

TERMS AND CONDITIONS. FOR THE DESTRUCTIVE AND INVASIVE SAMPLING OF SPECIMENS FROM THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM, LONDON.

In addition to the terms and conditions for [NHM Outgoing Research Loans](#) the following apply for Destructive or Invasive Sampling of specimens.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Museum welcomes the opportunity to use its collections in as many ways as possible for the furtherance of scientific study. To ensure that the needs of both contemporary and future users are properly catered for the following guidelines have been drawn up. However, the need to ensure the long-term survival of museum specimens requires that destructive or invasive sampling be control by guidelines as laid out below.

1.2 Destructive or invasive sampling of specimens for research purposes generally involves irreversible changes (including, sometimes, complete destruction) to the objects involved. Decisions on such matters will be taken only after due consideration.

1.3 The Museum will assess material potentially involved in such research in terms of its scientific, historical and cultural importance; the needs of both present and future users; and legal and ethical issues as they relate to that material.

1.4 Decisions on the use of specimens for dissection or destructive or invasive sampling will be taken in accordance with guidelines set out in the [NHM Destructive and Invasive Policy and Procedure](#) documents.

1.5 The Museum reserves the right to refuse permission for destructive or invasive sampling.

2. PROCEDURE

2.1 All proposals for research involving the destructive or invasive sampling of NHM specimens should be addressed to the relevant Collections Manager and submitted on the [Destructive and Invasive Sampling Request Form](#) which will be provided.

2.2 Applicants should provide brief details of the proposed project, its justification, method, their competence and the institution where the work is to be done.

2.3 Applications should be submitted at least 1 month in advance of when the samples are required, whether through a visit or loan request.

2.4 A proposal should include:

- the names of the researcher(s) involved and a brief CV for each if requested
- a brief outline of the project including protocols, timeframe and expected outcomes, including plans for disseminating the results
- details of the lab. where the samples are to be studied
- a brief justification of the material required to do the research
- evidence that the proposed techniques produce reliable results and of the researcher competence with the protocol
- possible dates and duration of visit if applicable

2.5 Loans are made to institutions not individuals.

2.6 Postgraduate students must supply a letter of support (on institutional letterhead paper) from their supervisor.

2.7 Any researchers not directly affiliated with a university or research facility must provide a letter of support from the host laboratory.

2.8 This proposal will be evaluated with regard to scientific importance and technical feasibility. Museum staff can advise on suitable techniques. Further information might be requested. If approved, the Museum will nominate a curator as the key contact for the project.

2.9 The choice of specimens and their use will be under the guidance of the appropriate curator. The smallest possible sample will be taken, from the least intrusive site and causing the least damage to the specimen. Removal of samples should not prevent standard measurements from being taken in the future.

2.10 Proposals for research involving donation of whole or part specimens or for dissection or destructive or invasive sampling of specimens should be addressed to the appropriate Collections Manager.

2.11. Proposals will be evaluated with regard to their scientific importance and technical feasibility. Further information or references might be requested. If the proposal is acceptable, the Collections Manager will decide, in consultation, which specimens, if any, may be used. The Museum reserves the right to refuse permission to allow invasive investigation of its specimens.

2.12. Invasive techniques must be agreed with the Collections Manager before the project proceeds. Museum staff can advise on suitable techniques. The Museum reserves the right to insist that the work is done within the Museum and/or by the Museum's own staff.

2.13. In most instances, specimens will only be sampled for scientists or projects, which are likely to publish the results of their research.

2.14. Decisions will normally involve at least one member of the curatorial staff independent of the relevant research team. Investigations, which result in the complete destruction of an object, constitute a disposal and are thus governed by the provisions of [NHM Deaccession, Disposal and Dispersal Policy](#).

2.15. The Museum retains the right to insist that any sampling is done in an appropriate laboratory within the Museum.

2.16. The smallest possible sample will be taken in every case, from the least intrusive site and causing the least damage to the specimen.

2.17. Fees might be charged to help the Museum provide the necessary resources. e.g. staff time or training. The fee will cover any required access and the supervision of or assistance to the researcher to obtain the required samples. In some instances it may be deemed necessary for a member of Museum staff to take the samples on the researcher's behalf.

A waiver of, or adjustment to, the fee is at the discretion of the Collections Manager. A decision on waiving fees is based on an assessment of the delivery of a direct benefit to the NHM. A waiver would generally be an exception and provision of a reason for a decline of a waiver or adjustment should not necessarily be expected.

2.18. Material can only be passed to third parties or products subsequently used with the written approval of the Museum.

2.19. The Museum retains all rights to any samples or products derived from specimens in its collections.

2.20. The research and the results of the research may not be commercially exploited in any way without the prior written agreement of the Museum. Such agreements may be refused in the Museum's absolute discretion or granted subject to such conditions as the Museum may decide (and may well require prior agreement as to the sharing of the financial benefits arising from such exploitation). Such decisions will be informed by the [NHM Access and Benefit Sharing Policy](#) and the principles of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity.

2.21. The NHM warrants that it has made all reasonable inquiries as to the provenance of the items provided for sampling and that to the best of its knowledge the NHM is the legal owner of the items.

3. Terms of agreement

3.1 The applicant agrees to:

- return to the Museum all remaining material including the original mount, dissected parts and any preparations, or products such as unused tissue samples, or aliquots of extracted DNA to the Museum.
- make permanent preparations of all remaining parts using materials and protocols specified by the Collections Manager.
- provide each permanent preparation with a direct copy of the specimen data including determination; in permanent ink on an archival quality label.
- fully cross-reference all preparations with the original specimen following the format specified by the Collections Manager.
- label prospective voucher specimens so that they may be recognised as such and linked with the published study they support.
- conform to normal outgoing research loan regulations where material is to be removed from the Museum.
- identify specimens as far as possible before dissection or preparation.

- include details of vouchers, their nature and location, in published studies so that future workers can relocate them.
- provide GenBank/EMBL accession numbers or computer readable copies of sequence data derived from Museum specimens as soon as possible but no later than the date of submission for publication. The Museum undertakes not to disseminate these data until they are accepted for publication.
- provide copies of experimental protocols that differ from published methods. The Museum undertakes not to publicise such innovations until they have been published.
- publish jointly with Museum staff if they have contributed significantly to the work.
- acknowledge use of the NHM collection in any publications or unpublished reports involving use of Museum specimens. The researcher should acknowledge the Natural History Museum, London, by name and cite the registration numbers of the specimens concerned.
- notify the NHM of publications arising from the use of Museum items and may be asked to provide copies (one of which must be original) of the title page, relevant text and figures.
- provide brief annual reports on the status of the research until it is either published or abandoned.
- notify the NHM and return all samples if the project is abandoned before completion.
- return all unused samples or products once the project is completed.

3.2 The NHM agrees to:

- respond in writing to the applicant, agreeing to or declining the proposal.
- arrange access to the collections through the relevant Collections Manager who will prioritise requests and allocate sampling or visits in accordance with an agreed timetable appropriate for both parties.
- provide details of any relevant NHM specimens for the study in question. However, the choice of specimens to be sampled, is solely the responsibility of the relevant Collections Manager, who has to consider the condition and rarity of the specimen.
- permission to sample type specimens, historically important specimens or extinct or endangered specimens or taxon that are poorly represented in the collections will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and may carry additional costs.
- withhold from disseminating any details of sequence data, or novel protocols and procedures until they have been published.