

## Promoting Exhibit Access and Safety (PEAS) Working Group

### —advocating for an interdisciplinary approach to protecting collections

**MISSION:** The Promoting Exhibit Access & Safety (PEAS) working group advocates for an interdisciplinary approach and iterative process to designing, building, and managing exhibitions; one that balances public access, preventive conservation, and security; to provide a safe environment for visitors and promote collections preservation.

**VISION/ACTION:** The working group strives to provide a platform for engagement in challenging conversations and collaborative solutions to detrimental interactions between visitors and collections through:

- Collecting and compiling data on visitor interactions with exhibits to gain insights into visitor behavior.
- Researching and reviewing new methodologies to protect collections on exhibit, enhance public access, and cultivate behaviors that promote collections care.
- Offering interdisciplinary expertise, advice, and resources to those seeking to improve visitor safety and protect collections on exhibit.
- Promoting and advocating for the implementation of proven strategies within the field.

**PEAS working group** goals include:

- recognition and promotion of safe environments for museum visitors and collection objects
- promotion of cultural heritage preservation

**PEAS working group** benefits:

- developing working relationships across specializations
- accessing diverse sources of information
- fostering better understanding of visitor behaviors
- promoting visitor support for collections care
- reducing risk to collections

**PEAS working group** members represent a broad spectrum of museum experience and expertise including:

- collection management
- conservation
- exhibit design
- visitor services
- risk management
- facilities management
- architecture
- security

**Interested in learning more or participating in PEAS?**

- Contact us at [SI-PEAS@si.edu](mailto:SI-PEAS@si.edu)
- Or visit: <https://ncp.si.edu/PRICE-PEAS>



## Promoting Exhibit Access and Safety resource library

[https://www.zotero.org/groups/4754124/promoting\\_exhibit\\_access\\_and\\_safety\\_peas/items/4XXB5BGF/library](https://www.zotero.org/groups/4754124/promoting_exhibit_access_and_safety_peas/items/4XXB5BGF/library)

The screenshot shows the Zotero web interface. On the left, a sidebar lists 'Other Group Libraries' including 'Promoting Exhibit Access and Safety...' with sub-items like 'Collections and Conservation', 'Exhibit Design', 'PEAS Focus Issue', 'Risk Management', 'Security', and 'Visitor Services and Education'. Below this is a 'Filter Tags' section with tags like 'accessibility', 'archaeology', 'architecture', 'Case study', 'collaboration', 'collections care', 'collections emergency', 'community', 'conservation', 'contemporary art', and 'damage'. The main area displays a table of items:

Title	Creator	Date
Waller Chapter 4 Collection Risk Assessment	Waller	2019-01-01
Pursuing Learning through Intentional Practice		2018-12-10
Engaging Conservation, Collaboration Across Disciplines	Grant et al.	2017-11
The Importance of Movement and Operation as Preventive Conservation Strateg...	Wain	2017-04-03
A Guide to Risk Management of Cultural Heritage		2017-03-22
Whoops! When Visitors Get Touchy-Feely with Exhibits and Unleash Mayhem	Mele	2016-08-08
"Object Project" Explores Everyday Things That Changed Everything		2015

Below the table, the 'Info' tab is selected, showing details for the selected item:

Item Type	Book Section
Title	Waller Chapter 4 Collection Risk Assessment
Author	Waller, Robert
Book Title	Preventative Conservation: Collections Storage
Date	2019-01-01
Pages	59-90
URL	<a href="https://www.researchgate.net/publication/33...">https://www.researchgate.net/publication/33...</a>
Library Catalog	ResearchGate

An 'Abstract' section follows, containing text about preservation as a subsystem within a collection management system.



# COLLECTIONS

A Journal for Museum and Archives Professionals

## Focus Issue: Promoting Exhibit Access and Safety

**Guest Editors: Jeffrey Hirsch, Cali Martin, Melissa Miller, and Samantha Snell**

### Promoting Exhibit Access and Safety

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<https://ncp.si.edu/PRICE-PEAS>



# ACCESS AND SAFETY FRAMEWORK EXERCISE

2025



## Overview

This exercise will serve as a tool for Collections and Conservation staff to talk with leadership/curators/other stakeholders or decision makers about access and safety for collection items and the individuals that interact with them. This exercise is intended to prompt and frame conversations with colleagues around the risk decisions we are making for collections to provide access and provide points to consider when discussing access and safety with organization leadership.

## Directions

- You can also do this exercise independently or collaboratively with colleagues.
- To start, pick a collection item. Then, answer the following questions through the lens of yourself or your organization, or both. Your individual perspective may align or may contrast with that of your organization.
- Using your answers from the guiding questions, list out your top three priorities for access and safety in the chart below.
- Your museum's unique mission and collection type will have bearing on the answers so try to be as detailed as possible.
- Please note: life safety issues are not the focus here and always take priority. For the purpose of this exercise, assume that life safety issues have been addressed already

## Contact Us:

For questions about PEAS (Promoting Exhibit Access and Safety):

SI-PEAS@si.edu

For comments, suggestions, or questions about the framework:

Julianne Snider jxs1030@psu.edu



# Guiding Questions

1. What is the collection item?
2. Provide additional context of the collection item and its relationship to the mission of the museum?
3. Who are the stakeholders? What is their relationship to the collection item?
4. How did the item get into the collection?
5. How do you/your institution define access?
6. Who accesses the item?
7. Why is the item accessed?
8. How do you define safety?
9. What are the environmental condition requirements of the collection item? What impacts may that have on other items it is displayed with?
10. Who may have interests in interacting inappropriately with the item? How are you (or your institution) defining 'inappropriate'?
11. What exhibit conditions might inadvertently increase risks of damage to the collection item by museum staff or visitors? Inadequate barriers and signage?
12. Which of the agents of deterioration is the item most susceptible to? How can you mitigate those risks?

**Considering your responses to the questions above, draft a statement summarizing your access and safety priorities, and then write balance proposition (i.e. a big picture statement that takes into account our access and safety goals, and will guide decision making moving forward)**



## Access Priority



## Safety Priority



## Balance Proposition