

Loans in (borrowing objects)

Definition

Managing objects you borrow for a fixed period of time and for a specific purpose.

Scope

Typically, this might include objects borrowed for an exhibition or another extended activity such as a research project. Such loans should always have an end date. At the end date, you either renew the loan for a further fixed period or return the object to its owner. There should be no 'permanent loans' in your museum; if there are from years past you should renew them for a fixed period, try to acquire the objects, or return them.

This is a Spectrum primary procedure. UK museums must meet the standard set out below to fulfil the requirements of the Museum Accreditation Scheme.

The Spectrum standard

You should have a **policy** covering the borrowing of objects. This could either be a standalone document or part of a wider collections management policy. Either way, in deciding your policy you will most likely need to consider these questions:

- Why might you borrow objects?
- What legal and ethical issues will you consider before borrowing objects?
- What is the minimum and maximum length of a loan period?
- Who can authorise loan agreements for you to borrow objects?
- What steps will you take to check the provenance of potential loans?
- How will you deal with borrowed objects if the original lender can no longer be contacted?

You should also have a written **procedure** that explains the steps to follow when you borrow objects. Spectrum's suggested procedure is a useful starting point, but however you do it, your own procedure should meet the following minimum requirements:

Minimum requirement	Why this is important
You have a written agreement signed by you and the lender before any loan begins, with clear reference to the care standards you will meet and other terms and conditions.	You have a formal record of what was agreed in case any problems arise during the loan.
The reason for each loan is clearly stated.	You do not use borrowed objects in a way that goes beyond the purpose agreed with lenders.
All loans are for fixed periods.	<p>You can review longer-term loans at regular intervals.</p> <p>You do not create a future backlog of objects whose ownership status is unclear.</p>
You have appropriate insurance or indemnity cover for borrowed objects while they are your responsibility (including in transit).	<p>You are able to borrow high-value objects without unacceptable risk.</p> <p>You do not leave objects without cover while they are being transported.</p>
You have up-to-date information about the location and physical wellbeing of borrowed objects during the loan.	<p>You can give lenders data on the environmental conditions in which their objects are displayed.</p> <p>Borrowed objects do not get mislaid whilst in your care, risking damage to your reputation.</p>
You keep a written record of all loans.	You can consult the relevant loan file in case a problem with an object becomes apparent after it has left your care.

Suggested procedure

Loan research

Make the case for borrowing the objects and obtain authorisation.

Your loans in policy should set out when your museum might borrow objects, and how any proposed loans should be authorised internally before you approach potential lenders.

Send a loan request to the lender.

Loan requests should be in writing and submitted as far in advance as possible, bearing in mind that lenders often specify minimum timescales for processing loans. Depending on the lender, this may take months, or even years, so you should allow for this in your project planning.

Loan requests should include:

- Dates of proposed loan.
- Venues for proposed loan.
- Context and purpose of proposed loan (including such information as the themes of a proposed exhibition).
- Lender's name and address.
- Contact name and details.
- Object numbers of requested objects.
- Brief descriptions of requested objects.
- A statement of the intended insurance or indemnity.

All correspondence and additional information about the loan should be maintained in a related file, accessible at least by lender name and loan number. Record the **Document location** of this file, so that you and others can find it in future.

Record details of request.

Record the following from your loan request:

Loan in information

- A reference number for loan in - **Loan in reference number**.
- Name and contact details of the lender:
 - **Lender** (use a standard form of name).
 - **Lender's contact** (use a standard form of name).
 - **Address**.
- The person responsible for managing the loan on your behalf - **Loan in contact** (use a standard form of name).
- The reason for the loan - **Loan in reason** (use a standard term source).
- The proposed dates of the loan:
 - **Loan in begin date** (use a standard format).
 - **Loan in end date** (use a standard format).
- The status of the loan - **Loan in status** (use a standard term source).
 - The date of the status - **Loan in status date** (use a standard format).

Object identification information

- The lender's object numbers for the items being borrowed:
 - **Other number.**
 - **Other number type** (recorded as 'lender').

If you are borrowing from, for example, a private individual, and there are no lender's object numbers, you should assign a temporary number of your own to each item. This could be in two parts separated by a dash: first the *Loan in reference number*, then a sub-number for each individual object borrowed from the same lender.

Maintain an up-to-date record of the status of the loan throughout the process.

Exchanging further information

Complete and send a facilities report to the lender.

If the lender agrees to consider the loan, provide further information on your venues as required. The lender is likely to ask you for a facilities report, and may send you a blank form for this or ask you to use a template such as the one developed by the UK Registrars Group.

Obtain further information for each object from the lender, and update loan file.

When the lender has agreed in principle to the loan, and as the list of objects to be borrowed stabilises, request further details of the objects and record them in the related file. The information for each object should include:

- The lender's object number (if applicable).
- Object description.
- The name and address of owner.
- Its valuation.
- Its condition.
- Its display requirements.
- Its environmental requirements.
- Its handling requirements.
- Any potential risks.
- Its dimensions.
- Photographs of it, for research.

- Details of any relevant intellectual property rights and associated licensing requirements.
- Any additional descriptive and historical information as required.
- Exhibition number (if applicable).

It may be necessary to repeat these steps depending on conditions such as the availability of objects, security and environmental conditions.

Maintain the related file containing correspondence, object information, and any other documents, so that they can easily be found and referred to.

Agreeing the loan

Create and sign the loan agreement.

Finalise the conditions of loan. If you are borrowing from another museum it is likely that they, as the lender, will create the loan agreement. If not (eg you are borrowing from a private individual) create a loan agreement based on the agreed conditions (see **Note 1**).

When the loan is confirmed, appropriate agreements should be signed by lender and borrower. The agreement should refer to all conditions for the loan.

Add your copy of the signed agreement to the loan file, along with any other correspondence.

Record loan information.

Record, and add to the loan in information, the following:

Loan in information

- The name of person authorising the loan on behalf of the lender - **Lender's authoriser** (use a standard form of name).
- The date of the authorisation - **Lender's authorisation date** (use a standard format).
- Conditions applying to objects as part of the loan in agreement - **Loan in conditions**.
- General information about the loan - **Loan in note**.

Preparing to receive the loan

Schedule and prepare for the arrival of loaned objects.

This might include reserving a storage location, and briefing others on the conditions of the loan agreement. You will need to send the lender evidence of the insurance and indemnity cover arranged, arrange transport and obtain any other licences needed for the proposed use of the objects. Go to **Object entry** and from there to **Location and movement control** to arrange transport.

On arrival send a receipt and condition update to the lender.

Send a receipt to the lender to confirm arrival of the objects. Their condition should have been checked as part of the **Object entry** procedure, and to a level of detail required by the loan agreement, or by insurers or indemnifiers. If there are any problems, let the lender know immediately.

Add copies of this correspondence to the loan file.

If conservation work is needed, agree this with the lender.

If there is any damage to the objects, or if it was always planned that your conservators would do some work on the objects (eg cleaning ahead of an exhibition) go to **Collections care and conservation**.

Monitoring the loan

Monitor and report the condition of the objects during the loan.

Provide condition reports to the lender, as required by the loan agreement. If an object has been damaged, the lender should be informed immediately and provided with a full report. Go to **Condition checking and technical assessment**.

If required by the loan agreement, send environmental data (eg temperature and relative humidity readings) and other information about the objects' location. Report any changed circumstances even if objects on loan are not directly affected (eg a breach of security in a location containing borrowed objects), and go to **Location and movement control**.

Extending the loan

Do you want to extend the loan?

If you want to extend a loan beyond the fixed term of the relevant loan agreement, go back to the steps for agreeing the loan. Both the request to extend and the lender's response should be in writing, although you may not always need to draw up a completely new loan agreement. In any event, you should check that the information included in any existing agreement is still current. This might involve a new valuation and updating your insurance or indemnity cover. Loan extensions should always be for a fixed term.

If needed, go to **Insurance and indemnity** and potentially to **Valuation**.

Return and closure

Contact the lender to arrange for the return of objects.

Towards the end of the loan, arrange for the return of the objects. Confirm packing, transport and receipt arrangements as agreed with the lender. If the loan dates are being changed, consult the lender as soon as possible before an early return of the loan.

Carry out a final condition report on the objects.

Complete a final condition report on the object, taking photographs if possible, and go to ***Condition checking and technical assessment***.

Return the objects to the lender.

Go to ***Object exit*** and from there to ***Location and movement control*** to arrange transport.

Confirm all loan conditions have been met and close the loan file.

Obtain written confirmation from the lender that all the conditions of the loan agreement have been met, and take any action needed if not (eg paying any outstanding fees). Make final changes to the loan information and maintain the loan file as a permanent record and audit trail of the loan.

Guidance notes

Note 1: Loan agreements

The Collections Trust website includes links to some examples of loan agreements. Such agreements usually include the following:

- **Object related information**, including: standards of care, display, handling, usage (eg working exhibits, machinery), security and environmental arrangements, condition reporting and monitoring, agreement over the nature and extent of any investigative, intrusive or remedial conservation that needs to be carried out, the borrower's right to take action (eg where a loaned object is found to be infested).
- **Insurance and indemnity requirements.**
- **Costs and responsibilities**, including: conservation, transport, staff time and unforeseen costs.
- **Terms of reproduction and intellectual rights.**
- **Packing, transport, courier and other shipping requirements.**
- **Arrangements for scientific research loans**, including for purposes of destructive analysis or technical preparation. These should include a condition about the extent of destruction or preparation, and a statement of ownership of the products of this research. See also **Note 2.**
- **Additional terms and conditions as agreed with the lender**, including: the method of acknowledgement for labels, the owner's rights to their object during the loan period, the borrowing organisation's non-acceptance of responsibility to trace the owner should circumstances change during the period of loan.
- **Renewal application date**, if the loan is to be renewed.
- **Contact details**, emphasising the responsibility of the lender to keep the borrower informed of any changes.

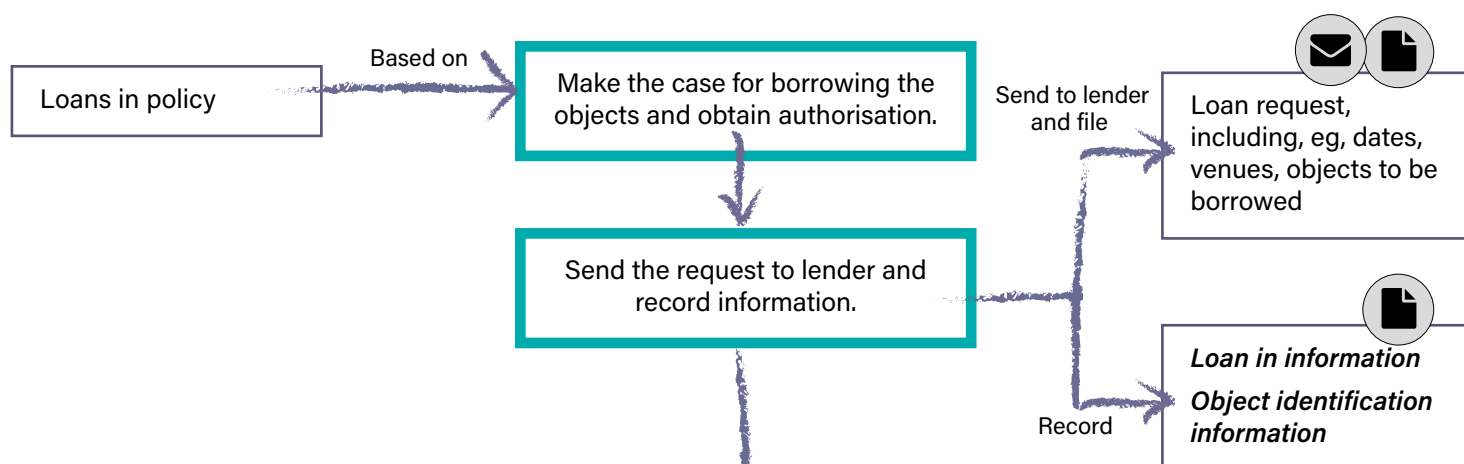
When borrowing from another organisation, the situation is likely to arise where the lender has a standard agreement for loans out and the borrower has one for loans in. The use of both agreements is not recommended, and the onus is on the borrower to accept the agreement of the lender as owner of the object. If necessary, draft a one-off agreement that covers all relevant points to the satisfaction of both parties.

Note 2: Scientific research loans

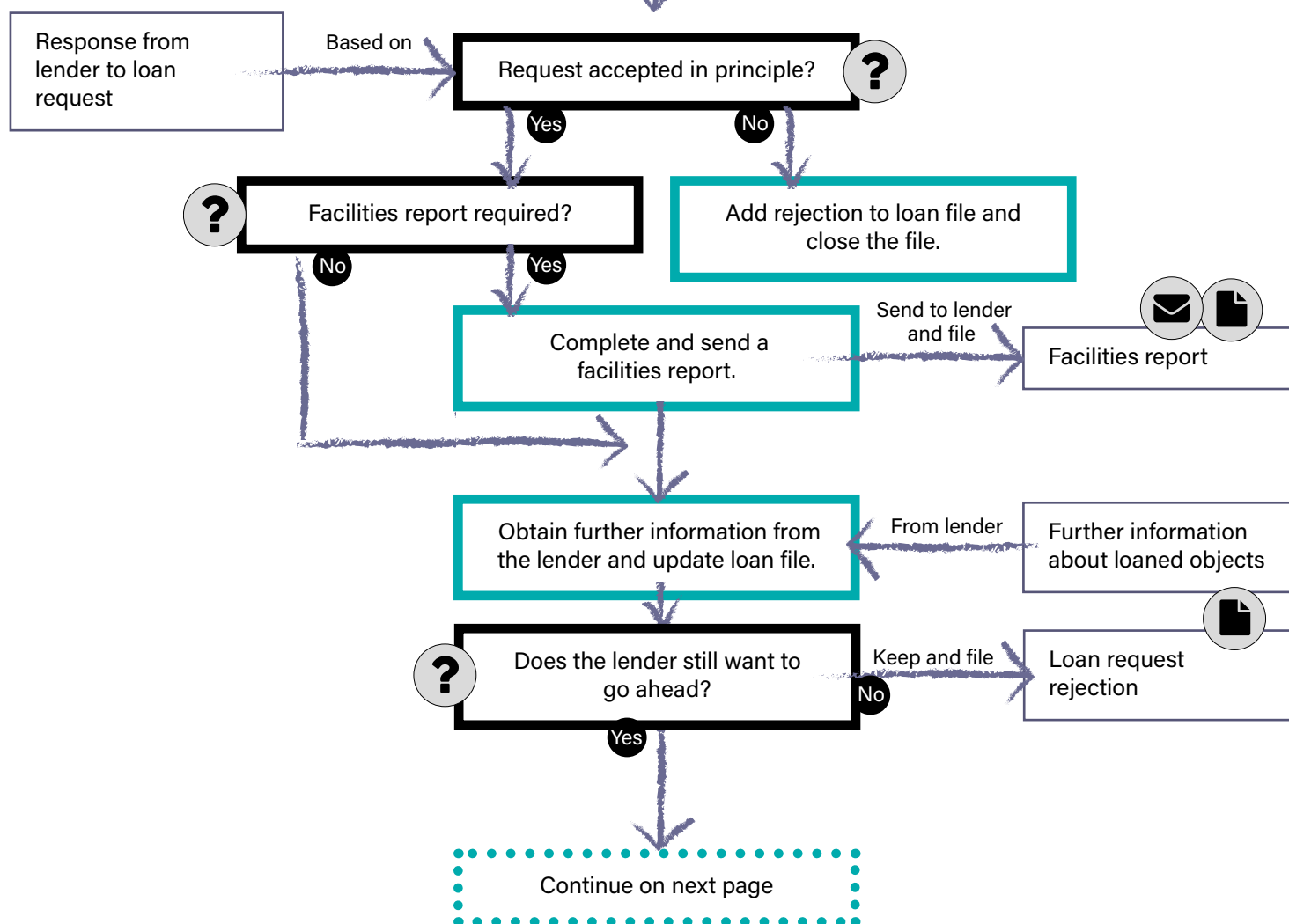
It is recognised that within scientific collections, loans are usually more frequent and less formal. Loans are usually organised under an international tradition, often discipline-specific. For example, you may already have established loan agreements with other bodies, or the loan itself may carry an agreement with it for return with the acknowledgement of receipt.

Loans in (borrowing objects)

Making a loan request



Exchanging further information

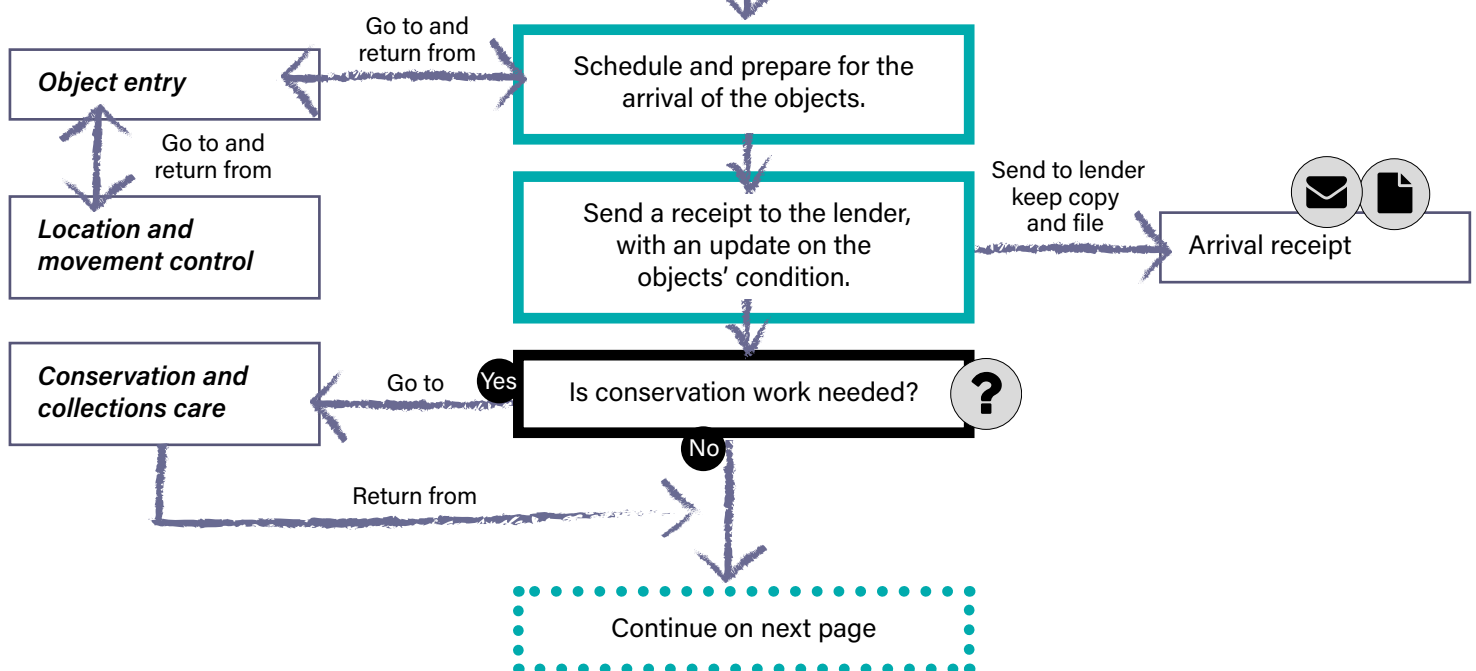


Agreeing the loan

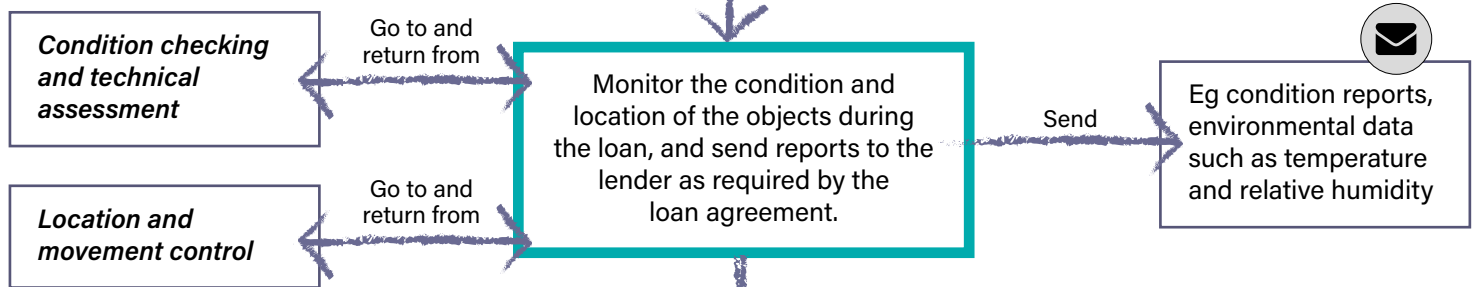
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Exchanging further
information



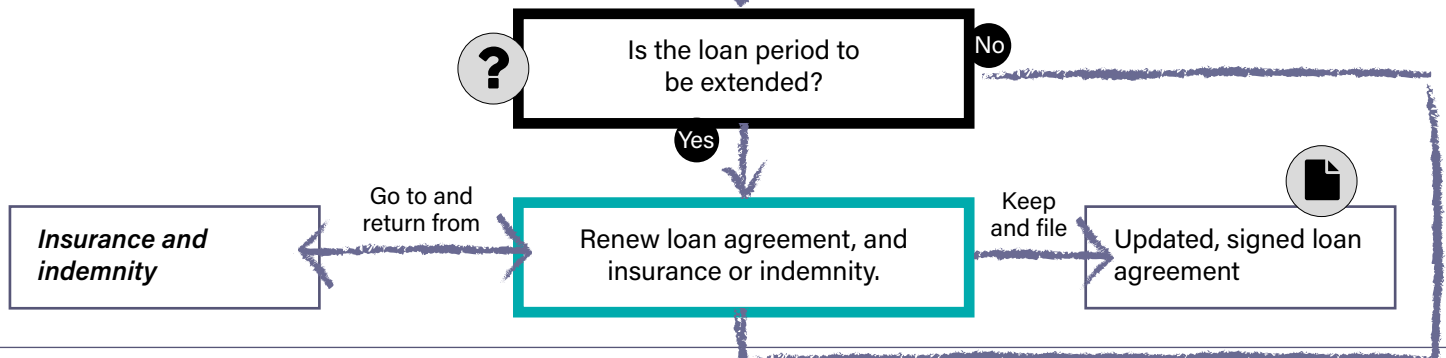
Preparing to receive the loan



Monitoring the loan



Extending the loan



Return and closure

