

Museum Facts

Museums Are Economic Engines

- Museums support more than 726,000 American jobs.¹
- Museums contribute \$50 billion to the U.S. economy each year.²
- Seventy-six percent of all U.S. leisure travelers participate in cultural or heritage activities such as visiting museums. These travelers spend 60 percent more money on average than other leisure travelers.³
- The economic activity of museums generates more than \$12 billion in tax revenue, one-third of it going to state and local governments. Each job created by the museum sector results in \$16,495 in additional tax revenue.⁴
- Every direct job at a museum supports an additional job in the economy. This is a higher rate than many other industries.⁵
- Museums and other nonprofit cultural organizations return more than \$5 in tax revenues for every \$1 they receive in funding from all levels of government.⁶

Museums Are Community Anchors

- In determining America's Best Cities, Bloomberg Business Week placed the greatest weight on "leisure amenities [including density of museums], followed by educational metrics and economic metrics...then crime and air quality."⁷
- Money Magazine's annual 'Best Places to Live' survey incorporates the concentration of accredited museums.⁸

People Love Museums

- More people visited an art museum, science center, historic house or site, zoo, or aquarium in 2018 than attended a professional sporting event.⁹
- Museums receive millions of online visits to their websites each year.¹⁰
- Museum websites serve a diverse online community, including teachers, parents, and students (including those students who are home-schooled).
- Museum volunteers contribute a million hours of service every week.¹¹
- Support for museums is robust regardless of political persuasion. 96% of Americans would approve of lawmakers who acted to support museums. The number is consistently high for respondents who consider themselves politically liberal (97%), moderate (95%), or conservative (93%).¹²

Museums Serve the Public

- Many museums offer programs tailored to veterans and military families. In 2018, more than 2,000 museums participated in the Blue Star Museums initiative, offering free summer admission to all active-duty and reserve personnel and their families.¹³ This effort reached more than 900,000 people, and many other museums offer military discounts or free admission throughout the year.
- Museums also provide many social services, including programs for children on the autism spectrum, English as a Second Language classes, and programs for adults with Alzheimer's or other cognitive impairments.¹⁴

¹ *Museums as Economic Engines*, AAM and Oxford Economics, 2017

² Ibid.

³ *Cultural and Heritage Traveler Report*, Mandala Research, 2013

⁴ *Museums as Economic Engines*, AAM and Oxford Economics, 2017

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ *Arts and Economic Prosperity V*, 2017, Americans for the Arts

⁷ businessweek.com/slideshows/2012-09-26/americas-50-best-cities

⁸ time.com/money/4939980/choosing-best-places-to-live-2017

⁹ Broader population sampling conducted on behalf of AAM by Wilkening Consulting, 2018

¹⁰ AAM estimate based on *National Study on the Use of Libraries, Museums, and the Internet*, IMLS, 2008

¹¹ *Museum Financial Information Survey*, AAM, 2009

¹² Ibid.

¹³ National Endowment for the Arts

¹⁴ *Museums on Call*, AAM, 2013



Museum Facts

Museums Partner with Schools

- Museums spend more than \$2 billion each year on education activities; the typical museum devotes three-quarters of its education budget to K-12 students.¹⁵
- Museums receive approximately 55 million visits each year from students in school groups.¹⁶
- Museums help teach the state and local curricula, tailoring their programs in math, science, art, literacy, language arts, history, civics and government, economics and financial literacy, geography, and social studies.¹⁷
- Students who attend a field trip to an art museum experience an increase in critical thinking skills, historical empathy, and tolerance. For students from rural or high-poverty regions, the increase is even more significant.¹⁸
- Children who visited a museum during kindergarten had higher achievement scores in reading, mathematics, and science in third grade than children who did not. Children who are most at risk for deficits and delays in achievement also see this benefit.¹⁹

Museums Are for Everyone

- Museums are committed to ensuring that people of all backgrounds have access to high quality experiences in their institutions. In 2012, 37% of museums were free at all times or had suggested admission fees only; nearly all the rest offered discounts or free admission days.²⁰
- Since 2014, more than 300 museums nationwide have facilitated more than 1.5 million museum visits for low-income Americans through the Museums for All program.²¹
- About 26% of museums are located in rural areas²²; other museums reach these communities with traveling vans, portable exhibits, and robust online resources.

Museums Are Trusted

- The American public considers museums the most trustworthy source of information in America, rated higher than local papers, nonprofit researchers, the U.S. government, and academic researchers.²³
- Museums preserve and protect more than a billion objects.²⁴
- The American public considers museums a more reliable source of historical information than books, teachers, or even personal accounts by relatives.²⁵

Museums and Public Opinion

- 97% of Americans believe that museums are educational assets for their communities.
- 89% believe that museums contribute important economic benefits to their community.
- 96% would think positively of their elected officials for taking legislative action to support museums.
- 96% want to maintain or increase federal funding for museums.²⁶

Museums Save Species

- In 2016, accredited museums spent \$216 million on field conservation projects in 127 countries.²⁷
- Museums are involved with conservation breeding, habitat preservation, public education, field conservation, and supportive research to ensure survival for many of the planet's threatened or endangered species. Museums also conduct or facilitate research to advance the scientific knowledge of the animals in human care and to enhance the conservation of wild populations.

¹⁵ *Museum Financial Information Survey*, AAM, 2009

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ *Building the Future of Education: Museums and the Learning Ecosystem*, Center for the Future of Museums, 2013

¹⁸ *The Educational Value of Field Trips*, Education Next, 2014

¹⁹ *The Effect of Informal Learning Environments on Academic Achievement during Elementary School*, presented to the American Educational Research Association, Swan, 2014

²⁰ *Annual Condition of Museums and the Economy*, AAM, 2013

²¹ Museums4all.org

²² *Museum Universe Data File*, IMLS, 2014

²³ *Museums R+D*, Reach Advisors

²⁴ *Heritage Health Index*, 2004

²⁵ *The Presence of the Past*, Rosenzweig and Thelen

²⁶ *Museums & Public Opinion*, AAM and Wilkening Consulting

²⁷ Association of Zoos and Aquariums