

Material Matters. Powerful Objects in Medical Museums and Collections

First Biannual Conference of the “International Association of Medical Museums and Collections” (IAMMC), formerly “European Association of Museums of the History of Medical Sciences” (EAMHMS)

Deutsches Medizinhistorisches Museum, Ingolstadt, Germany, 10 - 13 September 2025

The last conference (Leiden 2023) investigated “New Horizons” for medical museums and collections as a whole. The 2025 conference takes a different approach. It seeks to explore the power and needs of the single object in medical museums and collections. How can it serve as a starting point and source for specific research, teaching, and outreach? What are the challenges and opportunities of its sheer materiality? And how does our “care work” in museums and collections open up new approaches for the understanding of the object itself?

Furthermore, the current temporary exhibition of the DMMI “Heart of the Matter. Human specimens in the museum” serves as a focus for the sensitive object group of human remains with its specific needs and challenges. It raises the question of how to deal with these items on public display in the museum.

To explore the above-mentioned topics, an international and interdisciplinary conference will be held by the [Deutsches Medizinhistorisches Museum](#) (DMMI) in Ingolstadt, Germany between **10 and 13 September 2025**. The conference aims to bring together museum professionals, scholars, students and independent collectors to discuss the material status and requirements of medical objects entrusted to us, as well as new ways of releasing their power.

Papers (20 minutes) might address, but are not limited to, the following themes:

- The strength and relevance of objects as “generators of enquiry”, i.e. as a starting point for historical research
- Medical object meanings: single versus ensembles/collections
- Provenance research and medical objects
- Tracing the individual in human remains
- Fostering multisensory/multimodal engagement with specific medical objects
- Evocative medical objects in teaching and outreach
- Specific materials in medical collections and their needs (e.g.: film and photography as historical source and problematic material – the conference venue provides a cinema room)
- A matter of care: the (im-)perfect depot

Museum Slam Presentations (5 minutes) will provide the opportunity to deliver a concise insight into an institution (museum, collection, institute) or a specific project dealing with medical objects.

Proposals should be in a single Word document, including a 250-word abstract and a short CV/biographical statement and sent to dmm@ingolstadt.de by **28 February 2025**. Please use as subject line **“IAMMC Conference”** and note clearly if your proposal is meant for a paper or for the museum slam. We also welcome proposals from participants who would like to present or discuss in a joint panel or a roundtable some of the ways that they are working together on medical collections related topics.

This conference is organized on behalf of the new “International Association for Medical Museums and Collections” (IAMMC). This association is the successor of the “European Association of Museums of the History of Medical Sciences” (EAMHMS). At the opening of the 2025 conference IAMMC will be formally launched and we invite all interested to be part of this new movement!

Finally, some basic information on the conference site: the city of Ingolstadt is situated in Bavaria on the banks of the River Danube, mid-way between Munich and Nuremberg. It can be reached by car (highway A9), train (ICE station) and airplane (shuttle buses to Munich airport). Nowadays, it is famous as the home of AUDI and the birthplace of Frankenstein’s creature...

Best wishes,
Marion Maria Ruisinger and the team of the DMMI

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