

Data Protection Policy

1 Scope

- 1.1 This policy sets out the Natural History Museum's commitment to the Data Protection Act 1998 and good practice in handling personal data.
- 1.2 The Museum collects and uses personal details about current, past and prospective employees, suppliers, clients, customers, visitors and other contacts as part of our work, in order to provide or improve services, administer contracts of employment and to comply with the legal requirements of government departments and others. However it is recorded or used, whether on paper, electronically, or in any other medium, this data must be dealt with properly.
- 1.3 This policy applies to all personal data obtained, held and used by the Natural History Museum. This may be factual information such as names and addresses, or expressions of opinion, images or any other recorded information that can identify or tell something of significance about a living individual.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) provides a framework for organisations to ensure that personal data is handled properly, and gives individuals important rights in relation to their personal information, including being able to find out what is held about them.
- 2.2 The DPA applies to any processing of personal data. 'Processing' encompasses almost anything that can be done to data, including (but not exclusively) obtaining, organisation, use, retrieval, consultation, disclosure and destruction.
- 2.3 The DPA sets out eight Principles on the handling of personal data with which organisations must comply:
 1. Personal data shall be processed fairly and lawfully and, in particular, shall not be processed unless specific conditions are met.
 2. It shall be obtained only for one or more specified and lawful purposes, and shall not be further processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose/those purposes.
 3. It shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose(s) for which it is processed.
 4. It shall be accurate and, where relevant, kept up to date.
 5. It shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose/those purposes.
 6. It shall be processed in accordance with the rights of the data subject under the DPA.
 7. Appropriate technical and organisational measures shall be taken against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data.
 8. It shall not be transferred to a country outside the European Economic Area unless that country ensures an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data.
- 2.4 Data subjects' rights include being informed whether their information is being processed by the Museum; being provided with a description of what information the Museum holds about them; preventing processing in certain circumstances; and correcting, blocking or erasing incorrect information.

3 Statement

- 3.1 The Natural History Museum is committed to compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and takes seriously the responsibility of handling personal information. To this end the Museum endorses the Data Protection Principles and will ensure that all appropriate procedures and staff training are in place, so that all personal data obtained, held or used by the Museum is protected and managed in accordance with the DPA.
- 3.2 The Natural History Museum will usually not make a charge for responding to subject access requests, but reserves the right to charge the £10 fee allowed under the DPA if a large amount of work will be involved.

4 Data Protection Coordinator

- 4.1 The Museum's Data Protection Coordinator is Polly Parry (dataprotection@nhm.ac.uk).

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Policy owner: Paul Brereton, SIRO

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