National Snapshot of COVID-19 Impact on United States Museums

Fielded October 15-28, 2020
850 respondents from museums across the United States
95% confidence at +/- 3%

Research conducted by the American Alliance of Museums and Wilkening Consulting
Closures, Reopening, and Visitation
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Respondents by Institution type

- Aquarium
- Zoo
- Specialized Museum
- Science/Technology Center/Museum
- Nature Center
- Natural History/Anthropology
- History Museum/Historical Society
- Historic House/Site
- General Museum
- Children’s/Youth Museum
- Art Museum
- Arboretum/Botanic Garden
- Other
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Did the museum temporarily close to the public due to COVID-19 at some point this year?

- Yes: 98%
- No: 2%
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Is the museum currently:

- Open: 71%
- Closed: 29%
If the museum is currently closed, what is your target date for reopening?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No date for reopening currently identified</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Later in 2021</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First quarter 2021 (January-March)</td>
<td>26%</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 2020</td>
<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 2020</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2020</td>
<td>4%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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Distribution of closure

Y axis = number of museums
X axis = month in 2020
Changes in visitation

Museums that are open are experiencing, on average, 35 percent of normal attendance.

38 percent of respondents reported noting demographic changes in visitation upon reopening, primarily with shifts towards local residents and younger visitors.
Staffing and Service
Has your organization had to do any of the following?

- Furloughed contract staff: 5%
- Laid off contract staff: 9%
- Furloughed part time staff: 27%
- Laid-off part time staff: 26%
- Furloughed full-time staff: 21%
- Laid off full-time staff: 21%
- We have not furloughed or laid off any staff: 47%

53% of responding museums have furloughed or laid off staff.

On average, respondents indicated 28% of their staffs are currently furloughed or laid off.
Which staff positions were most affected by the layoff/furloughs?

- Guest Services/Admissions/Frontline/Retail: 68%
- Education Staff: 40%
- Facilities/Maintenance/Security Staff: 29%
- Curatorial/Collections/Publications Staff: 26%
- Development: 13%
- Marketing/Communications: 17%
- Finance/Administration: 14%
- Other: 20%

Positions most often listed by responding museums as being most affected by the layoffs:
- 68% guest services/admissions/frontline/retail
- 40% education staff
- 29% facilities/maintenance/security staff
- 26% curatorial/collections/publications
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Have you had to cut back on education, programming, and other public service due to budget shortfalls and/or staff reductions?

- Yes: 33%
- No: 67%
Finances and Sustainability
Museums and Lost Revenue

To prepare for reopening, each museum spent, on average, $27,000. This figure was as high as $750,000 for some respondents.

Responding museums lost an average of $850k each due to the pandemic so far this year.

On average, respondents anticipated losing approximately 35% of the museum's budgeted operating income in 2020.

On average, respondents predicted anticipating losing an additional 28% of normal operating income in 2021.
Did you replace an in-person fundraising event/gala with a digital event this year?

- No: 67%
- Yes: 33%

On average, virtual events fell short of their original revenue goal for in-person events by 34%.
Do you believe there is a significant risk of your museum closing permanently in the next 12 months, absent additional financial relief?

- **Not sure**: 17%
- **Yes**: 12%
- **No**: 70%

29% of museum directors surveyed confirmed there was a “significant risk” (12%) of closing permanently by fall 2021, or they “didn’t know” (17%) if they would survive. Numbers do not add up to 100 due to rounding convention.
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How many months of financial operating reserve does the museum have remaining?

- 6 months or less: 52%
- 7-12 months: 30%
- 13+ months: 18%

American Alliance of Museums
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