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## Museum of Science and Technology

### Common information

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### Provenance research

#### Provenance researcher

Mag. Dr. Christian Klösch

In the field of provenance research, investigations are carried out to determine the origins of objects from individual collections and whether these objects were unlawfully seized from their former owners during the National Socialist era.

The holdings of the Museum of Science and Technology are comprised of state-owned and privately-owned collections, which have been consigned to the Technical Museum for Industry and Commerce – as it was called at the time – since its foundation. Over the years, the holdings of the Museum have been extended following the integration of the Austrian Postal and Telegraph Museum and the History Museum of the Austrian Railways. These were joined by the holdings of the Austrian *Mediathek* (“media library”) in 2001.

Since the enactment of the *Kunstrückgabegesetz* (“Art Restitution Law”) in 1998, the holdings of the Museum of Science and Technology have been systematically examined for objects which had come to be owned by the Museum as consequence of National Socialism. Thousands of objects, books and archive materials were reviewed. Not only the acquisitions of 1938–1945 were subjected to scrutiny; acquisitions made subsequent to 1945 were also included as it cannot be ruled out that the Technical Museum had acquired seized objects at a later date.

In total, 14 dossiers containing several hundred objects have been conveyed to the Art Restitution Advisory Board. The Board has recommended the restitution to the original owners [or their heirs] in all cases. In addition, the Museum of Science and Technology has conveyed information to the National Fund on 28 objects acquired from the art trade during the National Socialist era for publication in the art database. The Museum hopes to receive further information or indications as to the original owners as a result of this publication.

The Museum of Science and Technology endeavours to trace the heir of the objects as quickly as possible so that the objects can be restituted. It is supported in its efforts by the Federal Ministry for Education and the Arts, the Commission for Provenance Research and the Jewish Community Vienna (IKG).