**Research Proposal:**

**Digital Curation and Preservation in Small and Midsized Museums in the Age of COVID-19**

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August 11, 2020

Fall 2020

**Abstract**

In the wake of the 2020’s global pandemic, known as COVID-19 and the Novel Coronavirus there has been a shift toward remote work and increased online presence for almost every industry. Museums, known for their unmatchable experiences with physical objects, are uniquely challenged by these changes. While the world attempts to find a new normal, small and medium-sized museums, reliant heavily upon onsite visitorship, gift shop purchases, and exhibition ticket sales have had to restructure their budgets and put increased focus on digitization and online presence. While many museums have been reluctant to take on massive digitization projects and creating online content, the pandemic has forced many institutions to reflect on the value of these tools. By comparing plans from early 2020 and late 2019 to the actions taken during the initial shutdown, in conjunction with anecdotal interviews from museum professionals I hope to represent the new future of museums. In doing so this research will also shed light on the current challenges and struggles related to the new protocols and limitations set out by legislative action as well as economic challenges in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. This combination of research methodologies, Literature review and Interview method, will seek to provide a functional range of data for a more complete scope of the issues small and midsize museums are facing.

*Keywords:* digital curation, online exhibition, digitization, coronavirus, COVID-19, social distancing,