

Scientific Collections on the Move

Provincial museums and international networks, an EU RISE project (2021-2024): presentation and preliminary results

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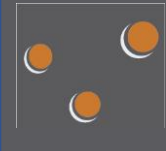


This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon
2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-
Curie grant agreement No 101007579

SciCoMove

Scientific collections on the move: provincial museums, archives, and collecting practices (1800–1950)

- This project originates in a former AvH Alumni award called "Museum networks" (2016)
- SciCoMove promotes international, interdisciplinary and intersectoral collaborations between historians of science, scientists and museum professionals from Latin America and Europe.
 - It encourages studies on the history of scientific collections in palaeontology, anthropology, botany and related applied sciences.
 - Its ambition is to reassess the significance of these collections and to develop new historical knowledge applicable to their curatorship, utilization by researchers and communication to the public.
 - It focuses on the past, but addresses current issues facing scientific museums in relation to repatriation and dialogue with "home communities".
- SciCoMove project started on 1 May 2021 and lasts 48 months.





48 researchers
16 institutions
9 countries

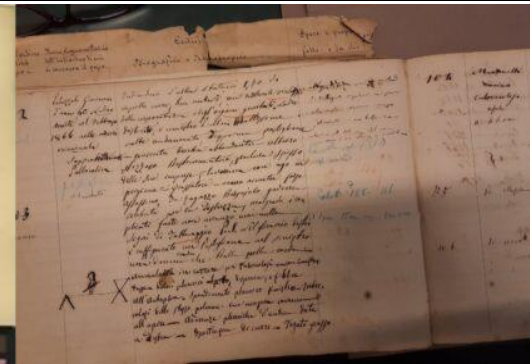
- Université du Mans, France
- Plantentuin Meise, Belgium
- Université d'Angers, France
- Muséum national d'histoire naturelle, France
- Ruprecht-Karls-Universitaet Heidelberg, Germany
- Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn, Germany
- Università degli Studi di Torino, Italy
- Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientificas, Spain
- Le musée Vert, France
- Museu de Ciències Naturals de Barcelona, Spain
- Laténium, Switzerland
- Universidad Nacional de La Plata, Argentina
- Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Cientificas y Tecnicas, Argentina
- Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Mexico
- Centro de Investigacion y de Estudios Avanzados del Instituto Politecnico Nacional, Mexico
- Universidad de la Republica, Uruguay

Our project is based on:

- **the shift of focus from major to smaller museums in the “provinces” or “peripheries”** in order to outline a more complex, less centralized, and less hierarchical vision of scientific exchanges
- **a conception of collections as nodes in networks of circulation and as structures producing knowledge,** rather than as heritage and conservation institutions;
- an ambition to better **connect the collections’ archives with the objects** exhibited or conserved and provide a wider historical and social meaning to these objects.
- attention to **objects “on the move”** and to the scholarly practices and sociability of the agents (collectors, brokers, amateurs) who made these moves possible.



Cabinet's furniture. Salvador Collection, IBB, Barcelona.



Research and Secondments

- SciCoMove promotes **collaborations** on equal terms between Latin American and European teams, in a multilateral and multilingual context of mutual training and sharing.
- The project facilitates exchanges and mobility of its researcher members, curators and PhD students, through **secondments** of one to three months in another institution of the consortium.
- All the partner organisations participate by sending and/or hosting secondments
- The **research** is based on the **material analysis of objects** combined with the **analysis of archives** recording their circulation, dispersion, exchange, and application. It is carried out through **case studies** and **workshops** on crosscutting themes.
- Implementation of the secondments to enable transfer of knowledge and achieve the individual case studies
- Secondments and workshops: Facilitate the collaborative research and the cross-fertilization and exchange of knowledge on crosscutting research themes



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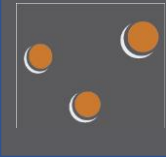
Workshops on cross-cutting themes

Workshop N° 1: CASE STUDIES– Le Mans (France), 9 November 2021

- Techniques in collections.
- “Live” and “dead” collections
- Scattered collections

SKULL COLLECTIONS: SERIES, STANDARDIZATION, AND INSTRUMENTS – Turin (Italy), 11-12 April 2022

- Skulls series and anthropological theories
- Paradigmatic skulls
- Instruments and standardization



Workshops on cross-cutting themes

CASTS, BONES AND FORGERIES - La Plata (Argentina), 12 July 2022

- The trade in antiquities, bones, and casts
- Fakes, duplicates, and casts
- Preparation, conservation, fabrication, and new professions

PLACES OF ENCOUNTERS AND CULTURE OF CURIOSITY – Barcelona (Spain), 13-14 April 2023

- Amateurs and vocational scientists: encounters, networks, and practices
- Amateurs as go-betweens, places of encounters.
- The afterlives of the culture of curiosity

Future workshops: Angers (France): Applied science collection - Heidelberg University (Germany): Trade and professions, Neuchâtel (Switzerland): Networks and diasporas.

Final international conference in Le Mans



The image shows a digital poster for a workshop. At the top, it features the logos for 'museodelaplata' and 'Facultad de Ciencias Naturales y Museo'. Below the logos is a photograph of several bone casts and fragments, some with handwritten labels like 'ALEXIA 10084' and 'ALEXIA 10098'. The main text on the poster is in Spanish: 'WORKSHOP Calcos, huesos y falsificaciones'. It also includes the text 'En inglés. Actividad gratuita con inscripción. | Cupos limitados.' and the date and time 'MARTES 12/07 | 9:30 - 16:30 HS.' The location is 'Auditorio Facultad de Ciencias Naturales y Museo Calles 122 y 60. La Plata'. At the bottom, there are logos for the European Union and SciCoMove, along with a small red heart icon and a 'Ver más >' link.

Training seminars

- Training and expertise exchange is an important dimension of the SciCoMove project
- **5-day-long training seminars:** to ensure that methodologies, approaches, and best practices are shared with the early career researchers taking part in the project.
 - These seminars are open to students pursuing their master or doctoral degrees and to museum professionals.
- The **first training seminar** took place in La Plata Museum (Argentina) and was dedicated to archives and collections:
 - “Natural history, collections, archives and museums in 19-20th centuries”, 4–12 July 2022.
 - 24 students participated: 12 from Argentina and 8 young SciCoMove members from Uruguay, Mexico, Spain, Switzerland, France, Germany and Italy
- The **second seminar** will be organized in Le Mans and will focus on collecting practices and collectors.



Communication and Dissemination

- **Research blog** <https://scicomove.hypotheses.org/>
 - For scholars, museum professionals, teachers, students, and science amateurs
 - To present case studies and discuss transatlantic scientific collecting practices and scientific exchanges.
 - To generate a new vision of museum collections as living networks for the exchange and circulation of knowledge.
- A **Digital exhibition** will be organized at the end of the project to communicate research results, in line with EU policy promoting the public understanding of science and citizen science
- Creation of the **Mooc** “Scientific specimens on the move” (multilingual + English subtitles).
 - Short videos on objects on the move, related to a selection of posts from the project’s blog.
 - SciCoMove Mooc will be hosted on the UMotion university platform (<https://umotion.univ-lemans.fr/>).
 - It will target general public, students and schoolteachers

