

Repatriation of taonga and kōiwi

Each step can be cyclical with the entire process taking months or even years to complete to ensure that everything is done correctly and all research is exhausted.

Repatriation begins

Formal requests may be submitted by iwi, hapū, individuals, or communities. This often starts with an initial visit or inquiry about the museum's collections.

Museum identifies taonga or kōiwi to be repatriated.

Knowing what your museum holds is the first step. Museums should always be researching their collections to know what they have and how they got it.

Due Diligence

Consultation:

Direct engagement with the claiming community to understand cultural context and significance.

Provenance research:

Investigating the origin, acquisition history, and cultural affiliation of the items.

Approvals process:

Formal evaluation by museum staff, and/or committee or governing body.

Handover

Develop a culturally appropriate plan for physical return in collaboration with iwi. The transfer includes the kaumātua or iwi leaders in the museum's ropū; receiving iwi and relevant museum kaimahi.

Ownership/custody transfer is completed via a deed or documentation.

Museum completes process for institutional and community records. Museum updates records.

An event may occur and may include tikanga Māori and tikanga of the receiving community.

Maintain relationships and address any ongoing concerns.



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