

**Mission Statement of  
the Archives of  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art**

**Mission**

The mission of the Archives is to collect, organize, and preserve in perpetuity the corporate records and official correspondence of the Museum; to make the collection accessible and provide research support; and to further an informed and enduring understanding of the Museum's history.

**History**

The Archives was established under the Museum's 1870 Constitution, which states that the secretary of the corporation, "shall have custody of and preserve the corporate seal and the archives." Until the 1960's the Archives primarily served as a resource for the Museum's secretary, other officers, and trustees, but has since expanded in scope to serve the needs of the Museum as a whole and to a limited degree, the public.

**Structure**

The Archives operates under the authority of the Senior Vice President, Secretary and General Counsel, who causes a record to be made of official Museum business. The Archives is the repository of all such corporate records.

**Collection**

As a repository for both historical and current documentation, the collection includes minutes of the meetings of the Board of Trustees and its various committees, documentation for gifts and purchases of art and selected monetary gifts, exhibition records, contracts, wills, legal opinions, business correspondence, and reports and applications relating to public and governmental agencies and authorities. The Archives also contains files of retired Museum directors and presidents, a record set of Museum publications from 1870 to the present day, historical photographs, architectural drawings, newspaper clippings, and ephemera.

**Access**

The Archives is accessible to Museum staff. It also provides access to qualified or scholarly researchers, on a case-by-case basis, subject to availability of staff and confidentiality of material, and after the prospective researcher has consulted published sources.

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