

IMLS Office of Museum Services Funding

Request

- We urge Congress to provide \$42.7 million in Fiscal Year 2021 funding for the IMLS Office of Museum Services, the amount approved by the U.S. House of Representatives last year.

Introduction

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is the primary federal agency responsible for helping museums connect people to information and ideas. Its Office of Museum Services (OMS) supports all types of museums—including aquariums, arboretums, art museums, botanical gardens, children’s museums, historic sites, history museums, military museums, natural history museums, nature centers, planetariums, science and technology centers, zoos, and more—by awarding grants that help them educate students, preserve and digitize collections, and connect with their communities. The 2018-2022 IMLS strategic plan focuses on promoting lifelong learning, strengthening the capacity of museums and libraries to serve their communities, increasing access to information and ideas, and strategically aligning resources to maximize public value.

Reauthorization

Congress overwhelmingly reauthorized IMLS and its Office of Museum Services (OMS) in late 2018 by enacting the Museum and Library Services Act of 2018 (S. 3530 now Public Law No: 115-410). The legislation was passed with widespread bipartisan support by unanimous consent in the Senate and by a vote of 331 to 28 in the House, showing Congress’ renewed bipartisan support for the agency’s programs and a renewed commitment to its funding.

Status

- The Office of Museum Services within IMLS is funded through the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill. It is currently funded at \$38.5 million for FY 2020.
- As in FY 2018, FY 2019 and FY 2020, the president’s FY 2021 budget proposal is expected to eliminate IMLS entirely, allocating no funding to OMS.

IMLS Office of Museum Services Funding History

	FY 10	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13 CR*	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21 President’s Request
Appropriation <i>(in millions)</i>	\$35.2	\$31.6	\$30.9	\$30.9	\$30.1	\$30.1	\$31.3	\$31.7	\$34.7	\$34.7	\$38.5	TBD

*In FY 2013, across-the-board sequestration cuts reduced OMS’ effective funding to \$29.2 million.

Talking Points

- The Institute of Museum and Library Services has strong bipartisan support, and has been lauded for its peer-reviewed, highly competitive grant programs.
- OMS has set a strong record of congressional support during the appropriations submission process in each of the last seven years, with 178 Representatives and 41 Senators signing FY 2020 appropriations letters on its behalf.



- In FY 2019, Congress provided \$242 million to IMLS, of which \$34.7 million was directed to the Office of Museum Services. With this funding, OMS provided 219 grants totaling \$34,714,990 to museums and related organizations in 48 states and the District of Columbia.
- By leveraging significant private, state, and local funding, OMS grants amplify a small federal investment for maximum impact in the community.
- In 2018, legislation reauthorizing IMLS passed Congress with overwhelming bipartisan support.
- There is high demand for funding from the IMLS Office of Museum Services. In FY 2019 OMS received 938 applications requesting nearly \$134 million, but current funding has allowed the agency to fund only a small fraction of the highly rated grant applications it receives.
- The Inspire! Grants for Small Museums program, designed to encourage small institutions to apply for OMS funding, generated 202 applications in its first year. OMS awarded 30 grants totaling \$1.1 million, representing 15 percent of the applicants and demonstrating a need for continued support for the nation's small museums.
- Despite this funding shortfall, museum attendance has increased, collections are subject to increasing risk, and museum staff members need professional development in conservation, education, and technology.
- In 2014, IMLS launched Museums for All, a national access initiative. Today, more than 500 participating museums offer deeply discounted admission to visitors who receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits. More than 1 million people visited a Museums for All museum in 2019 and more than 2.5 million visits have occurred since 2014.
- To learn more about grants awarded to museums in your state or district, visit: [imls.gov/grants/awarded-grants](https://www.imls.gov/grants/awarded-grants).

Additional Information About Museums

- [Museums are economic engines](#), supporting more than 726,000 jobs and contributing \$50 billion to the U.S. economy per year. They attract tourists, promote economic development, and make communities more desirable for employers.
- Museums' economic impact generates \$12 billion in tax revenue at all levels of government.
- Museums have strong public support: [Museums and Public Opinion](#), a 2017 national public opinion poll, showed that 95% of voters would approve of lawmakers who acted to support museums and 96% want federal funding for museums to be maintained or increased.
- Museums are an essential part of the nation's educational infrastructure, spending more than \$2 billion a year on education and promoting lifelong learning.
- Museums receive more than 55 million visits each year from student groups.
- Children who visited a museum during kindergarten had higher achievement scores in reading, mathematics, and science in third grade than children who did not.
- Museums are beloved community anchors, attracting over a million volunteer hours every week.
- Many museums have developed innovative programs to meet the growing needs of their individual communities. For example, some museums have programs designed specifically for children with special needs and their families, some work with medical schools to teach observation and description skills, and some are helping veterans heal from their wounds, both physical and psychological.

FY 2021 Senate OMS Sign-on Letter

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray:

We write to thank the Subcommittee for its previous support, and to urge you to support robust funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services' (IMLS) Office of Museum Services (OMS) in the fiscal year (FY) 2021 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations bill.

Despite its small size, the IMLS Office of Museum Services is the largest dedicated source of investment in our nation's museums, which support over 700,000 jobs and contribute \$50 billion to the U.S. economy each year. OMS funding plays a significant role in this economic impact by helping museums reach more visitors and spur community development. In addition to their economic benefits, OMS grants also support museums' advancements in areas such as technology, lifelong community learning, and conservation and preservation. These successes notwithstanding, only a small fraction of the nation's museums are currently being reached and many highly rated grant applications go unfunded.

The demand for museum services is greater than ever. At a time when school and community resources are strained, museums are working overtime to fill the gaps. Every year, they welcome more than 55 million schoolchildren, bring art, science and cultural heritage into communities, and partner with other nonprofits to meet the specific needs of their local population. In addition, our nation's museums are opening their doors to more people than ever with over 850 million visits each year – with many of these visitors offered free or reduced admission. Many museums have developed innovative programs to meet the growing needs of their individual communities. For example, some museums have programs designed specifically for children with special needs and their families, some work with medical schools to teach observation and description skills, and some are helping veterans heal from their wounds, both physical and psychological.

Congress reauthorized IMLS at the end of 2018, by enacting the Museum and Library Services Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-410). This legislation was adopted by unanimous consent in the Senate and by a vote of 331 to 28 in the House, showing Congress' renewed bipartisan support for the agency's programs and a renewed commitment to its funding. The agency is highly accountable, and its competitive, peer-reviewed grants leverage significant private resources while supporting museums in every state.

We urge the Subcommittee to support robust funding for the IMLS Office of Museum Services for FY 2021 to support the important work museums are doing in our states. This vital funding will aid museums of all types and enable them to continue bolstering the economy, serving our schools and communities, and preserving our cultural heritage for future generations.

Again, we appreciate the Subcommittee's prior support for OMS and request this investment to strengthen and sustain the work of our nation's museums.

Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator

Susan M. Collins
United States Senator

(For more information or to sign onto this letter, please contact Marissa Goodstone with Senator Gillibrand at marissa_goodstone@gillibrand.senate.gov or Rowan Bost with Senator Collins at rowan_bost@collins.senate.gov.)

FY 2021 House of Representatives OMS Sign-on Letter

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Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole,

We write to thank the Subcommittee for its previous support, and to urge you to support robust funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services' (IMLS) Office of Museum Services (OMS) in the FY 2021 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations bill.

Despite its small size, the IMLS Office of Museum Services is the largest dedicated source of investment in our nation's museums, which support over 700,000 jobs and contribute \$50 billion annually to the U.S. economy. OMS funding plays a significant role in this economic impact by helping museums reach more visitors and spur community development. In addition to their economic benefits, OMS grants also support museums' advancements in areas such as technology, lifelong community learning, and conservation and preservation. These successes notwithstanding, only a small fraction of the nation's museums are currently being reached and many highly rated grant applications go unfunded.

The demand for museum services is greater than ever. At a time when school and community resources are strained, museums are working overtime to fill the gaps. Every year, they welcome more than 55 million schoolchildren, bring art, science and cultural heritage into communities, and partner with other nonprofits to meet the specific needs of their local population. In addition, our nation's museums are opening their doors to more people than ever with over 850 million visits each year – with many of these visitors offered free or reduced admission. Museums are also part of a robust nonprofit community working to address a wide range of our nation's greatest challenges, from conducting medical research to helping veterans heal physically and psychologically, and from creating energy efficient public buildings to collecting food for needy families.

Congress reauthorized IMLS in late 2018, by enacting the Museum and Library Services Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-410). This legislation was passed by unanimous consent in the Senate and by a vote of 331 to 28 in the House, showing Congress' renewed bipartisan support for the agency's programs and a renewed commitment to its funding. The agency is highly accountable, and its competitive, peer-reviewed grants leverage significant private resources while supporting museums in every state.

We urge the Subcommittee to support robust funding for the IMLS Office of Museum Services for FY 2021 to support the important work museums are doing in our districts. This vital funding will aid museums of all types and enable them to continue bolstering the economy, serving our schools and communities, and preserving our cultural heritage for future generations.

Again, we appreciate the Subcommittee's prior support for OMS and request this investment to strengthen and sustain the work of our nation's museums.

Sincerely,

Paul Tonko
U.S. Representative

David B. McKinley, P.E.
U.S. Representative

Chellie Pingree
U.S. Representative

Andy Barr
U.S. Representative

(For more information or to sign onto this letter with one of its leads, please contact Noor Teebi Nimer with Rep. Tonko at noor@mail.house.gov, Kaitlin Brown with Rep. McKinley at kaitlin.brown@mail.house.gov, Evan Johnston with Rep. Pingree at evan.johnston@mail.house.gov, or Claire Osborn with Rep. Barr at claire.osborn@mail.house.gov.)

Tax Policy

Request

We urge Congress to:

- cosponsor legislation establishing a universal charitable deduction (H.R. 651, H.R. 1260; H.R. 5293), allowing taxpayers to deduct their charitable contributions, regardless of whether they itemize.
- cosponsor the Artist-Museum Partnership Act (H.R. 1793), which would allow artists to claim a fair market value deduction when they donate their own work to a collecting institution.
- cosponsor the Legacy IRA Act (H.R. 3832/S. 1257), which would broaden the IRA Charitable Rollover, allowing individuals to make tax-free distributions to planned giving accounts as well as to charities.

Introduction

Museums are part of the broader community of 501(c)(3) charities alongside social and human services organizations, educational institutions, religious congregations, and many others. In recognition of their public benefit, contributions to charities have been tax-deductible for over 100 years, helping to maintain a tradition of charitable giving unmatched in the world. Americans make charitable gifts for altruistic reasons, but tax policy can incentivize greater generosity. With the recent doubling of the standard deduction, however, only about ten percent of taxpayers now itemize deductions, and multiple measures show that both the amount given and the number of donors have declined.

Deductibility of Charitable Gifts

- Charitable giving is the lifeblood of museums of all sizes and disciplines, accounting for more than one-third of their operating funds and up to eighty percent of their collections. Reduced donations would significantly damage museums' capacity to serve their communities.
- The Giving USA 2019 report found that charitable giving by individuals dropped an inflation-adjusted 3.4 percent in 2018, despite a growing economy. Nearly every type of recipient organization saw giving decline or remain flat, including an inflation-adjusted 2.1 percent decrease in private sector giving to the arts, culture, and humanities.
- According to the Fundraising Effectiveness Project, fundraising plunged further during 2019, with the amount given having decreased by 4.6 percent and the number of donors down 3.6 percent compared to 2018. It is unprecedented for such drops to occur during a time of economic growth.
- H.R. 651, H.R. 1260 and H.R. 5293 would allow taxpayers claiming the standard deduction to also deduct charitable contributions, thus increasing the number of donors and the total amount given allowing museums and all other charities to better serve their communities.

Deductibility of Artist Gifts

- When a collector donates a work of art to a museum, they may claim a deduction for its fair market value. When artists give their own work, however, they can deduct only the value of materials, such as paint and canvas. As a result of this unfair treatment, few artists give, and the public is denied access to the best art being produced today.
- When Congress disallowed the artist deduction in 1969, the effect was immediate and drastic: artist donations to some museums declined by more than 90 percent.
- The Artist-Museum Partnership Act, H.R. 1793, would provide a deduction equal to appraised fair market value for charitable contributions of literary, musical, artistic, or scholarly compositions created by the donor, provided that the recipient organization uses the work in a manner related to its charitable mission.

IRA Charitable Rollover

- Under current law, individuals aged 70.5 and above may contribute up to \$100,000 from their IRA accounts to charity, counting it toward their required distribution but not paying tax on it. The Legacy IRA Act would expand this provision by allowing gifts to planned giving accounts, and by raising the cap.

Status

- Legislation in the House (H.R. 651, H.R. 1260; H.R. 5293) would allow individuals to deduct contributions regardless of itemizing status.
- The artist deduction legislation (H.R. 1793) has been introduced in the House.
- IRA Charitable Rollover legislation (H.R. 3832/S. 1257) has been introduced in the House and Senate.

Issues at a Glance

Museums—the vast majority of which are 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations—play a key role in education, job creation, tourism, economic development, historic preservation, environmental conservation, and advancing scientific literacy and global competitiveness. Museums also have strong public support: a 2017 national public opinion poll, [Museums and Public Opinion](#), showed that 95% of voters would approve of lawmakers who acted to support museums and 96% want federal funding for museums to be maintained or increased. The museum community—which includes aquariums, art museums, children’s museums, historic sites, history museums, maritime museums, military museums, natural history museums, planetariums, presidential libraries, public gardens, science centers, and zoos—has worked together to develop this federal policy agenda.

Institute of Museum and Library Services’ Office of Museum Services Funding

IMLS is the primary federal agency responsible for helping museums connect people to information and ideas. Its Office of Museum Services (OMS) awards grants to museums to support educating students, preserving and digitizing collections, and engaging communities. Grants are awarded in every state, but current funding has allowed the agency to fund only a small fraction of the highly rated grant applications it receives. Congress has regularly reauthorized IMLS with broad bipartisan support, most recently in 2018. OMS has set a strong record of congressional support during the appropriations submission process in each of the last seven years, with 178 Representatives and 41 Senators signing the FY 2020 appropriations letters on its behalf. IMLS received \$252 million in FY 2020 appropriations, of which \$38.5 million went to OMS.

- We urge Congress to provide \$42.7 million in FY 2021 for OMS, the amount approved by the U.S. House of Representatives last year.

Tax Policy

Charitable giving is the lifeblood of museums of all sizes and disciplines; it accounts for more than one-third of their operating funds. We support efforts to extend and expand incentives for charitable giving. Limitations on these incentives could have a chilling effect on the ability of museums to attract donations needed to serve their communities and protect their collections. We urge Congress to:

- cosponsor legislation establishing a universal charitable deduction (H.R. 651, H.R. 1260, H.R. 5293), allowing taxpayers to deduct their charitable contributions, regardless of whether they itemize;
- cosponsor the Artist-Museum Partnership Act (H.R. 1793), which would allow artists to claim a fair market value deduction when they donate their own work to a collecting institution; and
- cosponsor the Legacy IRA Act (H.R. 3832, S. 1257), which would expand the IRA Charitable Rollover.

National Endowment for the Humanities

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) provides direct grants to museums, universities, archives, and libraries in support of research, education, and preservation. Due to high demand and extremely limited funding, NEH is only able to fund a small percentage of the proposals it receives. The agency also provides annual grants to state humanities councils in every state and U.S. territory. NEH received \$155 million in FY 2019 appropriations and \$162.25 million in FY 2020 appropriations.

- We urge Congress to provide at least \$170 million for NEH in FY 2021.

National Endowment for the Arts

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) works to bring the arts to every community in America, including rural areas, military bases, and urban centers. It provides grants to all types of arts organizations—including museums—to exhibit, preserve, and interpret visual materials. The agency's federal role is uniquely valuable: no other funder, public or private, funds the arts in every state and the U.S. territories. The NEA also distributes roughly forty percent of its grant funds to state arts agencies for re-granting. The NEA received \$155 million in FY 2019 appropriations and \$162.25 million in FY 2020 appropriations.

- We urge Congress to provide \$170 million for the NEA in FY 2021.

Elementary and Secondary Education

Museums are vital education providers, educating students, providing professional development to teachers, and helping teach local curricula. Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (the “Every Student Succeeds Act”) provides states with significantly more flexibility in setting and meeting performance targets, which could make it easier for schools to work with museums.

- We support efforts to promote school-museum partnerships (including museum schools), require greater collaboration between the U.S. Department of Education and the Institute of Museum and Library Services, fully fund federal education programs in which museums participate, and fully implement the “well-rounded education” provisions in the Every Student Succeeds Act, which include the many subject areas in which museums help teach the curricula.

Higher Education

Median earnings for adults with a bachelor's degree are approximately 64 percent higher than those with just a high school diploma, according to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Yet, student loan balances constitute the largest source of debt for American households. While many museum jobs require bachelor's or even advanced degrees, nonprofit museum professionals often do not earn as much as they might in the private sector. Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) is a vital tool in allowing talented and highly trained employees from all socioeconomic backgrounds to work at organizations that make an impact in their community. Many museums benefit from Higher Education Act (HEA) program funding.

- We support efforts to improve the affordability and accessibility of higher education for all students. We urge Congress to support and improve PSLF and sufficient income-driven repayment options for federal student loans. We also ask that Congress support funding for HEA programs in which museums participate, such as Title VI International and Foreign Language Education.

Lifelong STEM Engagement

Museums, science centers, zoos, aquariums, botanical gardens, and other cultural institutions have an important role to play in increasing the understanding of and engagement with science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) among people of all ages. As museums are key partners in ensuring Americans' lifelong engagement in STEM, we urge Congress to:

- support federal agency efforts to implement the 5-year Federal STEM Education Strategic Plan;
- fully fund and authorize museums to participate in STEM engagement and informal STEM education programs across federal science agencies;
- fund the following programs at their inflation-adjusted FY 2020 levels: NSF's Advancing Informal STEM Learning (AISL) program at \$64.5 million, NOAA's Office of Education at \$30.5 million, NASA's Office of STEM Engagement at \$123 million and Science Mission Directorate's Science Engagement and Partnerships Division at \$47 million, and NIH's Science Education Partnership Award (SEPA) program at \$21 million; and
- regard museums as vital components of the STEM education ecosystem, including by ensuring that such organizations are eligible for relevant federal funding opportunities and represented at appropriate conversations convened by federal agencies.

Historic Preservation

In addition to preserving and protecting more than 1 billion objects, many museums are historic themselves, and their collections are critical to telling our collective national story. Historic sites and historic preservation efforts not only protect our national heritage, they are also economic engines and job creators in the thousands of communities they serve. Minimal government funding helps to leverage significant private support, often through the Historic Tax Credit. The FY 2020 appropriations provided \$52.7 million to State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs), \$13.7 million to Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPOs), and \$750,000 for grants to underserved communities—all through the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF). It also provided an additional \$18.8 million from the HPF to document, interpret, and preserve the stories and sites associated with the Civil Rights Movement. Save America's Treasures (SAT) received \$16 million in FY 2020 through the HPF and the Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization grant program received \$7.5 million.

- We urge Congress to support FY 2021 funding of at least \$61 million for SHPOs, \$22 million for THPOs, \$850,000 for grants to underserved communities, \$28 million for civil rights sites, \$18 million for Save America's Treasures, \$10 million for Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization grants and to cosponsor the Historic Tax Credit Growth and Opportunity Act (H.R. 2825/S. 2615). We also urge Congress to support the legislative proposals recommended by the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission in its [report to the President](#) on the country's 250th commemoration.

Public Diplomacy and the Protection of Cultural Property

As welcoming and trusted community anchors, museums are perfectly positioned to help build cross-cultural relationships, which are enhanced by collections that span the world across centuries. In recent years, irreplaceable cultural property has been lost in places like Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Mali, and Afghanistan. Protecting this property—both directly and by working through international organizations—is a vital part of United States diplomacy, showing the respect of the United States for other cultures and the common heritage of humanity. American museums and the conservation professionals who work with them are some of the world's best at protecting and caring for cultural property.

- We urge Congress to pursue measures that protect cultural property around the world, and to consider museums and conservation professionals as part of the solution to these issues. We expect the United States Government to comply with international law and urge the U.S. Government to maintain its commitment to its longstanding practice of not targeting cultural sites during peace or wartime.

Shutdown Prevention and Economic Impact

Government shutdowns occur with some frequency; there have been 20 of them since 1976. During the 16-day shutdown in October 2013, hundreds of museums nationwide—as well as national parks, forests, monuments, and historic sites—were forced to close their doors. This prevented the public from enjoying artworks, historic treasures, and lands that are intended to be held in the public trust. The economic impact of these closures was devastating, not just for the entities themselves, but for many businesses that rely on the tourism they generate. The damage from the 35-day 2018-2019 partial government shutdown—the longest in U.S. history—is still being assessed but the Smithsonian lost an estimated \$3.4 million in revenue and the National parks lost more than \$10 million in revenue.

- We urge Congress to amend the Anti-Deficiency Act to allow for the continuity of operations and public access to our nation's public lands and federally operated museums in the event of a funding gap.

The Multinational Species Conservation Funds and Wildlife Conservation

In addition to educating the public about wildlife, accredited zoos and aquariums also protect species in their collections and across their natural habitats. The Multinational Species Conservation Funds (MSCF) are targeted investments in global priority species such as African and Asian elephants, tigers, rhinos, great apes, tortoises, freshwater turtles, and marine turtles. The MSCF program helps to sustain wildlife populations by combating poaching, reducing human-wildlife conflict, and protecting essential habitats globally. Despite its modest funding level, this program has a significant impact because it consistently leverages almost a 2 to 1 match of federal dollars from partner governments, local NGOs, international conservation organizations, and private businesses.

- We urge Congress to pass H.R. 1446/S. 652, legislation to reauthorize the Multinational Species Conservation Funds Semipostal Stamp which benefits these critical programs.
- The museum community, including botanical gardens, strongly supports efforts to protect native wildlife, including declining pollinator populations.

Museum Facts

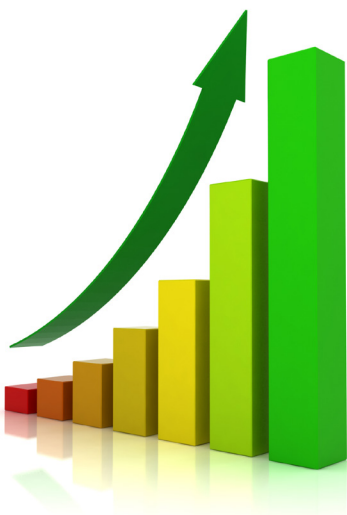
Museums Are Economic Engines

Museums support more than

726,000

American jobs.

Every direct job at a museum supports an additional job in the economy. This is a higher rate than many other industries.



Museums contribute

\$50 billion

to the U.S. economy each year.

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.

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.



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.





Museums Are for Everyone

Museums are committed to ensuring that people of all backgrounds have access to high-quality museum experiences. 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.



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.

Museums Partner with Schools

Museums help teach the state and local curriculum, tailoring their programs in math, science, art, literacy, language arts, history, civics and government, economics and financial literacy, geography, and social studies.





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 2019 more than 2,000 museums in all 50 states participated in the 10th year of the Blue Star Museums program, offering free summer admission to all active-duty and reserve personnel and their families.¹³ In the past five years more than 4 million active duty members and their families have participated in the Blue Star Museums program, which is, on average, more than 800,000 visitors per year, 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; bitly.com/healthcompendium, 2019

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
- Facilitated classroom visits to art museums have a measurable impact on key aspects of student learning.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 500 museums nationwide have facilitated more than 2.5 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 2018, accredited museums spent \$231 million on field conservation projects in 130 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 *Impact of Art Museum Programs on Students Research Study*, National Art Educators Association and Association of Art Museum Directors, 2018.

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

Museums & Public Opinion

Summary of Findings

The news for museums is excellent. National public opinion polling shows that Americans overwhelmingly appreciate and recognize the work of museums as educational and economic assets to their communities. What's more, Americans broadly support federal funding of museums and approve of lawmakers who take action to support them. The data speaks clearly, whether young or old, conservative or liberal, or a museum-goer or not, Americans value the museums in their communities.

97%

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 taking legislative action to support museums

96%

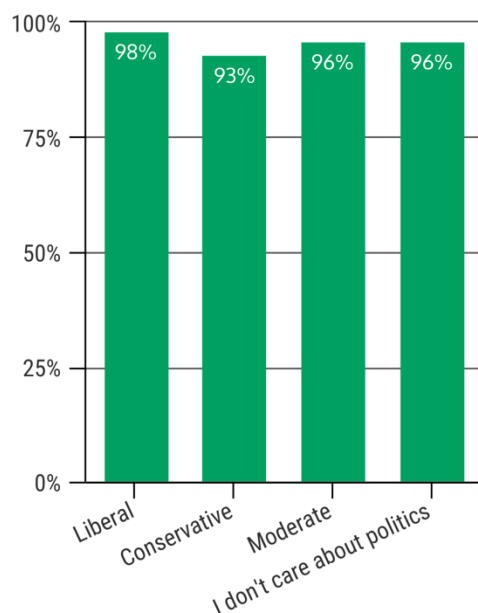
Want federal funding for museums to be maintained or increased

Americans Want Their Lawmakers to Act in Support of Museums

Museums are widely valued for their educational and economic contributions, but Americans don't stop there: they expect their legislators to take action to support them. The vast majority of Americans would approve of lawmakers who take legislative action to support museums. This support is clearly a bipartisan consensus with more than 90% of respondents agreeing across all political affiliations. 95% of voters report they would approve if their lawmakers took action to support museums.

Amidst today's contentious political climate, few issues garner such consistent and high approval as the support of American museums.

Political Persuasion



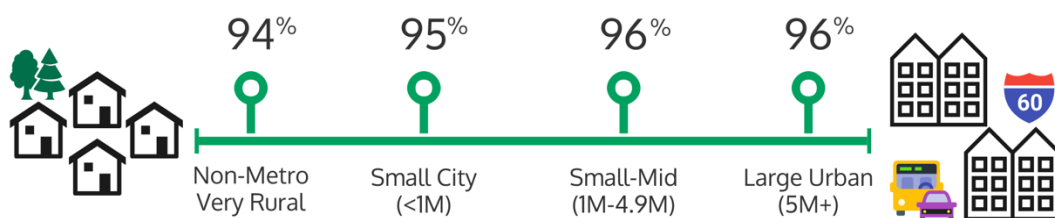
Visitors to Museums



Voters in Elections



Community Size



Percentage of Americans who would approve of lawmakers who take action to support museums



About the Alliance

The American Alliance of Museums is the largest organization of its kind in the United States with the mission of championing museums and nurturing excellence with our members and allies. With over 35,000 members that represent museums of all kinds, from art and history museums to zoos and botanic gardens, the Alliance provides strong support, standards of excellence, thought leadership, and professional networks to the entire museum field. As an Alliance, we speak with one voice to advocate for museums and assert their value as critical educational institutions, economic engines, and community assets.

Nurturing Excellence

ACCREDITATION

The Alliance serves as the U.S. accrediting body for museums. As the museum field's mark of distinction, accreditation offers high-profile, peer-based validation of a museum's operations and impact.

CORE DOCUMENTS VERIFICATION

Through this program, the Alliance evaluates a museum's five core policy documents (mission statement, institutional code of ethics, strategic institutional plan, disaster preparedness/emergency response plan, and collections management policy) against a set of required elements.

MUSEUM ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Supported through a cooperative agreement between the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the Alliance, the Museum Assessment Program (MAP) provides technical assistance to all types of museums to improve operations through self-study and a consultative site visit from a peer. Since 1981, this popular program has served more than 5,000 museums.

PEER REVIEW

The Alliance's volunteer peer review program is the lifeblood of accreditation and the Museum Assessment Program (MAP). Each year, hundreds of museum professionals conduct site visits to the participating institutions, lending their experience and expertise while enriching their own.

Championing Museums

ADVOCACY

Join the Alliance's year-round advocacy initiatives and help advance the cause of museums. The Alliance provides the tools and information you need to make the case for museums at the national, state, and local level.

MUSEUMS ADVOCACY DAY

Working with our partners at the national, regional, and state level, this unique annual event brings together museum professionals, trustees, students, and supporters. Get hands-on advocacy training, build your own leadership skills, and make visits to Capitol Hill.

"INVITE CONGRESS TO VISIT YOUR MUSEUM" WEEK

Show your elected officials what museums are and do in the community. The Alliance provides the tools and templates to invite your elected officials to visit your museum and plan and prepare for their visit.

CENTER FOR THE FUTURE OF MUSEUMS

An Alliance initiative, the Center for the Future of Museums (CFM) identifies trends and critical issues facing museums and society. CFM produces a weekly Dispatches from the Future newsletter and TrendsWatch, an annual forecasting report. On a selective basis, CFM staff are also available to provide workshops and training on strategic foresight and emerging issues, as speakers for public lectures or conferences, and as advisors on museum planning initiatives.



Resources

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Alliance provides opportunities designed to help museum colleagues build professional skills, manage their careers, foster communities of practice, share expertise, and contribute to common standards and best practices.

PROFESSIONAL NETWORKS

Individual Professional members of the Alliance have access to nearly two dozen professional networks based on job responsibilities and areas of interest.

RESOURCE LIBRARY

The Alliance is proud to maintain an online library of over 2,000 guidelines, articles, and fact sheets for our members on all aspects of museum operations.

INFORMATION CENTER

The Alliance also provides our Tier 3 members customized reference services and sample documents.

ALLIANCE BLOG

The Alliance blog provides the museum community with a place to share stories and insights, reaching thousands of people across the global museum field each week. Field Notes is a weekly e-newsletter featuring fresh stories from the blog.

MUSEUM MAGAZINE

Museum magazine is AAM's bi-monthly, award-winning magazine that addresses the issues and challenges facing museums today.

MUSEUM JUNCTION

Join our free online community to connect with peers, pose questions, and share your expertise with colleagues.

AAM BOOKSTORE

The AAM Bookstore offers the best and most comprehensive professional literature in print and eBook formats, making it the go-to source for all titles critical to the work of museums—from accessibility, interpretation/education, and audience research to technology, mission/institutional planning, collections stewardship, financial sustainability, and more.

ANNUAL MEETING & MUSEUMEXPO

The annual meeting brings together 5,000 museum professionals from around the world, and is the museum field's premier professional development opportunity. The Annual Meeting & MuseumExpo showcases the latest in technology, exhibit design, lighting, security, and countless other innovations critical to the museum field. More than 250 exhibitors display and demonstrate cost- and time-saving solutions and cutting-edge technologies.



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