



Global Summit of Research Museums II: Objects in Motion

October 17-19, 2022 – Munich, Germany

As the most visited research institutions globally, museums reach hundreds of millions of people worldwide – virtually and physically. The tangible and intangible collections in museums play a vital role in preserving, interpreting, and making natural and cultural heritage accessible. Research in museums contributes to infrastructures of educational, social, and scientific engagement that transcend political and geographic boundaries.

The first Global Summit of Research Museums, held at the Museum für Naturkunde Berlin in 2018, initiated a **global knowledge and collection network** to strengthen border-crossing connectivity and collaboration. In the intervening years, research museums have further defined their place at the nexus of science, research, education, and intercultural dialogue.

The Global Summit of Research Museums II will reflect on the multifaceted transformations museum objects face as they move through geographic, political, cultural, and virtual spaces during their life cycles. We will examine both the entangled histories inscribed in them and the methods of investigation we use to analyze them from theoretical, institutional and practical points of view. Our focus will be on the particular potential, social relevance, and global responsibility of collection-based research as research museums further develop into strategic places of knowledge production, social participation and international cooperation.

Just as knowledge, goods, news, humans, animals, and ideas circulate, **museum objects are on the move** over the course of their life cycles. Throughout their migrations, objects experience multiple transformations: they originate in local to regional, national to continental, even in global contexts; are collected across natural and cultural borders; exist within histories of **cultural exchange, colonial exploitation, and international networks of research**.

Through experimentation, technical innovation, and exploratory methods, research museums create new knowledge that affects how we perceive objects over time. We interpret and reinterpret not only their scientific, cultural and political significance, but also study the material transformations these objects experience as they age, decay, are conserved or reborn virtually as data sets and digital bodies.

A museum object's life cycle, however, does not necessarily end as part of an exhibition or in collection storage; instead, its existence may continue in a different context as it is sold, discarded, reused, restituted, resacralized. Research museums have become increasingly open to transdisciplinary collaborations, collection digitization, and restitution, and these practices have brought a noticeable sense of movement into and among museum collections, which in turn have led to public attention, new research questions, and new challenges.

Funded by Aktionsplan Leibniz-Forschungsmuseen II, a German federal and state government project grant, the Global Summit of Research Museums II is jointly organized by the Leibniz Research Museums, which are: Deutsches Bergbaumuseum, Deutsches Museum, Deutsches Schiffahrtsmuseum, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Museum für Naturkunde Berlin, Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum, Senckenberg Gesellschaft für Naturforschung, Zoologisches Forschungsmuseum Alexander König.

The Deutsches Museum will host the Summit in Munich in collaborative leadership with the Museum für Naturkunde Berlin; the Summit's international partner is the Smithsonian Institution.

Deutsches Museum



Smithsonian

The Leibniz Research Museums

