

Category

OC Outreach and Communications

Session Number

OC-3

Session Title

The role of museums in promoting polar heritage and advancing polar science

Session Description

Museums have a long history of exploring and documenting polar biological and geological diversity and human history, and they play an important role in sharing polar knowledge and heritage with the public. Collections housed in museums and other institutions hold the record of life on the planet, including millions of specimens from the Arctic and Antarctica, yet museums have been largely on the periphery of polar science. The need for permanent specimen and tissue repositories, and a global inventory of these repositories, is a priority, given the value of these collections to polar science. There is great value and interest in the stories of people who live and work in Polar Regions, and museums are able to share this human history in compelling ways. Museums also communicate polar research and exploration to the public, and provide digital access to their specimens. This session focuses on all aspects of polar research, collections and engagement at museum and related institutions, including museum-led polar research, knowledge gaps in the polar collection record, progress in digitizing polar collections, documentation and conservation strategies of polar collections, museum outreach and engagement related to polar issues, and discussion of ways museums can better work together and with the broader research community in a 21st century global context to advance polar research and collections, and engage, inspire and educate citizens about polar regions and issues.

Keywords: museums, collections, repositories, outreach, engagement, specimens, Arctic, Antarctic, cross-disciplinary, biodiversity

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