

FIELD MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY



The Field Museum was founded in 1893 as part of the World's Columbian Exposition on Chicago's south side. Just over a century ago in 1921, the Museum opened its new building in Grant Park in downtown Chicago. Located on the lakefront, the Field Museum typically welcomes about 1.3 million visitors annually, including more than 150,000 students. Almost half of the building's 1.3 million square feet are dedicated to exhibitions; the other half houses the Museum's encyclopedic scientific and cultural collections, research facilities and equipment, and staff offices.

While the general public experiences the Museum through our exhibits and learning programs, research and collections – what happens “behind-the-scenes” – are critical aspects of our mission: to fuel “a journey of discovery across time to enable solutions for a brighter future rich in nature and culture.”

Field Museum Collections

The Museum's collections number some 40 million cultural items and scientific specimens in the areas of botany, geology, life sciences, and social sciences.

Botany



The Museum manages the fifth largest herbarium in the Western Hemisphere, estimated to include almost 3 million specimens of angiosperms, gymnosperms, pteridophytes, bryophytes, fungi (including lichenized ascomycetes), and algae. The herbarium was established in 1894 based on acquisitions from the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition. Numerous botanical expeditions, sponsored or co-sponsored by the Field Museum, have established the herbarium as one of the world's preeminent depositories of Central and South American plants and approximately 60% of the phanerogam collections are from these areas.

© The Field Museum, B83151c, Photographer John Bayalis.

Earth Sciences

Earth Sciences at the Field Museum are focused on paleontology, systematics, evolutionary theory, meteoritics, and polar studies. Most of our paleontologists take an interdisciplinary approach in their research programs, combining fossil and living organisms together to extract information of broad evolutionary significance. Current research within the Robert A. Pritzker Center for Meteoritics and Polar Studies focuses on the presolar history of our Galaxy, on the early evolution of our Solar System, and on the flux through time of extraterrestrial matter to Earth and its influence on Earth systems. The Center also supports fieldwork and data analysis projects in Earth's polar regions. Collections include fossil vertebrates and invertebrates, paleobotany, and physical geology.



Individual Green River fossil specimens (~50 million years BP). North America, USA, Wyoming Green River. © The Field Museum, GEO86416_051d, Photographer Dov Scher.

Life Sciences



The zoological collections are among the largest and most comprehensive in the world and include amphibians and reptiles, birds, fishes, mammals, invertebrates, and insects, arachnids, and myriapods. Holdings include millions of specimens in dry storage (such as bones, feathers, shells, pinned insects), fluid-preserved specimens for anatomical research, frozen tissues for DNA studies, as well as numerous other special collections. In addition to forming the basis for research by Field Museum's zoologists, this enormous resource is utilized by scientists from around the world.

Leopard frog. *Rana pipiens*. First specimen collected by first curator of ichthyology and herpetology, Oliver Hay, 1895. © The Field Museum, Z94371_01d, Photographer John Weinstein.

Anthropology

Anthropology is all about what makes us human, our place in nature, our common concerns, and our differences. We explore these ideas through laboratory and collections-based research at the Museum and at field sites throughout the world. We build and maintain the Museum's world-class collection, which now includes more than 1.5 million objects, documenting the diversity and accomplishments of humankind. Through registration, conservation, collections management, and curation, we preserve this collection and its documentation in order to connect communities, researchers, and the public to our shared global heritage.

Jade figurine frog, Liangzhu, China. © The Field Museum, A114478_01d, Photographer Diane Alexander White.



Repatriation and NAGPRA

Repatriation is the process by which important cultural items and human remains are returned to lineal descendants or descendant communities.

For domestic repatriations, the Field Museum follows a law called NAGPRA (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act) that established a process through which museums work with Native American tribes and lineal descendants to identify and return items and human remains that fall under the law. While most repatriation claims are facilitated through NAGPRA, the Field Museum also gives full consideration to repatriation requests for the return of human remains and funerary objects from culturally affiliated descendant communities or lineal descendants for whom NAGPRA does not apply.

NAGPRA Overview

NAGPRA is a federal law that was passed in 1990. This law and its implementing regulations require that any institution that receives federal funding consult with Native American communities to identify within its collections human remains and items that may fall under NAGPRA. There are four NAGPRA categories: human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony. The institutions must continue to consult to work towards repatriation or other disposition of NAGPRA-eligible remains and objects.

The Repatriation Process

1. Official tribal representatives submit a **request for information** pertaining to their cultural group or area on formal letterhead. The Museum sends a relevant catalog inventory.
2. During **preliminary consultation**, repatriation staff provide further information concerning the collections inventory in order to help the tribe determine which items or human remains they would like more information about or to request. Tribes are encouraged to visit the Museum in person during this time. The Museum is also able to provide letters of support for NAGPRA consultation grants at the request of the tribe.
3. After the tribe has identified the items or human remains they believe fall under NAGPRA, official representatives submit a **formal request** for repatriation on letterhead. The Museum then sends a formal response acknowledging the request.
4. Staff from the repatriation program **conduct research** into the requested items or human remains in consultation with knowledge holders in the tribe. A recommendation report is then written and circulated amongst relevant Museum staff.
5. The **Repatriation Subcommittee** reviews the request packet, General Counsel's report, and recommendations. The Subcommittee will make a decision on the repatriation or disposition of the requested items and human remains.

6. If the request is approved under NAGPRA, a notice must be published in the Federal Register. This will take the form of a **Notice of Inventory Completion (NIC)** for human remains and associated funerary objects or a **Notice of Intent to Repatriate (NIR)** for unassociated funerary objects, objects of cultural patrimony, and/or sacred objects.

7. If no other groups come forward following the publication of notices, the Museum and tribe may move forward with **physical repatriation**. The Museum can provide letters of support for NAGPRA repatriation grants.

Field Museum's Board of Trustees' Repatriation Subcommittee Mission Statement

While carefully balancing numerous interests and diverse worldviews and considering current and historical ethical principles, the Committee reviews, monitors, and makes decisions on behalf of the Museum regarding requests for repatriation of any kind as deemed appropriate to resolve under existing policies and procedures. Additionally, the Committee makes recommendations to the Committee on Science and the Board of Trustees on all other matters regarding repatriation. The Committee informs and advises the Board of Trustees about its dual fiduciary obligations to preserve and interpret collections and to comply with current ethical, moral, and legal practices regarding repatriation. As part of this assignment from the Museum, the Committee acts to strengthen existing relationships and to forge new relationships with diverse peoples.

Repatriation Subcommittee Vision Statement

The Committee fosters and maintains mutually respectful and sustainable relations between native communities and the Museum. Through visits and communication with representatives of native communities, museums in general, and the public, the Committee promotes greater cultural awareness and understanding of indigenous cultures worldwide. The Committee informs and advises the Board of Trustees on the importance of its role in the repatriation process and advocates for the allocation of necessary and appropriate resources for the Committee and the Museum staff to carry out the Committee's mission.

Helpful Websites

<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nagpra/index.htm>
<https://repatriation.fieldmuseum.org/>

Field Museum Repatriation Statistics (20 years)

Federal Register Notice Totals

31	Notices of Inventory Completion
4	Corrected Notices of Inventory Completion
34	Notices of Intent to Repatriate
2	Corrected Notices of Intent to Repatriate

Repatriation Totals (Domestic + International)

893	Human Remains
555	Associated Funerary Objects
1,835	Unassociated Funerary Objects
435	Sacred Objects and/or Objects of Cultural Patrimony

Claimed Items and Remains Approved for Repatriation

100%	Human Remains
100%	Associated Funerary Objects
99.4%	Unassociated Funerary Objects
92.2%	Sacred Objects and/or Objects of Cultural Patrimony

Completed Claims

47	Domestic
6	International
53	Total (38+ groups)

Active Claims

5	Domestic
1	International
6	Total

Images of Repatriation

Documentation of the Crow collection by Crow tribal members (from left) Gordon Real Bird and Jack Real Bird, around 2004. This visit was supported by a NAGPRA consultation/documentation grant.



M. Lockhart of Hydaburg Cooperative Association signing final paperwork for the repatriation of ancestral human remains, 2010.



Sharing images and documentation of Inuit collections with traditional leaders from the Nome and Wales Eskimo Communities of Alaska in Nome, Alaska, June 2009.



Documentation of Inuit cultural items with the Nome and Wales Eskimo Communities of Alaska, 2009.



Hopi traditional leaders working with Cheryl Podsiki (conservator) on pXRF testing of ceremonial items.



Hopi traditional leaders with Cheryl Podsiki (conservator) in Stanley Field Hall before meeting with Field Museum President and Board members, around 2015.



Packing repatriated items for return with Harold Jacobs of the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, around 2004.



Tlingit clan leaders consulting about box drum, 2013.



Tlingit clan leaders from Alaska including Andy Gamble (Kaagwaantaan) and Harold Jacobs (Yanyeidi) trying on Chilkat ceremonial robe during a repatriation consultation at the Museum, 2013.



Estimated Repatriation Resources

The below figures are based on Field Museum costs (salary and fringe) over 20 years for staff who worked on repatriation efforts.

NAGPRA/Repatriation Staff

Repatriation/NAGPRA Director @ 75% time

Repatriation specialist (11 years) @ 75% time

Subtotal NAGPRA/Repatriation Staff \$2,140,223

Collections Staff

Collections Managers @ 12% time

Collections Assistants @ 5% time

Assistant Collections Managers @ 2% time

Conservators @ 1% time

Registration staff @ 1% time

Subtotal Collections Staff \$316,680

Curatorial, Institutional, and Legal Oversight

Science & Education VP @ 2% time

Curatorial staff @ 2% time

General Counsel for 45 completed claims

Subtotal Curatorial, Institutional, and Legal Oversight \$649,022

Additional Staff

Extra staff hired for Hopi repatriation

Osteologist

Subtotal Additional Staff \$66,041

Administrative Costs \$951,590

Funding from NAGPRA Grants \$727,352

MINIMUM COST FOR FM NAGPRA REPATRIATIONS \$4,850,908*

*This figure does not include additional costs such as equipment, travel, costs carried by Tribes, costs for State and Federal agencies assisting with reburials, and other unknown costs (e.g., for summary items - sacred objects, objects of cultural patrimony, and unassociated funerary objects).

Minimum Cost Estimates for NAGPRA Repatriations

Minimum cost for Field Museum NAGPRA repatriations	\$4,850,908
Number of items repatriated over the past 20 years by the Field Museum	\div <u>3,490</u>
Estimated minimum cost per repatriated item	\$1,390
Number of culturally unidentifiable human remains (CUIs) and associated funerary object (AFOs) in the National Park Service database	846,092
	\times <u>\$1,390</u>
Estimated minimum cost to repatriate currently listed CUIs and AFOs in database	\$1,176,067,880
Estimated minimum annual cost to repatriate currently listed CUIs and AFOs over 10 years	<u>\$117,606,788</u>