Minimum Requirements for Preservation and Access of Recent Heritage of Science (RHS)

These *Minimum Requirements* are the result of discussions and contributions made at the **UNIVERSEUM Working Group of Recent Heritage of Science**, both in workshops and online. They aim at providing basic guidelines for the preservation and access of dispersed RHS of historical, scientific and cultural significance. They are aimed at university departments, laboratories and research institutes, particularly those who lack trained professionals in heritage and collections.

RHS is complex and diverse. It may be a collection in the traditional sense of the term, but it may also be a group of multiple large-size components or modules of scientific instruments and apparatus, or even an entire lab. Careful examination must be done at selection stage so that the integrity of the RHS and its associated documentation is preserved, *in situ* whenever possible. These *Minimum Requirements* assume that examination and selection have already been made (see *Selection Criteria*, Universeum WG, 2013).

Minimum institutional recognition & permanence:

1. Once selected and recognised as having scientific and historical value and significance, the collection/group/module/lab should be considered protected and inalienable.
2. Institutional procedures should be developed so that at least one person should always be designated as responsible for the collection/group/module/lab.
3. Whenever possible, advice on the preservation and access of the collection/group/module/lab should be sought from a museum or from museum professionals.

Minimum documentation:

4. The collection/group/module/lab should have a list of objects (on paper or computer file).
5. Parts should not be disconnected. Links between the collection/ object/group/module/lab should be maintained.
6. Information regarding manufacturer, users like researchers, technicians, provenance, and past uses (operating manuals, operating systems, publications, record or lab books, photos, etc.) should be preserved too.

Minimum storage, security & environmental conditions:

7. Whether in storage or on display, the collection/group/module/lab (and associated documentation) should be in a dedicated and secure space, with controlled-access.
8. The collection/group/module/lab should have stable, if possible monitored, environmental conditions (e.g. temperature, relative humidity, light).

Minimum access conditions

9. The collection/group/module/lab and associated documentation should be accessible for different uses, including research, teaching and display.
10. The university or department should develop procedures/policies to make the collection/group/module/lab accessible to interested scholars and students.

Minimum display conditions

11. At the university/department, objects on display should have labels (designation, function and maker).
12. Smaller objects should be displayed in secure and closed display cases.

Organised by Marta C. Lourenço
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