location.

5. Labelling

To the extent possible, each object is labelled with its catalogue number and the catalogue number should be the only number on the object. The labelling system must be conservationally sound, reversible, and impervious to water. White paint, white-out, and nail polish are prohibited. For those objects too small or fragile to label or where labelling would damage the object, alternative labelling such as with acid-free tags or on containers must be associated with the object.

6. Inventory

- A comprehensive inventory is conducted of each object, once every year. The Museum practices computerized inventorying using a relational database. The curator oversees the inventory process and coordinates with the coordinator or head.

- An inventory record form is produced. The inventory record must include, but is not limited to the following:
 - a. accession, catalogue.
 - b. object name and/or a short description;
 - c. condition of the object;
 - d. current housing location;
 - e. date of inventory;
 - and f. discrepancies and problems encountered.
- Once the inventory is complete, all collection records and documentation are updated to reflect the findings of the inventory.
- The spot-check inventory is conducted once a month occurs on the department or unit level, is organized by the curator, and involves only a specific portion of the collection.
- Once the inventory is complete, all collection records and documentation are updated to reflect the findings of the inventory.
- The inventory should be properly monitored under the control of the head of history or the coordinator of archaeology and cultural tourism.

7. Security

- The openings of both the museum and the museum laboratory (Number of Keys) will be placed in the office of the Head of History. A register will also be maintained.
- The control of the CCTV should be with the Head of History.
- The Museum building including the open museum and systems are inspected every six months by the Preventive Maintenance of the Management Committee.
- Visitors shall stick to the time limit inside the museums. The staff shall ensure that there is no crowding at entry or inside the museums.
- No food and eatables shall be allowed inside the museum. The curator (in the absence of him/her, the Head), advises on food, drink, smoking, and photography restrictions, and requirements to conform to other instructions and signage.
- The Head of History or the person authorized by him/her opens and closes the building at the beginning and end of the day.

- Warns violators of rule infractions such as smoking, loitering, flash photography, and touching exhibits
- Examines doors, windows, and gates to determine that they are secure

8. Cleaning

- Museum objects should be properly cleaned once a month under the supervision of the Head/History.
- The open-space museum should be properly maintained at regular intervals.
- Particulate pollutants are controlled by daily vacuum cleaning of the Museum areas by the custodial staff.

9. Maintenance

- Appointment of personnel for the function of the museum and the maintenance activities: Laboratory Assistants, Museum Supervisor and work aid.
- The museum should have the practical feasibility of purchasing museum materials and materials required for the laboratory (Hand gloves, Acid-free paper, Acid-free cardboard, Photo packets, Bubble wrap, cleaning detergents, Vacuum cleaner, Soft brush, uniform etc.).
- Visible and ultraviolet light levels, temperature and relative humidity, and atmospheric pollutants are measured.
- The intake of new objects and replacement or deletion of existing ones in museum displays will be carried out on the basis of the recommendation of the Management Committee.

10. Implementation

a. Teaching and Studies

- In order to carry out the teaching process activities in the museum and museum laboratory, the lecturer should obtain permission from the Head of History on the day before the specified date.

- If chemicals have to be used for processing from the laboratory, permission should be obtained in advance from the Head of History.

(Form: Name of the Lecturer, Designation, Date, Time, Name and Size of the Chemical, Signature of the Laboratory Assistant etc.).

- If the laboratory is in use, appropriate uniforms and protective equipment should be used.

b. Volunteers

Appointment of volunteers for museum services. They will include students in the field of History, Archaeology and Cultural Tourism.

c. Visitors

Schoolchildren will be allowed to visit the museum (with prior permission) once a week.

Others can visit up to three o'clock on office days.

- d. Fee for permits to visit museums:** Adults: Rs. 100, School Children: Rs. 20, Foreigners: Adults: 10 US Dollars, Children: 02 US Dollars

11. Safe Handling

Before any object is handled and moved, the person conducting the handling must verify the following.

- The handling is essential and objectives cannot be achieved without handling
- The object must be evaluated visually and judged to be stable so that moving it will not cause damage;
- The method of moving and transporting the object chosen must be most suitable given the physical properties of the object and must not cause damage (e.g., use both hands, avoid projecting parts or weak points);
- The method of transporting the object must provide adequate support and cushioning (e.g. padded tray, padded cart);
- The route the object will be transported along must be free from obstruction or other hazards;

- sufficient staff members are available to move and transport large, heavy, or awkward objects; and
- A safe place to receive the object must be provided before the object is transported
- Anyone handling collections objects must wash their hands and wear clean cotton gloves when handling objects. Non-powdered latex gloves provide a better grip for handling slippery objects.
- Any personal items are removed that may scratch or snag on an object (e.g., belt buckle, necklace, lanyard,).
- Objects are handled over padded support.

12. Conservation

- Conservation assessment usually is carried out in-house by the appropriate curator on a regularly scheduled basis. The advice of a conservator is sought as necessary.
- If problems are found, the person conducting the assessment recommends any required stabilization methods or conservation treatments that are required.
- A priority treatment list is developed based on the most urgent need.
- The Head of History or the person authorized by him/her identifies objects in need of conservation treatment on the object's condition report, and conservation treatments are scheduled by the Head of History or the person authorized by him/her in order of priority.
- As the Museum does not have a conservator on staff, conservation treatments must be contracted with a conservator having graduate credentials and a specialization or expertise in the type of object needing conservation. A budget to fund the work must be available.
- The conservator must produce a proposal for the work and a budget estimate for the cost of the treatment prior to beginning any treatment.
- For any treatment, the conservator must include documentation of the object before, during, and after treatment. Treatments must be reversible, minimally invasive, and use compatible materials so that physical and intellectual integrity is not compromised.

- All health and safety rules and procedures are to be followed and data sheets on the solvents in use are posted in the labs where the solvents are in use. Safety cabinets must be kept in the lab to house the solvents.
- Only trained personnel with fitted masks and appropriate filters are allowed to use solvents.

13. Photography

- The Head of History or the person authorized by him/her as a museum photographer documents objects when they are accessioned, and at any successive time that photography is required. A photographic log is kept.
- The Head of History or the person authorized by him/her as a museum photographer organizes, catalogues, and houses photographic records.
- Image use requests are made on the Image Use Request form.

14. Emergency Preparedness

- Emergency preparedness for the Museum is based upon the avoidance of loss of resources resulting from an emergency. (Emergency preparedness for accidents, fires, weather emergencies etc.)
- The emergency preparedness procedures address measures before, during, and after an emergency.

15. Storeroom

- Due to the limited space in the museum, some items are stored in the storeroom and not in the display section of the museum. Storerooms must be clean dust-free and insect-free all the time.
- All items inside the box must correspond with the Inventory.