

Call for Papers: Online Workshop

“Archaeological University Collections: Past Lessons and Future Goals”

Mon, 27th & Tues, 28th November 2023

Deadline for abstracts: 25th May 2023

Established as ‘study collections’, archaeological university collections combine academic teaching, research, and public outreach. Such collections often have a fascinating history of their own, as some collections were systematically formed to serve teaching and research, and sometimes even addressing the broader public, while others emerged as a side product of the teaching activities, without a clear museological programme.

As the historical development of the collections, also their modern utilisation and methods of engagement differ drastically. Especially for academic disciplines like archaeology and art history, study collections are crucial for the understanding of the respective field: instead of limiting to books and photographs, i. e. two-dimensional representations of study objects, the study collections offer a chance to investigate material objects practically, as well as different methodologies, with real materials. Traditional education like the observation or drawing of works of art has been enhanced by digital documentation methods, providing also an opportunity for interdisciplinary cooperation.

Simultaneously, the collections are not immune to the demands regarding research, public outreach, access and transparency. In some universities, a central administrative “University Museum” has been established which offers the opportunity to develop collections and work on a long-term basis, helping to raise interest, investment, and acknowledgement. In many cases, however, collections are forced to work independently, and somehow isolated, therefore being limited financially. Especially the so-called “small disciplines”, such as archaeology, mostly operate on a minimum financial support and human resources, and have to constantly justify their existence and funding both politically and socially.

A better visibility from outside and intensive research showing the value of archaeological and art historical university collections is one survival strategy which needs ideas and engagement. We are therefore looking for papers presenting projects from and with university collections in the fields of **teaching, research and public outreach**. With the workshop, we aim to stimulate open discussions about the current and future role of archaeological university collections and to create a room to **share ideas and experiences** that can be imported, helping to strengthen individual collections and contributing to the common goal of raising awareness for their importance.

The topics of the papers may include, but are not limited, to:

- teaching and students' engagement in university collections
- public outreach projects
- innovative research projects

The workshop will focus on projects dealing with archaeological and art historical collections, but is also open to papers presented from other kind of university collections. Collection professionals, as well as early career researchers and students involved in collection projects, are welcome to contribute to the workshop.

The workshop is part of a cooperation project between the Collection of Classical Antiquities at Heidelberg University and the Helsinki University Museum. The project is funded by the Heidelberg University Mobility Funding "Mobility in international research collaborations" and consists of a knowledge transfer and exchange of experiences, but also seeks to discuss the potential role of university collections in the 21st century.

Abstracts of max. 300 words can be sent to Polly.Lohmann@uni-heidelberg.de.

You will be informed about the outcome in early June 2023. Speakers will have 20 mins for their presentations + 20 minutes questions and discussion.

On behalf of the organising committee:

Polly Lohmann (University of Heidelberg)

Anna-Maria Wilskman (University of Helsinki)

