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About the collections and exhibitions of physics and astronomy at the Museum of Science and Technology in Milan (MUST)

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In 1955, two years after the inauguration of the Leonardo da Vinci Museum in Milan, the Physics Section opened with the three galleries Ottica, Elettricità and Apparecchi storico-didattici. The Physics Section exhibited a good part of the material sent on display at the Chicago Expo in 1933 by the CNR and donated to the Museum in 1947, and of the collection of didactic instruments of the Physics Institute of the University of Padua, granted to the Museum in 1954.

The MUST collection of scientific equipment and instruments, born from these two collections and now called the “Strumentazione Tecnico Scientifica” Collection, consists of over 2000 items from various sources, including the “Centro Didattico di Fisica Sperimentale”, a prestigious activity of the Museum between 1955 and the end of the 1980s.

Recent research apparatuses by CERN and INFN are among the latest acquisitions conferred on this collection. The MUST Astronomy collection is essentially made up of instrumentation from the Brera Observatory (OAB) and exhibited since 1961 in the Museum’s Astronomy Section, now included in the Museum Space Area. The latest instrument to arrive from the OAB, in 2017, is the Merz Repsold refracting telescope used by Schiaparelli.

A cultural heritage education project: MUST and the Liceo Scientifico Vittorio Veneto in Milan are experimenting with the students a path that starts from the objects of the Liceo’s collection of scientific instruments, present since 1923, to get to know them and use them as historical sources, according to the working method of the museum.

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