



## National Leadership Grants - Museums

Sample Application MG-252895-OMS-23

### School for Advanced Research (Indian Arts Research Center)

Amount awarded by IMLS:	\$175,587
Amount of cost share:	\$178,788

The School for Advanced Research will create an Indigenous collections care guide to support the museum field with an accessible reference tool for professionals who interact regularly with Native American collections. The guide will provide museums with a framework to recenter collections stewardship practices around the needs and knowledge of Indigenous community members. Production of the guide will be led by a diverse group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous professionals in collaboration with a working group, who will facilitate organizing the information shared by the community experts and framing it in a way that is accessible, usable, and relevant to museum and academic professionals. At the conclusion of the project, 175 tribal community representatives and museum professionals will have had a voice in the development of the guide which will be freely available for tribal community representatives and museums of all sizes. The completion of the guide will be marked with a free virtual four-part speaker series, hosted by Gilcrease Museum's Helmerich Center for American Research. The guide itself will live on the School for Advanced Research website and be freely available as text or to download.

Attached are the following components excerpted from the original application.

- Narrative
- Schedule of Completion
- Performance Measurement Plan

When preparing an application for the next deadline, be sure to follow the instructions in the current Notice of Funding Opportunity for the grant program and project category to which you are applying.

## Narrative

The School for Advanced Research (SAR) is seeking a National Leadership Grant for Museums for the creation of an Indigenous Collections Care Guide to support museums with an accessible reference tool for professionals who interact regularly with Native American collections. SAR's research collection, stewarded by its museum, the Indian Arts Research Center (IARC), is a leader in the field of Native American community collaboration. The IARC is known for its impact in the museum field through its publication *Guidelines for Collaboration* (SAR Press, 2017) and in overseeing the drafting of *Core Standards for Museums with Native American Collections* (CSMNAC), a guide in the final stages of development. The *Indigenous Collections Care (ICC) Guide* will complement the *Guidelines for Collaboration* and CSMNAC's advocacy for change by offering recommendations to museums that care for Indigenous collections. The ICC Guide will be the first of its kind and will benefit museums in need of direction for the practice of Indigenization, especially through collections care.

The total budget for this project is \$354,374.20, to be utilized over a three-year project beginning September 1, 2023. The project aligns with the IMLS Program Goal 3: Advance the museum field's ability to identify new solutions that address high priority and widespread collections care or conservation issues. It meets Objectives 3.1 through development and dissemination of new tools that facilitate management, preservation, and use of museum collections, and Objective 3.2 in that it supports the development and implementation of training and professional development resources to improve the stewardship of collections.

The ICC project furthers SAR's recently updated Strategic Plan (2021-2025), which lays out institutional goals for expanding and integrating programs that build public awareness of and engagement with SAR. Through this project, the IARC will continue to expand SAR's impact as a leader in museum management of Native arts and further its engagement in the field by developing and providing resources for best practice.

## Project Justification

The museum field has expressed a need for this resource. In a recent survey conducted by the Indigenous Collections Care (ICC) Working Group, 84 percent<sup>1</sup> of professionals from fields such as art, history, archaeology, and historic preservation stated that an ICC Guide would be highly beneficial to their institution or organization. For decades, museums and academic institutions have been the accepted authority on Indigenous material culture, and there is an expressed desire within the field for that to change. When repatriation is underway, the ICC Guide can offer considerations for bridging care before transfer occurs, or it can be utilized for the conscientious management of collections in which physical transfer or repatriation are not sought. The ICC Guide will not instruct museums on how to specifically care for each item, since protocols vary among communities, but will offer scalable considerations of culturally appropriate collections stewardship, with questions and talking points to address during consultation, and with templates and case studies for use in implementation, advocacy, and the creation of policies and procedures.

Kelly McHugh, Head of Conservation at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI), notes in support of this project: "NMAI was founded on the principles of combining Indigenous ways of knowing with museological practices in the care and stewardship of collections. Over the last 30 years the collections-based departments at the museum have worked hard to realize this caretaking responsibility. There was no guide when we started this work and know that had there been a resource for us to consult – we would have

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<sup>1</sup> This number is the total of survey participants who selected "Yes" or "Most of the time" to Question 7, "Will a completed Indigenous Collections Care Guide benefit your institution?". See the ICC Field Survey Results and Analysis for details.

felt much more confident in our stewardship approach and implementation. The need for a coordinated effort to create a guide that prioritizes Indigenous knowledge has been long standing. It will not only benefit the day-to-day work at NMAI but will serve our constituency in that a coordinated practice on the part of all institutions will ensure that the practice of caring for Indigenous collections is reflective of Indigenous principles, values, and relationships.” (See letters of support in Supporting Document 2.)

Collections stewardship and cataloging practices are often presumed to be neutral, or even privileged, and imbued with an authority that leaves behind the associated community. Changing this approach within the broader field is a priority. Over 60 percent of individuals responding to the ICC 2022 survey currently follow at least some cultural care protocols, though most of these practices are not institutionalized and are followed on an individual staff basis. Of the 332 respondents, fewer than 10 percent were aware of resources or tools addressing care for Native American material culture. Most of the resources people were aware of are from Canada and Australia or are adjacent to what the ICC Guide will address. Two of the key resources cited in survey responses were the SAR’s *Guidelines for Collaboration* and the *Core Standards for Excellence for Museums and Native American Collections* (CSMNAC). Others include: the *Protocols for Native American Archival Materials* ([www.2.nau.edu/libnap-p/](http://www.2.nau.edu/libnap-p/)), *Canadian Museums Association Move to Action Report: Activating UNDRIP in Canadian Museums*, *Local Contexts*, and individual institutional documents such as the Autry’s *Where Repatriation Meets Protocols*. These resources address related components including collaboration, archival collections, repatriation, and the importance of reframing the field, but none offer practical guidance and considerations specifically related to the care, use, and access of Native American material culture and associated documentation. The ICC group’s intent is to provide the needed third volume of the IARC’s Native collections care management guidelines.

Jennifer Shannon’s article, *Collections Care Informed by Native American Perspectives* highlights the importance of teaching the next generation of students and museum emerging professionals on this avenue of collections care. She notes, “Changing how we manage collections and for whom is helping us to reimagine the museum--- its purpose and its future.”<sup>2</sup> In a significant shift over the past three decades, museum professionals have been collaborating with tribal communities by incorporating their voices into the daily tasks of exhibition design, educational programming, and collections stewardship. Scholars within the museum and anthropology fields have been questioning the ways in which museums interact with, care for, and categorize Native American cultural material on a collection’s stewardship platform. Amy Lonetree’s 2012 ground-breaking book, *Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums* explores how museums can honor and depict Native American history through collaboration. While her work focuses on the exhibition of Native American culture, Lonetree has ignited a long-overdue conversation around privileging Native voices in museums.

As valuable as Lonetree’s work is, museums are more than their exhibitions. They are repositories for material culture and cultural heritage. It is therefore an essential function of a museum to track, identify, and care for these items and their associated documentation. Hannah Turner’s 2020 book, *Cataloging Culture: Legacies of Colonialism in Museum Documentation*, makes the compelling case that museum catalog records have turned Native American culture into data. By transitioning cultural knowledge into categories and standardized nomenclature, the creation of a catalog record is an act of transformation and removal. This structure is built on the foundations of colonization that show the public a version of history that is often disconnected from descendant communities and Indigenous knowledge.

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<sup>2</sup> Jennifer Shannon, “Collections Care Informed by Native American Perspectives: Teaching the Next Generation,” *Collections: A Journal for Museum and Archives Professionals* 13, no. 3-4 (2017): p. 207, <https://doi.org/10.1177/155019061701303-402>.

Collections stewardship and cataloging are the invisible infrastructure upon which the rest of museum practices are built. The ICC Guide will provide museums a framework to recenter collections stewardship practices around the needs and knowledge of Indigenous community members. Sheryl Ogden's 2004 edited volume, *Caring for American Indian Objects: A Practical and Cultural Guide*, provides some initial steps and ways of thinking, but it does not address the totality of collaborative Indigenous collections stewardship practices. The ICC Guide covers all possible components of collections management, including risk management and documentation. (See table of contents in Supporting Document 5).

Museums and academic institutions often focus their cultural efforts on items subject to compliance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) (25 U.S.C. § 3001-3013). Up until recently, this has not included the adherence or accommodation of any cultural care protocols. The proposed regulations for NAGPRA released on October 18, 2022 include a new clause that addresses the Duty of Care that museums have to all ancestral remains, funerary belongings, and cultural items in their possession or control. Added by request of tribal nations, the Duty of Care states that museums "must, to the maximum extent possible . . . incorporate and accommodate customs, traditions, and Native American traditional knowledge in practices or treatments of human remains or cultural items." ((43 CFR § 10.1.d.2)). At this point, there is no resource for museums to provide guidance on how to incorporate the Duty of Care rule into their collections stewardship practices. The ICC Guide will give museums talking points and considerations to respectfully address these needs in consultation with communities.

Many items outside the institutional scope of NAGPRA work also have special protocols or care needs.<sup>3</sup> Though return to their descendant communities should be sought whenever possible, this may not always be the community's preference. The ICC Guide will address how museums and communities can discuss the appropriate care of these items as well as advocate that the Duty of Care rule conveys can and should be applied to all Indigenous collections whenever possible.

Based on survey data the majority of small and medium-sized museums expressed an interest in and in some cases have begun incorporating Indigenous care protocols into their collections stewardship, but most have not formalized the process. (See survey results in Supporting Document 4.) The practices that do exist are informal or facilitated by engaged individual staff members. These institutions tend to have access to fewer resources and smaller staffs, sometimes with less professional training or opportunities for professional development. While they may have access to scholarly sources or understand the importance of addressing cultural care needs, this work can feel overwhelming and intimidating. A guide with practical language and templates will be an ideal resource for these individuals as they find their way to this practice. A document that clearly articulates how Indigenous voices can be privileged in multiple areas of collections care can demystify the process and provide concrete steps forward. The ICC Guide can profoundly benefit these institutions and organizations.

The Indigenous Collections Care (ICC) Working Group was formed through mutual interest at a NAGPRA Community of Practice event. Marla Taylor, Curator of Collections at The Robert S. Peabody Institute of Archaeology, in Andover, Massachusetts, and Laura Bryant, Anthropology Collections Manager and NAGPRA Coordinator at the Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art (known as Gilcrease Museum) in Tulsa, Oklahoma, are the co-facilitators of the ICC Working Group, along with Laura Elliff Cruz of SAR. Together, they identified a gap in the field of Native collections stewardship and presented on the topic at a Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) Community of Practice meeting. The reception from the Community of Practice group was strongly positive and prompted the facilitators to recruit members for a working group related to Indigenous collections care. The group began meeting in early 2021, and since then, a

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<sup>3</sup> Ryan Wheeler, Jaime Arsenault, and Marla Taylor, "Beyond NAGPRA/NOT NAGPRA," *Collections: A Journal for Museum and Archives Professionals* 18, no. 1 (2022): pp. 8-17, <https://doi.org/10.1177/15501906211072916>.

core group of approximately 15 people actively participate in monthly meetings to discuss the creation and structure of the ICC Guide. The first group conversations focused on community building and establishing the goals and objectives for future conversations. The group established five core values (see Supporting Document 5) that set the stage for everything to be included throughout the rest of the ICC Guide, with each section offering readers talking points and considerations on how to apply those values to specific components of collections stewardship.

The group was intentionally created to have balanced representation from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous museum professionals and academics, tribal historic preservation officers, collections staff, and NAGPRA coordinators. While membership has fluctuated slightly, the ICC group has made an effort to ensure that approximately half of the active membership is Indigenous and represents the diversity of regions across the United States. The members represent a subset of the target audience or group that will use the ICC Guide and include museum and collecting institution staff and administrators, tribal representatives working with institutions, and professors and students in departments related to museums, history, and anthropology.

Though the working group will continue to be essential in the development and organization of the ICC Guide, the content must be further developed and closely reviewed by Native American community representatives from both federally and non-federally recognized tribes from throughout the various regions of the United States. These community representatives are the people who regularly work with institutions and collections, and they intimately know the needs and protocols of their cultural heritage. Expressing the range of voices and views throughout Native American communities is essential. The importance of this has been expressed repeatedly by members of the working group and by audiences at previous professional presentations, including conferences.

The project team and working group see themselves as facilitators organizing the information shared by the community experts and framing it in a way that is accessible, useable, and relevant to museum staff to implement and use for advocacy. To ensure this, in addition to incorporating Native American community representatives' voices, museum professionals at various levels and experiences will participate in review sessions to evaluate the language, organization, and usability of the ICC Guide.

Improving cultural care also directly benefits the museum-going public. Visitors gain greater cultural competency by interacting with narratives influenced by communities. Truly collaborative exhibitions and programming goals can feel out of reach for smaller institutions or historical societies. However, integrating practical collaborative collections stewardship approaches – whether items are awaiting repatriation, housed as part of a care agreement, or an unprocessed portion of a larger collection – is a tangible step forward for many museums. Privileging community perspectives and protocols to collections care will trickle through to exhibitions and programming. It can even contribute to community and cultural healing.

SAR has long played a key role in developing strategies for engagement between source communities and museums in the care of Native arts collections and the development of relevant programming. In addition to the SAR publications cited, the IARC's nationally traveling exhibition *Grounded in Clay: The Spirit of Pueblo Pottery* (see attached brochure in Supporting Document 8) demonstrates a fundamental shift in the way museum exhibitions are developed by giving priority to community voices, values, and needs. Curated by 60 members of the 21 Pueblo tribes in the Southwest, the project aligns with the tenets of SAR's *Guidelines for Collaboration*. While general consultation with a few community members to produce an exhibition is becoming more common across the nation, it is still rare and highly unusual to directly use the voices of the community as a group curatorial expression. In this era of social change where the ways in which underrepresented communities, especially Native voices, have been muted are becoming more apparent, it is increasingly essential to demonstrate and enhance the ways in which multiple and complex community voices can speak without

paternalistic oversight in museum settings. This foundational approach, more frequently seen at the curation and exhibition levels, is not as common in the collection's stewardship realm and will serve as a model for this project and for future collaborative collections care initiatives across the museum field.

## **Project Work Plan**

At the time of the grant award announcements, an initial draft of the table of contents and short section descriptions (see Supporting Document 5 for the content list draft and select examples) will be complete and ready to share in content review sessions, as described below. An active and diverse group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous professionals within the fields touched by the stewardship of Indigenous collections has been meeting monthly since the beginning of 2021. The ICC Working Group has worked to align diverse intergroup perspectives into a united message and develop the outline of the ICC Guide. Through robust conversation, the ICC group carefully constructed language for each section to re-frame established collections stewardship practices through an Indigenous care lens. The ICC group felt strongly that these topics are essential conversation points with tribal communities and agreed that a unified voice would yield the strongest conversations. These section descriptive summaries will be the starting point for review and development in the content review sessions.

To conduct a thorough and appropriate review of the ICC Guide, it is imperative that key stakeholders are fully integrated in the process, especially representatives from Native American communities. These representatives regularly work with institutions and collections and know the needs and protocols of their cultural heritage. As reflected in the budget, the grant will allow us to compensate them for their time and expertise.

### 1: Preparation

At the beginning of the grant schedule, the ICC project team will begin working closely with Laureen Trainer at Trainer Evaluation to develop the process evaluation and surveys surrounding the focus group sessions. The evaluation plan will be intricately woven into the project and all the findings will be submitted, reviewed, and implemented before the next component of the project. In this way, the evaluation portion of the project will proceed in the same spirit as the initial ICC Working Group, where the voices, values, needs, and opinions of the stakeholder communities are integral to the buy-in and relevance of the ICC Guide.

A process evaluation will create a feedback loop between the participants and project team, where the experience of the participants from one focus group will shape and inform the design of the subsequent focus group. In this way, any successes, challenges, and ideas will emerge early in the process and will immediately be incorporated into ongoing planning and programming. Rather than the data coming at the end of the project, the data will inform the process along the way, allowing planners to change course and/or make continual, small adjustments to achieve project goals. The ICC Guide emphasizes the need for flexibility and conversation to best serve the communities and care for Indigenous collections. The evaluation component will be built to support that flexibility and allow the ICC team to constantly improve and build upon the content and structure of the project.

Ten honoraria are budgeted for the ICC members' time, while others will continue to volunteer who cannot accept an honorarium. The ICC group will continue to have monthly meetings, and participation of nine meetings per year or twenty-seven total for the three-year project for ICC member honoraria are budgeted (please see budget justification for further details). ICC members will also work closely with the project team to help prepare by sending invitations for the virtual focus group sessions and the facilitation of the breakout groups, as described below. They will help develop the schedule and gather contact information for the 125 invited participants. ICC Working Group members will help build the regional invitation lists based on existing

relationships, networks, and expressed interest in the recent ICC survey or past correspondence. Existing relationships offer a foundation of trust that will make these sessions more productive and help counter hesitations about involvement in or the purpose of the project. The project team will create invitations detailing the project and expectations and prepare information to share with identified participants, including information summarizing the project and a draft of the content outline and topic descriptions.

### Phase 2: Content Review Sessions with Native American Community Representatives

The Indigenous Collections Care project will host five virtual content review focus group sessions with tribal community representatives. All participants in these sessions will be paid an honorarium for their time and expertise. Four of the sessions will each target twenty-five (25) representatives from federally recognized Native American communities. A combination of regions, such as the Southwest, the Northwest Coast, Alaska and Hawaii, Northwest, Northeast, or the Plains, will be targeted for the four sessions. The fifth session will target twenty-five (25) representatives from non-federally recognized tribes from throughout the United States.

This approach will enable widespread input from approximately 125 diverse representatives on the development and review of the content topics and framing of the core content of the ICC Guide. Communities from different regions often have different perspectives and approaches, so capturing the breadth of diverse considerations is imperative to making the ICC Guide useful to all. This diversity and broad reach also contribute to community buy-in and trust, which are essential to the successful implementation and applicability of the ICC Guide. Community representatives may include tribal historic preservation officers, cultural or language department staff, tribal museum staff, and elders.

The five content review sessions will be scheduled for every 2-3 months to give Trainer Evaluation and the ICC team time to process feedback and content from the sessions and evaluations as well as prepare for invitations for the next session. The narratives provided in the sessions will highlight the questions and talking points that communities want to be asked and considered regarding the care, use, and access of their cultural material and associated documentation. Each participant will be asked to contribute written comments, suggestions, and language to all sections of the guide before and/or after each session. These sessions are also an opportunity for participants to share case studies or any helpful supplementary resources that could be included in the appendices of the ICC Guide.

During the sessions, participants will be arbitrarily divided into breakout groups by the project team. Each group will utilize a facilitator and note-taker from the working group membership or associated colleagues to maximize discussion. The participants within each breakout group will engage with up to three sections of the ICC Guide for just over two hours, with breaks interwoven as needed.

A survey following each session will give participants an opportunity to reflect on their experience, the facilitation techniques, the discussion, the content covered, the degree to which they felt their voice was heard, and any additional thoughts about the ICC Guide. Additionally, facilitators will be asked to identify participants they think would be candidates to take part in an interview with the evaluator. Surveys will provide a breadth of information about the focus group, while interviews will provide depth and allow the facilitation team to understand the “how” and the “why” behind statements and experiences.

ICC project leads will meet monthly to review the data, identify trends, and pull out important quotes, sentiments, and perceptions. Working with this information, the facilitation team will regroup and make any necessary changes to upcoming focus group formats. This will continue throughout the entire review process. The ICC Working Group will continue to meet on its own monthly to discuss the sessions and adjust the ICC Guide's content.

### Phase 3: Museum Review Sessions

Once completed, the ICC Guide draft will be presented to fifty (50) museum professionals, strategically selected by the ICC group for their diverse roles within organizations of various sizes and locations. These could include administrators, collections staff, volunteers, database administrators, and museum studies students. These individuals are a prime audience for the ICC Guide and their responses will round out the contributions to the work as well as develop a set of advocates within the professional community.

These two museum review sessions, each with twenty-five (25) participants, will focus on the accessibility and usability of the ICC Guide. They will be structured similarly to the content review sessions by dividing into breakout groups to cover all sections and topics within the guide with a facilitator and notetaker. A key outcome sought from sessions is to determine any perceived obstacles to using the ICC Guide and the reasons for any reluctance to change or rethink collections stewardship. It will be important to learn what support, education, and resources could help change museum perspectives and practice in culturally appropriate collections stewardship. Trainer Evaluation will send surveys to participants following each session.

Additionally, a survey asking for feedback about the ICC Guide will be sent broadly to tribal and museum representatives who did not participate in the focus groups. This survey will have two tracks: one for tribal community representatives and one for museum and academic professionals. The component of the survey targeting tribal community representatives will focus on the content of the ICC Guide and ask what is missing, for any examples or case studies, and for the level of trust in the guide as a whole—will this be a document they want to see museums using? The museum and academic professionals will be asked about the accessibility and usability of the ICC Guide and the roots of any hesitancy to engaging in this practice. This approach will facilitate broader investment in the ICC Guide while also building anticipation for the end product. This survey will be distributed through listservs, networks, and social media.

### Phase 4: Host In-Person Seminar at SAR (Final Vetting Session)

Following the virtual sessions and the incorporation of received content and feedback, ten key participants will meet at the IARC for an intensive two-day in-person working meeting with the ICC project lead team. The in-person meeting will discuss the core content shared and received during the focus group sessions and surveys as well as incorporate the content and feedback into a comprehensive draft of the ICC Guide. This will also be an opportunity to refine language, organization, and accessibility and to discuss the structure and content of the Appendix, including what templates, examples, and case studies to incorporate.

In-person seminars hosted at SAR have proven to be groundbreaking in that they are a uniquely productive approach at a critical stage in a project for fostering advances in the humanity field through creative practice and scholarly research in Native American arts and related disciplines.

### Phase 5: Final Review

The ICC Working Group will work throughout the project to edit and complete a final draft of the ICC Guide based on feedback from the content review sessions. This draft will be sent to the community representatives who were part of the content review sessions, who will have the opportunity to offer comments and input on a survey about the final draft before the guide is considered complete. This review is separate from the content review sessions, and participants will be provided a separate honorarium for their time responding to the final draft. Based on the previous experience of SAR staff when creating the *Guidelines for Collaboration* and in the vetting of the *Core Standards of Excellence for Museums with Native American Collections*, it is anticipated that approximately fifty (50) stakeholders will participate in this final review. This will be an opportunity for tribal



participants to respond to any reluctance or obstacles shared by museum participants, which will help in the planning for the speaker series to occur at the completion of the Guide and in the eventual development of educational resources. Once all final comments have been received, the project team and ICC Working Group will make final edits. Upon completion, SAR will work with contractors and staff to copy edit, format, design, and produce the ICC Guide in print and digital forms.

#### Phase 6: Dissemination

The Indigenous Collections Care Guide will only deeply affect the museum field if it is widely and openly shared. The ICC project leads and working group members will build communication, anticipation, and outreach throughout the development of the guide. Throughout the project, the project leads will provide updates to the NAGPRA Community of Practice group during some of their monthly meetings. Participants in these regular meetings represent some of the key audiences for the ICC Guide and have already served as a beneficial stage to spreading the word about the importance of Indigenous collections care and in providing feedback on the project in the past.

The ICC Working Group members will also submit proposals to present the ICC Guide at various professional conferences and provide updates and information throughout the creation process, continuing to spread the word about the work to keep people engaged and to build anticipation for the resultant product. These conference sessions will be funded outside the grant and accepted at the discretion of the professional organizations.

SAR will continue to update the ICC's webpage regularly with changes in status, plans, and overall content, and the project team will share updates on social media, using the existing profiles of institutions and organizations actively participating in the project, including SAR, the Gilcrease Museum, the NAGPRA Community of Practice, the Robert S. Peabody Institution of Archaeology, and other organizations that show interest in the project, including the Association for Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums (ATALM) and the Association of American Indian Affairs (AAIA). In addition to the social media platforms, the ICC Guide will be disseminated through a variety of museum listservs, museum graduate programs, and blog posts through their institutions. Furthermore, proposals for articles will be submitted through journals such as *Museum Anthropology* and *Collections: A Journal for Museum and Archives Professionals* about the project.

The completion of the ICC Guide's content and creation in the spring of 2026 will be marked with a four-part speaker series, hosted by Gilcrease Museum's Helmerich Center for American Research (HCAR) in partnership with SAR. The series will be hosted virtually and be free to attend to increase the reach and accessibility of those with limited budgets and time. Each panel will focus on different topics discussed within the ICC Guide, and chosen speakers will be provided with an honorarium, and will include some involved in its development and review.

The resources needed for the project include staff time for coordinating the working sessions and overseeing the creation of the ICC Guide, honoraria for external review group members, contracted work for project evaluation and the design and publication of the guide, advertising costs for dissemination of the guide, and travel expenses for the in-person review session. The project does not require IRB approval.

Risks to the successful completion of the project include a potential inability to recruit enough tribal community participants for the review sessions. To mitigate, the ICC project team will plan on recruiting from a combination of tribal regions described in Phase 2. In addition, the project team will be mindful of tribal ceremonial calendars and to reaching more broadly into tribal authorities for representatives and following up on initial communications. Alternatively, the final survey and post content review sessions to tribal participants may

exceed the fifty (50) respondents currently allocated in the budget. Only the first fifty participants that respond within the required timeframe allocated for edits will be compensated for their time. If we receive more than fifty responses, we still welcome feedback if participants choose to volunteer their time. For the in-person final vetting session at SAR, if more than ten people indicate interest, the group will be selected to reflect diversity in region, perspective, and roles in the community.

Another potential risk to the project would be that the creation of the ICC Guide receives significant pushback from a select few Indigenous community voices. The ICC project team has already encountered constructive feedback regarding the ICC Guide from community members when presenting on the project at the Association on American Indian Affairs (AAIA) Annual Repatriation Conference in October of 2022. Those individuals felt that repatriation should be the primary goal for museum collections and that the guide could be another tool for museums to resist repatriation, which was never the intention. As noted earlier, the ICC Guide will help facilitate the talking points and considerations of culturally appropriate care before repatriation. Language in the ICC Guide was clarified in response to their concerns to re-emphasize that repatriation is ideal if, and when, it is possible and appropriate, which varies by each tribal community. In personal conversations, project leads were able to address concerns directly and build rapport, making the project stronger. Interviews facilitated by Laureen Trainer after each focus group session will also provide an avenue to explore any issues that arise before the next structured content review session. Additionally, the widespread involvement of community representatives in the development and review of the ICC Guide, as well as their membership in the ICC Working Group, will help establish trust.

## **Project Results**

The project results will include a website dedicated to the ICC Guide and highlighting the contribution of those involved. The website will also include templates, case studies, and other resources. The ICC Guide will be available on the website both as webpage text and a PDF for people to download for free. Four hundred (400) copies of the ICC Guide will be printed, and the ICC Working Group will distribute them at professional conferences, to interested participants in the content review sessions, and through other in-person opportunities. Hard copies will also be mailed and distributed to tribal communities who may not have easy access to technology or the Internet.

The Indigenous Collections Care Guide will continue to live and grow within SAR and with the involvement of at least some of the original team. SAR will maintain the ICC webpage and the content of the ICC Guide and its appendices in perpetuity. The ICC team plans to revisit the content and language approximately every five years, or more frequently if necessary, and will continue to grow the appendices with new or updated examples, templates, and case studies. As people learn about and begin to incorporate this practice into their daily care practices, they will be able to share their outcomes and stories on the ICC webpage.

The ICC Guide also sets the stage for a larger, international conversation about Indigenous material in collections. This was mentioned several times in the Additional Comments field of the ICC survey from professionals working with material from Mesoamerica. Translating this Guide to Spanish and adding language and wider international community involvement to make its use relevant to other Indigenous cultures outside the United States will be excellent growth and expansion opportunities for the future.

The ICC Working Group has discussed at length the need for training and teaching resources, including curriculum, seminars, and workshops. Current resources include the UCLA/Getty Program in Conservation of Cultural Heritage NEH funded project *“Preservation of Indigenous Collections: Training for Tribal Materials and Museums.”* This project supports “Native Americans working with tribal materials at museums and cultural

centers across the country.”<sup>4</sup> The Beloit College Center for Collections Care is also seeking NEH funding for “Capacity and Community Building Through Preservation and Access Training.” Focused on developing content for emerging museum professionals, this proposal seeks, in part, to create an online course focused on culturally appropriate care. These projects will provide vehicles for sharing the need for prioritizing Indigenous collections stewardship and basic steps forward. The ICC team intends to create a tool that can be shared with these students and professionals. While specific projects like these may address some components of care addressed in the ICC Guide, there are many other topics and opportunities to share. The ICC team hopes to build upon these and the development of the ICC Guide to incorporate these new standards of care for Indigenous collections into the teaching and training of the upcoming generation of museum professionals.

The ICC Guide is meant for museum and collecting institution staff and administrators, tribal communities and representatives working with institutions, archaeologists, and professors and students in departments related to museums, history, and anthropology. As seen in the ICC survey results, approximately 84% of people from a wide range of organizations representing the target audience have said the ICC Guide would be beneficial most if not all the time to their institution or organization.

In summary, this project supports the museum field’s goal of priorities for identifying new widespread collections care solutions. Responsible care and stewardship of collections is the heart of every museum. At the conclusion of the proposed project period, 175 tribal community representatives and museum professionals will have a collaborative voice in this project and a free guide will be available to museums of all sizes and for tribal community representatives. Trust, respect, and relationship-building are the foundations to collaboration and to completion of this important Indigenous Collections Care Guide. This approach trickles down to every department across the museum and benefits the visiting public and museums for the future.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://ioa.ucla.edu/content/neh-awards-conservation-program-310000-training-preservation-indigenous-collections>







**Applicant Name:** School for Advanced Research  
**Project Title:** Indigenous Collections Care Guide

<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Data We Will Collect</b> (e.g., counts, costs, weights, volumes, temperatures, percentages, hours, observations, opinions, feelings)	<b>Source of Our Data</b> (e.g., members of the target group, project staff, stakeholders, internal/external documents, recording devices, databases)	<b>Method We Will Use</b> (e.g., survey, questionnaire, interview, focus group, informal discussion, observation, assessment, document analysis)	<b>Schedule</b> (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually, beginning/end)
<b>Effectiveness:</b> The extent to which activities contribute to achieving the intended results	<p><b>Example:</b> At the end of each month, using a report prepared by the registrar, we will compare the cumulative count of rehoused objects against the total number proposed for the project.</p> <p><b>Example:</b> At the end of each project year, our external consultant will present results of the ongoing observation-based evaluation and compare them against our intended project results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The facilitators will interview selected tribal participants from focus group sessions and use this data for formative evaluation after each tribal focus group.</li> <li>-All participants from each focus group session will be surveyed, with the data used for formative evaluation after each focus group from those who participated; the surveys will be developed that target specific groups, i.e., one survey for tribal representatives and one for museum representatives.</li> <li>- A survey will also be sent to those who could not participate in the focus group sessions.</li> <li>-Survey Data will be used throughout the project to evaluate effectiveness, and at the end as a final review of the project.</li> </ul>			
<b>Efficiency:</b> How well resources (e.g., funds, expertise, time) are used and costs are minimized while generating maximum value for the target group	<p><b>Example:</b> Twice per year, we will assess our expenditures for program supplies on a per-person-served basis.</p> <p><b>Example:</b> Each quarter, we will calculate the dollar value of volunteer hours contributed to the project as recorded in our online volunteer management system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Facilitators will identify which tribal representatives should be contacted for a follow-up interview based on questions, discussions, topics raised during the focus group session.</li> <li>-Key project staff will track expenditure progress on a quarterly basis through accounting reports and Excel spreadsheets.</li> <li>-On a quarterly basis, the project team will review hours recorded that have incurred for the proposed project activities to ensure the project is on schedule and adjust as needed.</li> </ul>			

<p><b>Quality:</b> How well the activities meet the requirements and expectations of the target group</p>	<p><i><b>Example:</b> At the beginning, the mid-point, and end of the project, we will administer a satisfaction survey to staff who have participated in the training.</i></p> <p><i><b>Example:</b> We will gather opinions about our online services through questionnaires provided to every 20<sup>th</sup> user.</i></p> <p>-The evaluator and project team will work closely together to ensure that interview and survey questions are relevant and culturally sensitive. After each round of data, the project team will review the instruments to make sure they are achieving the results the project team needs to move forward, with changes made as necessary.</p> <p>-The project team will, through ongoing email communications or meetings, as necessary, review and evaluate feedback from the review sessions, and that the overall goals of the project are being met, with adjustments in scheduling and format made as necessary.</p>
<p><b>Timeliness:</b> The extent to which each task/activity is completed within the proposed timeframe</p>	<p><i><b>Example:</b> Every six months, our Project Director will assess the fit between our proposed Schedule of Completion and actual activity completion dates.</i></p> <p><i><b>Example:</b> Each quarter, each project partner will submit to our Project Director a templated report showing their progress on meeting project milestones.</i></p> <p>-The project team will meet quarterly and continuously at the conclusion of each phase of the project to assess the schedule of completion and adjust any activities if there are any delays or if the project activities are ahead of schedule.</p> <p>-Interviews of tribal representatives will occur within one week of the focus group when possible to ensure that the information is still at top of mind, and that planners have the information they need to facilitate the following focus group.</p> <p>-Surveys will be sent out at the conclusion of each focus group and remain open for 5 days, allowing time to gather, analyze and share data that can be used by the facilitators for the following focus group.</p> <p>-Surveys sent to those who could not participate will happen at the end of the focus group phase, allowing the evaluator and facilitators to focus on the time-sensitive nature of the focus group phase.</p> <p>-The final review survey will be sent out when the final draft is complete.</p>