

Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Museum

Scientific Research Policy

Name of Museum: Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Museum

Governing Body: Trustees of the Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Museum

Date of which this policy was approved by governing body: 2020

Date at which this policy is due for review: 2025

Aim

The Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Museum will build on core strengths (such as the history and material culture of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (S.T.E.A.M) while developing audience and visitor experience.

Context

Scientific research underpins the work of the Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Museum, enabling us to deliver a group mission of inspiring futures through the creative exploration of S.T.E.A.M and inspiring the next generation.

Scientific research is a key means by which the Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon values of thinking big, revealing wonder, sharing authentic stories, igniting curiosity and openness are expressed.

Scientific research is an essential instrument for addressing the core and supporting priorities of *Inspiring Futures* was born.

Scientific research enables the Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Museum staff and volunteers to grow our audiences and exceed their expectations because it enhances their professional practice across collections, visitors and policy, leading to a better cultural and educational experience. The specific scientific research audience is numerically small but disproportionately significant, as its members address otherwise unseen and unused collections and develop new narratives from them.

Scientific research sustains and helps grow our collection, uncovering forgotten relevance and revealing new stories. It can be foundational in securing local, national and international working, enabling new networks.

Scientific research into site histories can support the transformation of our estate; digital Scientific research is a priority area.

A reinvigorated scientific research culture across the museum, that builds on One Collection and acknowledges expertise in all teams, will enable the Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Museum to create a common culture of scientific research, curation, display and learning. This is a major opportunity for the Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Museum to gain influence by delivering a world-class and sector-

leading scientific research programme, expressing the international status of the original Company, with an appropriate commitment to the highest intellectual standards.

Scope

The Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Museum undertakes Scientific research to increase its long-term capacity to use its collection to engage public interest in the role of science and technology past, present and future. Scientific research of many kinds and conducted by professionals, staff and volunteers within all areas, is the life blood of major museums. Scientific research, conducted at every level from fact-checking to academic-style publications, will everywhere be characterised by rigour and traceability to reliable sources. The Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Museum will work to enable its staff, volunteers and visitors to develop their Scientific research skills to the highest quality appropriate to each project or activity. The majority of our Scientific research effort is currently aligned with major projects within the business plan, but Scientific research to develop the understanding to enable future projects is also encouraged and undertaken. The museum will work to national and international standards of best practice and seek to become leaders in its field and in the production of original knowledge and new scientific research methods. We support both scientific research more narrowly targeted at the production of particular outputs (such as specific displays) and broader academic scientific research (that is scientific research of university quality that informs both museum displays and websites but also publications and presentations for academic and non-academic audiences).

What we will do

Achieving this aim is a responsibility across the Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Museum, in which the Scientific research takes a key role. Through collaboration, we will enhance scientific research in digital, conservation science, learning and audiences as well as collections and history.

To ensure close integration with the museums' programmes, Museum Trustees will hold early discussions to ensure that, where appropriate, scientific research funding applications can be developed in a timely fashion.

Across the Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Museum, Trustees will support staff and volunteers in the development of scientific research skills and ambitions, including selective support for study as forms of continuing professional development.

The Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Museum will work with colleagues and professionals to:

- Ensure that training and development opportunities are put in place for staff and volunteers across the organisation to enable strategic Scientific research objectives to be met.
- Extend Scientific research activities, events and seminar programmes across the museum.

- Develop scientific research and scientific research projections in new and existing areas by reinforcing existing Scientific research strengths in historical and conservation study of collections.
- Develop scientific research and scientific research projections in new and existing areas by discussing potential new areas such as digital and international scientific research.
- Investigate the potential for establishing a centre for scientific research and study.

Topics

The Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Museum will select topics for scientific research by the topic falling into one of the following categories:

- The Economic History of the Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Company Limited from 1860 until closure in 1986.
- The Social History of the Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Company Limited from 1860 until closure in 1986.
- The Technological History of the Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Company from 1860 until closure in 1986.
- The Material Culture – which promotes study of our collection (and places), including conservation Scientific research.
 - I. Conservation scientific research: The study of materials, deterioration, conservation and preservation of items in the collection; the study of museum environments for display and storage, including both conservation and environmental sustainability.
- The Public Culture – Scientific research into public history, audiences and historical public culture.
 - I. Audiences that engage (and do not engage) with our collection through exhibitions, educational visits, web access and otherwise.
 - II. Citizen science: using museums as the stage for scientific projects including lay participation
 - III. Scientific research into achieving the most effective practice in museum displays and programming.

Looking at the above categories we have identified the following topics for initial scientific research (but not limited to):

- The locomotives, the science behind their manufacture and operation and their respective histories owned and/or used by the Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Company Limited across its 600 depots and associated sites throughout the world.
- The track layouts, materials (including the scientific make-up and manufacture) and developments and their associated surroundings across the

600 depots and associated sites used and/or owned by the Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Company.

- The people, their individual histories, backgrounds, the clothes they wore, how they wore them, their role they played across all 600 depots and associated sites used and/or owned by the Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Company Limited.
- The Social history of the employees and management of the Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Company outside of business and work hours.

As well as the above Scientific Research Policy, we do our own scientific research with specific aims and objectives but also encourage public Scientific research too.