

Reimagining via ReOrg

Conservator Hack for May 11, 2021

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Winston Churchill once said “Never waste a good crisis”. Since the current pandemic restrictions have closed Manitoba museums for the moment, this could be a good time to re-organize all or some of your storage areas. Even if you are happy with the way things are at the moment, why not have a look at what other institutions have done and see if you can get new ideas?

The Canadian Conservation Institute, in partnership with ICCROM (International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property), has developed the ReOrg method for museums. The ReOrg method is a practical, low-cost approach to evaluating and improving collection storage using existing resources and using staff expertise. It is designed for institutions of 2-5 staff and collections of up to 10,000 artifacts, but it can be adapted for use by larger – and smaller – institutions.

CCI staff have delivered ReOrg workshops throughout Canada and the world, including Winnipeg. However, all the resources you need to undertake your own ReOrg project are available free of charge in English and French at <https://www.iccrom.org/themes/preventive-conservation/re-org/method>. It is not necessary to have completed an inventory of your collection in order to begin ReOrg and you can undertake it in your existing storage space; no additional space is required. Read the ReOrg Workbook first to understand the process, fill in the evaluation questionnaire and then determine your options using the worksheets and resources documents.

If you'd like to see more before getting started, or even if you're happy with the way things are at the moment, why not have a look at what other institutions have done and see if you can get new ideas? The ReOrg International YouTube site shows how museums from Atlantic Canada, Quebec, Ontario and internationally have used the process to reorganize their storage spaces:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJCKqPYjvLi9jJqnjROUzIQ>

If you have any questions, or would like virtual assistance in reorganizing your collection storage rooms, please contact me via email ([conservator \(at\) museumsmanitoba \(dot\) com](mailto:conservator@ museumsmanitoba.com)). I would be happy to help, and CSP services are being waived until further notice.