

# Revealing the Hidden Collections

Creating a Scottish university museums portal

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# Collections

- More than 1.8 million items held in Scottish university museums
- 32% of Scotland's history of science; 31% of coins and medals; 24% of fine art; 20% of natural science collections; 18% of world culture.
- The entire collections of the Universities of Aberdeen and Glasgow and select collections from the Glasgow School of Art, University of St Andrews, and University of Edinburgh have been Recognised as of national significance



## BUT

- only 140,000 items (7.5%) were open to online discovery
- only 32,000 items (1.8%) were represented with images.
- Less than 40% of the entire collections were catalogued



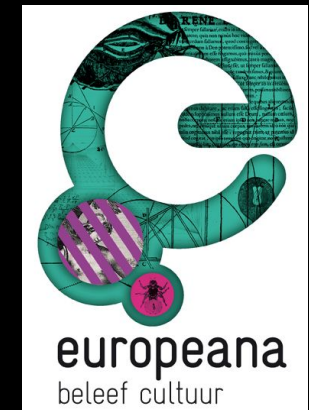
# Aims



***All museums and other collections should make the research data in their content management systems available online as soon as possible, without waiting until backlogs are cleared or records improved to levels of perceived 'perfection'.***

[www.rin.ac.uk](http://www.rin.ac.uk)

- Collection-level descriptions
- Item-level records
- Photographs
- Harvested from institutional database
- Searchable through individual museum websites, UMIQ search portal, Culture Grid and Europeana



# Partnership

UMIS | University  
Museums  
in Scotland

revealing  
the hidden  
collections

## Funding



## Technical expertise



## University museums

UMIS | University  
Museums  
in Scotland



# Project management

## Funding

- Scottish Funding Council    £240,000 (€280,000)
- University partners (in-kind) £78,000 (€94,000)

## Challenges

- Insufficient preparation time
- University recruitment procedures
- Priorities of institutional IT services



**revealing**  
the hidden  
collections

Collection Description		Collection name	Collection number	Type of collection description
Form ID	Ancient Egyptian and Sudanese Collection		ABDUA/C1	Collection Level Description
Keywords	Ancient civilizations ; Antiquity ; Egyptology ; Antiquities ; Archaeological excavations ; Archaeological objects ; Archaeological sites		<b>Object(s)</b> amulets; basketry/ropes; canopic jars; coffins; coins; faience figures; faience vessels; flints; food/plant material; funerary cones; furniture; glass vessels; jewellery; metal figures; metal vessels; animal remains (mummies); human remains (mummies); offering tables; ostraca	<b>Description (including details of associated people)</b> The museum holds 4,000 ancient Egyptian and Sudanese objects. Pieces of special interest include the statue of the scribe Rahotep, the shabti box of Montu, a commemorative scarab of Amenhotep III, four Graeco-Roman period human mummies; the collection of pre-dynastic materials; scarabs and items from the el-Kharga Oasis. The museum possesses casts, squeezes, old photographs and manuscripts of Egyptological interest but they have not yet been fully catalogued. Objects are known to have come from the following locations in Egypt (with the name of the excavator/sponsor and year of excavation given where possible): Abydos (Petrie - Egypt Exploration Fund, donated 1902-1904); el-Amrah (Mace and MacIver - Egypt Exploration Fund, 1899-1901); Badari (Brunton - British School of Archaeology in Egypt, 1920-1924); Oxyrhynchus (Egypt Exploration Fund, c. 1902-1904, probably Grenfell and Hunt); Gerzeh (Petrie et al. - British School of Archaeology in Egypt, 1910-11); Gizeh (Petrie - British School of Archaeology in Egypt, c. 1909-1911); Harageh (Engelbach - British School of Archaeology in Egypt, 1912-1914); Hawara (Petrie et al. - British School of Archaeology in Egypt, 1909-1911); El Hilbeh (Grenfell and Hunt, Egypt Exploration Fund, 1902-1904); Kharga Oasis; Meydum (Petrie et al. - British School of Archaeology in Egypt, 1909-1911); Gurob (Brunton and Engelbach - British School of Archaeology in Egypt, 1920-1921); Memphis (Petrie and Mackay - British School of Archaeology in Egypt, 1909-1911); Shurafa (Engelbach and Petrie - British School of Archaeology in Egypt, 1911-1912); Antaeopolis (Petrie - British School of Archaeology in Egypt, 1922-1924); Riqqeh (Engelbach et al. - British School of Archaeology in Egypt, 1912-1914); Saqqarah (Emery - Egypt Exploration Society, 1969); Sedment (Petrie and Brunton - British School of Archaeology in Egypt, 1920-1921); Tarkhan (Petrie et al. - British School of Archaeology in Egypt, 1912-1914); Thebes, including Gurna (Petrie - British School of Archaeology in Egypt, 1909-1911); Deir el-Bahari (Naville - Egypt Exploration Fund, 1902-1904). Objects are known to have come from the following locations in Sudan (with the name of the excavator/sponsor and year of excavation given where possible): Napata in museum records, but given the years and excavator probably Faras (Griffith - Oxford University, 1912-1913); Sanam (Griffith - Oxford University, 1912-1913).
Associated places	Africa; Egypt; Abydos; El Amrah; Badari; Oxyrhynchus; Gerzeh; Gizeh; Harageh; Hawara; El Hilbeh; Kharga Oasis; Meydum; Gurob; Memphis; Shurafa; Antaeopolis; Riqqeh; Saqqarah; Sedment; Tarkhan; Thebes; Gurna; Deir el-Bahari; Sudan; Faras; Sanam			
Dates of material	5000BC to AD900			
Dates of collection	1871-1996			
Sub-collection	James Grant (Bey) Collection			
Super-collection	Marischal Museum Collection			
Associated collection				
Published catalogues etc				
<b>Institution Description</b>				
Contributor	University of Aberdeen			
Owner	University of Aberdeen			
Location	Marischal Museum, University of Aberdeen			
Postal address	Marischal College, Aberdeen			
Postcode	AB10 1YS			
Country	Scotland UK			
Website	www.abdn.uk/museums			
Access conditions	The University of Aberdeen collections are available for research by appointment.			
<b>Collector(s)</b> W M Flinders Petrie 1853 - 1942; Arthur Cruttenden Mace 1874 - 1928; David Randall MacIver 1873 - 1945; Guy Brunton 1878 - 1948; Bernard Pyne Grenfell 1869 - 1926; Arthur Surridge Hunt 1871 - 1934; Reginald Engelbach 1888 - 1946; Ernest John Henry Mackay 1880 - 1943; Francis Llewellyn Griffith 1862 - 1934; Walter Bryan Emery 1903 - 1971; Henri Edouard Naville 1844 - 1926; Egypt Exploration Fund 1882 - 1914; Egypt Exploration Society 1914 - ; British School of Archaeology in Egypt (BSAE)				
<b>Custodial history</b> Important sources are the Robert Wilson bequest, 1871 (almost 200 pieces), and over 2000 items (inc. 1100 scarabs) from the collection of Dr. James Grant (Bey), 1897; the latter was a medical graduate of the University and physician at the court of the khedive of Egypt. Further material comes from excavations by Garstang and the Deutsche Forschung Gesellschaft and from the Hasluck, Henderson and Reid donations. A number of objects not presented at the time were donated to the University by Grant's descendant Mrs. Gordon Morrice, 1948. In 1996, some 400 Egyptian antiquities and associated items collected by Joseph Pollard were donated by a descendant.				

# Consultation

- Collections are central to teaching and research
- Access to collections should be improved
- Enthusiastic staff result in well-used collections



*We are stuck using the same specimens every year because we have no idea what is available to use from the museum.*

*It is vital that the museum is woven into the fabric of the University Faculties so it is seen as one rather than separate entities.*

*Working with objects brings out questions from students that they would not have otherwise thought of. Objects engage students and help the topic come alive.*

# Consultation

- Digitisation is key to the future of collections
- Copyright issues can limit access
- More digitised records are needed



*There is a danger that if it is not online, people will think that it doesn't exist.*

*Images would be the top documentation element to improve.*

*Prioritise collection descriptions and object records,  
the visual is expendable though wonderful.*

*Fewer databases would make more sense -  
have a coherent single system.*

# Records created

	CLDs		Item records	
	proposed	delivered	proposed	delivered
University of Aberdeen	200	200	8,000	8,000
University of Dundee	200	117	3,000	1,500
University of Edinburgh	100	100	0	50
University of Glasgow	1,000	1,075	0	0
Glasgow School of Art	30	10	0	1,500
Heriot-Watt University	100	100	0	50
Robert Gordon University	10	11	0	3,400
University of St Andrew	100	113	0	800
University of Stirling	10	7	0	400
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,750</b>	<b>1,733</b>	<b>12,000</b>	<b>15,700</b>

# Website

[www.umis.ac.uk/revealing](http://www.umis.ac.uk/revealing)

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Home About

UMIS | University Museums in Scotland revealing the hidden collections

## Search the Scottish university museum collections

Search

Filter

- ☐ Collection descriptions
- ☐ Item records
- ☐ Both

Collection Filter

- ☐ All collections
- ☒ [Select collections](#)

### Introduction

Scottish universities hold a high proportion of Scotland's nationally important collections - more than 1.8 million items.

The Revealing the Hidden Collections website gives information about all the material through almost 2000 detailed descriptions of collections and an increasing number of records of individual items and collections, making available all records through a single search maintained by the Culture Grid.

The partners in the Scottish Funding Council supported project are the University of Aberdeen, University of Dundee, University of Edinburgh, Glasgow School of Art, University of Glasgow, Heriot-Watt University, Robert Gordon University, University of St Andrews and the University of Stirling. They are all members of UMIS: University Museums in Scotland.

UMIS | University Museums in Scotland

Scottish Funding Council  
Promoting further and higher education

CULTURE GRID

RECOGNISED COLLECTIONS  
by NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

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