



An Chartlann Náisiúnta
National Archives

Loans Policy



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Introduction

Every year the National Archives receives requests from institutions to borrow collection items for temporary display. The National Archives lends items for the following reasons:

- to support the mission and strategic goals of the National Archives
- to make the collections more widely accessible within Ireland
- to further knowledge, understanding and scholarship relating to the collections
- to enhance the reputation of the National Archives

This document outlines the National Archives' external loan policy and the procedures for submitting a loan request. It covers the loan of all items for exhibition of any duration, from single items to multiple records. It should be read in conjunction with the National Archives' *Loan Agreement*, which outlines the terms and conditions for loans in detail.

1. Application Procedure

- a. Loan requests should be submitted a minimum of six months prior to the opening of the exhibition to allow time to process the loan and ensure the suitability and stability of the object(s).
- b. Preliminary research should be carried out well in advance of the required notice period and where possible visiting the Reading Room is recommended to view the items under consideration.
- c. The borrowing institution must apply in writing to the Director by submitting a *Loan Request Form* (see Appendix). All loan requests will be acknowledged on receipt.
- d. The Keeper Public Services & Collections and Senior Conservator will assess the suitability of the object(s) requested for loan.

2. Conditions of Loan

- a. The borrowing institution must be open to the public for the duration of the loan and meet standards of care, security and access as agreed with National Archives.
- b. The National Archives must be satisfied that the proposed borrower can demonstrate that the objects requested form an essential part of their display, and the exhibition itself is intellectually valid and will provide public benefit.
- c. Items are lent to a single institution and are expected to remain in situ.
- d. All loan agreements entered into by the National Archives will be of a defined duration. The normal loan period is for three months.
- e. The maximum long-term loan period is five years. This will be subject to regular inspection and review within that period as agreed in advance with the borrower. Extensions may be considered, and will be treated as a new application.
- f. In cases where a document cannot be lent due to its condition, size format or availability, an alternative may be suggested or a good quality facsimile.
- g. Loans are subject to the submission of a standard Facilities Report that will detail security of buildings and cases, alarm systems, fire protection and emergency response.
- h. Loans will be subject to correct environmental conditions and case design allowing for adequate lighting, humidity, temperature, and security controls that must be documented by the borrower.
- i. Loans are subject to insurance being in place on a 'nail to nail' basis from the point of object(s) leaving National Archives premises until their return. The insurance valuation will be set by the Archives and listed in the Loan Agreement.
- j. Loans are subject to records of all objects, including Condition Reports, being checked and signed by both parties at all points of exit and entry between the borrowing institution and National Archives.
- k. National Archives will appoint a member of staff to act as courier for loaned objects in transit.

- l.** National Archives will typically bill expenses incurred in loans to the borrower, although some or all of these may be waived at the discretion of the Director.
- m.** The loan agreement will address copyright, intellectual property, photographic, filming rights and publication rights.
- n.** The borrowing institution must return any or all of the exhibits at the written request of the Director of the National Archives.
- o.** No less than three weeks prior to the close of the exhibition the borrower must contact the National Archives in order to confirm the collection arrangements.
- p.** Loans are subject to completion of all written agreements and contracts.

3. Decision to Lend

- a.** The National Archives will lend only to organisations and venues which are open to the general public and can fulfil the terms of the Archive's Loan Agreement.
- b.** The decision to lend objects will include consideration of the safety, security, physical condition and degree of rarity of the objects, the value of the loan to the recipient, the facilities required to service the loan, and the resources of either the borrower or the National Archives.
- c.** Any decision to refuse a loan may include consideration of circumstances that would be damaging to the National Archive's standing and reputation, or any exhibition which includes objects that are known to have been illegally or unethically acquired by the current holder.
- d.** Applications will be assessed by the Keeper Public Services & Collections, based on the written submission by the borrowing institution, and the internal reports by National Archives staff.

- e. The Director is currently responsible for loan approvals once a final object list is drafted and a recommendation made by Keeper Public Services & Collections. This responsibility will fall to the National Archives Advisory Council once re-established.
- f. The National Archives will maintain a central register of loans, with files containing all documentation, reports, lists of objects, and signed agreements.
- g. The National Archives reserves the right, at any time not to proceed with a loan request.

Approval/Revision History

This Loans Policy is version 2, issued in November 2024 and formally approved by the Director on 25 November 2024. This policy is reviewed on an annual basis by the Keeper Public Services & Collections, a full revision will take place every five years.

Appendix

National Archives Loan Request Form

Name of Borrowing Institution	
Address of Exhibition Venue	
Main Contact Person and contact details	
Title of Exhibition	
Proposed Date and Duration	
Scope of exhibition and reasons for inclusion of NAI items	
List of items requested (including NAI Collection Reference Numbers)	
Special / Other Conditions	

Please submit completed form and any additional supporting documentation to the Director, Orlaith McBride (query@nationalarchives.ie)



The National Archives
Sráid an Easpag, Baile Átha Cliath
D08 DF85, Éire

www.nationalarchives.ie


Phone: +353 (0)1 407 2300

Lo Call: +353 1890 252424

Email: query@nationalarchives.ie

 [@narireland](https://www.instagram.com/narireland)

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