

# CULTURE AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT: MAXIMISING THE IMPACT

Towards an OECD Guide for  
Local Governments,  
Communities and Museums

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## 1. About this guide

Museums and cultural heritage sites are powerful assets for local development. They can help attract tourists, bring revenues, regenerate local economies, promote inclusion, boost cultural diversity and reinvent territorial identity. For several decades now, cities and regions have been drawing on these assets to put in place heritage-led regeneration plans as part of their wider economic development strategies. In this context, national, city and regional governments, the museum community, and other stakeholders are increasingly interested in:

- **New ways to measure the impact** of culture and museums on local development to effectively channel public and private funding. The debate shifts from demonstrating the tax revenues, visitors' spending and jobs associated with the museums' economic activity to also capturing impacts on community development through greater social capital; on urban regeneration; on place branding; on inclusion and well-being; on innovation and creativeness.
- **Examples of 'what works' and 'what does not'** in maximising the impacts and creating linkages between the museums and the local economy and social fabric and the implications for a wide spectrum of policies ranging from culture and tourism to employment and skills, health, business development, innovation and spatial planning.
- **New governance arrangements and funding models.** The new agenda impacts on how work is organised within a museum including human resources and funding. It also requires local and regional governments to effectively integrate new dimensions in their economic, social and spatial development strategies.

In 2017-18 the OECD Local Economic and Employment Development Programme is developing a *guide* to inform and support policy makers in designing successful culture-led local development strategies. The *guide* will:

- Identify policy options and measurement indicators to help local governments and museums to increase the development impact of cultural heritage;
- Build a repository of good practices;
- Distil lessons for policies in the area of culture and tourism, employment and skills, health, business development, innovation and spatial planning;

This note is the pilot version of the *guide*. It was developed in consultation with the museum community through the International Council of Museums (ICOM), with selected local governments, experts and academia who participated in four experts' group meeting in 2017 and building on earlier OECD work in the area ([Culture and Local Development](#) (2005), [Local Benefits from Staging Global Events](#) (2008), the [Impact of Culture on Tourism](#) (2009), and [Tourism and the Creative Economy](#) (2014)).

The OECD Secretariat would like to thank Xavier Greffe, Emeritus Professor, University Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, who prepared this guide. The work benefited from contributions from Barbara Ischinger (University of Göttingen, Germany), Luca Dal

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Further work in 2018 will include:

- Pilot phase with selected localities and museums;
- Finalisation of the guide based on a pilot phase;
- Development of a repository of good practice case studies;
- Dissemination at the OECD International Conference on Culture and Local Development on 6-7 December 2018 in Venice, Italy.

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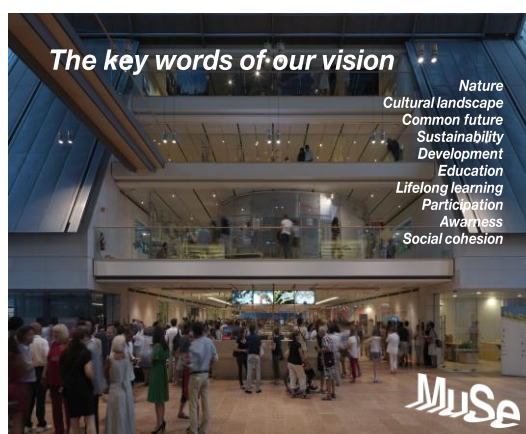
## 2. Introduction

At the time that museums were set up, economic motivations did not count for much. The debate on the power of cultural heritage to attract people and on the economic impact of museums began in the 1970s when many countries started looking for new engines of growth following the gradual decline of traditional manufacturing industries. It was then suggested that their place could be taken by cultural activities, an idea that inspired the *White Paper on Creative Industries* published in the United Kingdom in 1997, preceded by the report brought out by the French Planning Commission in 1990 on the creation of new services and jobs - *Nouveaux services, nouveaux emplois*. It was hoped that ‘cultural tourism’ could take the place of exports as tourist spending would bring in the required revenue in foreign currency: there was no need to move goods to boost earnings, it was enough to get consumers to travel. Consequently, museums were seen as a source of revenue and creators of new jobs<sup>1</sup>.

In the early years of the 21st century, another argument was put forward to stress the role of museums as drivers of development, namely their power to increase the attractiveness of an area. In a globalised world, places now compete with one another to attract investments and professional skills and museums are treated as magnets capable to catalysing this process.

At the same time the role of museums was emphasised in the dimensions such as general well-being, health, education and creation of social capital. Finally, in the age of the creative society, where production of knowledge through knowledge becomes the main lever of development, museums can support local economic development through their support for creative economic activities such as design and innovation for the benefit of local enterprises. Then, for local government, museums become not only one of many players but also drivers.

Since museums enhance well-being, create better living conditions and inspire people, their missions are enriched. Care and preservation of heritage, housing and displaying collections will always be their basic function. A larger objective today is creating knowledge for and about society, or being a place for exchanging references. Another new objective is making the museum a driver of vibrant local development.



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<sup>1</sup> Greffe X. (2016), *Are Museums Drivers of Development? Strategies, Assessment and Prospects*.

As the International Council of Museums (ICOM) has pointed out, the contribution of museums to sustainable development is now an essential element of their agenda. According to ICOM (2011), “sustainability is the dynamic process of museums based on the recognition and preservation of tangible and intangible heritage with the museums responding to the needs of the community. To be sustainable, museums, through their mission, must be an active and attractive part of the community by adding value to the heritage and social memory.”

## 2.1. The purpose of the guide

The purpose of this guide is to propose policy options for local governments and museums willing to maximise the local development impact of cultural heritage. The guide provides a self-assessment framework:

- For local and regional governments to assess and improve their approaches to utilising cultural heritage as part of sustainable local development;
- For museums to assess and strengthen their existing and potential linkages with the local economy and social fabric.

### 2.1.1. Local government as partner and enabler

The contribution of museums to local development through the dissemination of intrinsic and extrinsic values means that their relations with local government are therefore essential, and not only because the majority of museums belong or are placed under the tutelage of local government. In recent decades, many studies have shown how the attitudes of local government catalyse or inhibit the potential contribution of museums to local development. The reverse of this is that many museums explain their difficulties by pointing to the lack of interest of local politicians in their regard, and some of them do not hesitate to say that their own success depends on the decisions of local government. This argument should not legitimate a loss of autonomy of museums and the absence of assessment. But we have to consider the evaluation of museums in conjunction with the corresponding agenda and goals of local government that represents its respective communities, and mobilises resources—regulatory, financial, land and human—to realise these goals.

### 2.1.2. The importance of self-evaluation

To understand the need for a self-evaluation process, we must start from the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic benefits from artistic and cultural activities, as shown in the famous 2004 report by the Rand Corporation<sup>2</sup>. The report shows that the intrinsic values of cultural institutions, in this case the aesthetic and cognitive benefits deriving from museums’ collections, are extended by a series of extrinsic values: the creation of jobs and income related to museums’ activities; the ability of visitors to have empathy for others and thus to consolidate social capital; improved behaviours for social inclusion, well-being and health, etc. These extrinsic values can then change the horizon of museum management. Unable to find the financial resources necessary for producing intrinsic values, they could more easily find them in producing extrinsic values. This position is as

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<sup>2</sup> McCarthy, K. et al. (2004), *Gifts of the Muse : Reframing the Debate about the Benefits of the Arts*, RAND Research in the Arts, <https://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG218.html>

much risky as it is realistic. Inserted in the context of local development, the museum would not be a cultural institution in itself, with its own legitimacy, but one tool among others serving purposes that are not its alone, leading then to the distortion of possible contributions, to confusion of responsibilities and to demobilisation of allocated efforts.

Therefore, widening the prospects of museum management makes things more complicated. A curator or manager can contribute through his or her decisions to create such effects. But can such a person be held responsible when the expected results will depend on behaviours and resources other than their own behaviours and resources? This does not mean that the argument of extrinsic values should be abandoned, but that the process of evaluation of museum management must be refined. Here the perspective is certainly not to make the museum a school, a hospital or an employment agency. It is to help the museum to be aware of such effects and to develop behaviours to catalyse their emergence, while respecting the nature of the institution. The assessment must examine if and how museums expand their strategies and prospects for action from the core of their activities if they are to play the role of asset or driver for the development of their local area. The assessment must accept that there may be hierarchies within each museum between different services and products. The assessment must start with identifying the existence of a relevant strategy, the realisation of this strategy depending on many factors that are not under the control of the museum. *So there is at the beginning a dimension of self-evaluation.*

In terms of indicators, this means that as well as traditional *assessment indicators*, indicators for capacity building are more than welcome. Since this capacity building is narrowly tied to the context of each museum, such indicators can be proposed by the museum itself according to its specificity. The only condition is the ability of the *capacity building indicator* to open a dynamic perspective, i.e., to express within time how this capacity building is progressing.

### ***2.1.3. Achieving results through better capabilities***

This consideration of both intrinsic and extrinsic values leads not only to a change in the nature of the assessment but also to a change in the centre of gravity. When we say, for example, that a euro or a dollar spent in museums can lead to a final impact of three or four euros—here based on the principle of the multiplier—we presuppose a causal link that is not always easy to establish, since a good economic situation pushes results up and vice-versa. Likewise, when we presuppose that a cognitive experience in the museum improves bonding and bridging with others, the production of new social capital will depend on many other factors.

We should not conclude that evaluation is unnecessary but rather decide at which stage to anchor this process. Must we evaluate the impact of a museum by looking at the results for which it may be only partially responsible (job creation, social inclusion, urban regeneration) or shall we look at the change in attitudes and actions that will pave the way for such results? The priority is to know if the museum and its staff take into consideration an issue, collect the corresponding information, organise actions, work in partnership with other relevant institutions, etc. An assessment is still needed, but it has to fit with various elements, which are under the control of the museum and its staff. Considering social issues, Amartya Sen stressed the importance of the *capability* in which he saw the strategic resources of human development. Concerning the development of museums, we can also talk about *museum capabilities*. There are in any museum some areas of freedom and choice, more or less extended according to the spatial, financial or

training constraints that affect museums. But they exist, and sometimes they can even be built in order to allow such choices. The crux of the museum management is for the staff to understand these degrees of freedom, to extend them if possible and to mobilise them. Rather than limiting the assessment to some final results for which the museum is not always accountable, it is better to think in terms of the identification, extension and mobilisation of its capabilities. In more technical terms, this means that the assessment is focused on the action that the museums can actually take or not: there exists a potential agenda to implement, and the object of the evaluation is to know if the museum and its staff organise themselves to take these actions.

## 2.2. The structure of the guide

The guide is organised around the following five themes:

1. Economic development and innovation
2. Urban design and community development
3. Cultural development, education and creativeness.
4. Inclusion, health and well-being.
5. Managing museums for local development.

For each theme a series of policy and action options and good practice criteria are presented, addressed to both museums and local government.

**Figure 2.1. The structure of the guide**



### 3. Economic development and innovation

#### 3.1. In a snapshot

The contribution of museums to local development through the creation of jobs and generation of new revenues through increased territorial attraction is well recognised. But there also exist more medium and long-term effects, such as the dissemination of new technologies, the creation of new products, and support for creativity. Potential impacts deal with:

- New jobs and revenues through increased territorial attraction for tourists, talents and firms;
- Dissemination of new technologies, creation of new products, support for creativity;

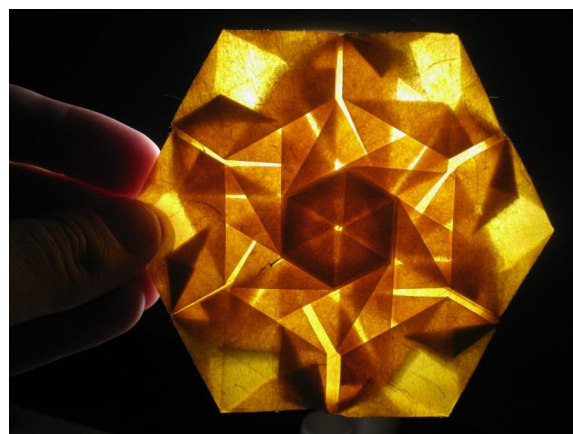
**Table 3.1. Key policy options for local governments and museums**

<b>POLICY OPTIONS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS</b>	<b>ACTION OPTIONS FOR MUSEUMS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coordinate local cultural institutions and tourism offices in order to offer an integrated cultural supply attractive to visitors</li> <li>- Promote accessibility of museums</li> <li>- Catalyse partnerships between museums and economic actors (artisans, SMEs, etc.) for economic development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop a relevant supply of cultural services inside and outside museums</li> <li>- Create partnerships to reach out to some categories of visitors</li> <li>- Become facilitators of knowledge and hubs of living archives and documents on the scientific, technological, economic and social history of the local area</li> <li>- Create opportunities for entrepreneurs, designers and craftsman to benefit from collections</li> </ul>

#### 3.2. Rationale

The contribution of museums to local development through the creation of jobs, activities and expenditures is universally recognised. Traditionally, this effect is considered as mainly dependent upon the number of visitors, the amount of their local corresponding expenditures, and the length of their stay. Museums are then considered as an export industry with an important multiplier effect: the difference with the more traditional export industries lies in the fact that instead of moving products museums move consumers.

But there also exist more medium and long-term effects, such as the dissemination of new technologies, the creation of new products, and support for creativity. One of the forgotten initial functions of many museums is support for local entrepreneurs through the conservation of designs, prototypes and products. Many craft and industrial museums have been created by corresponding local enterprises. Today, the issue is to know if such museums are only keepers of an industrial memory or if they can be organised to support local innovators through the display of collections.



Origami inspired NASA solar panel.

©Jorge Jaramillo/Flickr

Museums may be reluctant to present themselves as significant drivers of local development, fearing a progressive gap with their more genuine scientific and social functions. Today this attitude is disappearing, and museums agree on the fact that they have to take into consideration this role when they face local government and ask for public subsidies. However, they consider they lack the resources and the autonomy that could make them more proactive in this field. Moreover, though some *happy few* museums do well in this regard, the vast majority of museums are unable to attract a significant number of visitors. Whatever the stakes, this role implies the need for new management techniques, new pricing policies and new equipment, with the bulk of the money being spent in museum shops and restaurants.

In this perspective, local government could mobilise its various resources (regulation, funding, urban development, information policy, mutualisation of municipal services in order to favour the accessibility of museums, urban signalisation, parking lots) to support this agenda. It could do this by mobilising local tourist offices and by promoting the international image of museums. It could favour partnerships between museums and economic actors in order to implement relevant projects for economic development (artisans, SMEs, etc.). It could also coordinate all local cultural institutions so as to offer an integrated supply that is more attractive to visitors and mutualise some of the costs, mainly those related to back-office activity.

### 3.3. Policy options for local government

Museums support local economic development through tourism, development of skills and innovation in creative economic activities, such as design. For local governments, museums can become not only players but also drivers and enablers of local development. This function is very well recognised now, but this depends on many factors, such as the nature of the collection, its size, its fragility and the existence of relevant skills, both inside and outside the museum. Moreover, if the objective is to increase the economic impact of a museum, it must be remembered that this impact will depend on factors very external to the characteristics of the museum, such as the state of the local labour market regarding relevant skills, the state of the local hospitality industry.

### ***3.3.1. Local government should promote museums locally, nationally and internationally***

The promotion of museums on the international tourism market requires information and organisation, the cost of which cannot be supported by the museums themselves. This function needs to be organised on a permanent basis and should include participation in international fairs and congresses. It is logical that local government should share these costs with the different stakeholders.

To score highly, local government could, for example:

- Fund information and advertising support.
- Organise the participation of museums in international fairs and other events.

### ***3.3.2. Local government should mobilise its various resources in order to favour the accessibility of museums to visitors and tourists***

One of the main challenges of cultural tourism is the urban and local management of the flow of tourists. This is not only a logistical issue but also an environmental one.

To score highly, local government could, for example:

- Create incentives for museums to extend their opening hours.
- Organise packages that combine local transportation costs and museum entrance.
- Organise circulation and parking lots that promote environmentally-friendly access to museums.

### ***3.3.3. Local government should promote coordination between local cultural institutions in supplying integrated programs in order to lengthen the stay of the visitors***

It is well recognised that the positive impact of cultural tourism depends greatly on the length of stay of visitors. Therefore it is important to offer opportunities for leisure and hospitality alongside the cultural core attraction, and local government should consider this issue with a long-term perspective.

To score highly, local government could, for example:

- Create incentives to regulate opening hours and days for visits.
- Create incentives to organise passes for tourists as well as for residents.

### ***3.3.4. Local government should facilitate good cooperation between museums, tourism offices and the hospitality industry in order to prevent opportunism and unfair agreements on price***

Difficulties can arise from a lack of good coordination between tourism offices and museums. This difficulty may increase when tourism offices sell tickets to museums, imposing an unjustified mark-up on the price charged by the museums themselves. Naturally every kind of work has to be recognised and paid for, but this should not create disequilibria that make cultural tourism unsustainable for some strategic actors.

To score highly, local government could, for example:

- Work on the nature of information disseminated by the actors of the hospitality industry relating to museums.

- Work on a fair sharing of revenue when museum tickets are sold to visitors by tourism offices.
- Consider, if necessary, the issue of creating and controlling labels in a touristic area in order to avoid opportunistic behaviour.

### ***3.3.5. Local government should promote partnerships between museums and economic actors in order to implement relevant projects for economic development***

The relationship between the hospitality industry and museums should be fairly managed. If cultural tourism can be a positive sum game, it is not necessarily positive for every stakeholder, which can create difficulties. Local government has many resources, such as regulation and funding, that can be mobilised for smoothing this relationship.

To score highly, local government could, for example:

- Make the collections of museums better known for artisans, designers, SMEs and companies.
- Support the efforts of museums in creating spaces, including co-working spaces, and time for the study of their collections.
- Support fair management of intellectual property.
- Support partnerships with science parks.

## **3.4. Action options for museums**

### ***3.4.1. Museums should be committed to exchanges of knowledge with the hospitality industry, artisans, designers, enterprises, universities, NGOs and the public sector***

Not all potential partners for such knowledge have a clear understanding of the regulations, work culture and timelines of museums, nor of the possible impact of collaboration. This limits opportunities for knowledge exchange. The availability of collections is a window that should be opened as wide as possible, for everyone's convenience, but this is not always the case. Opportunities for meetings between museums and stakeholders can help foster knowledge exchange. Normally, design activities are at the core of such meetings, but exchanges about the content and evaluation of collections can open up wider perspectives about new products and processes.

This can also take the form of staff mobility between museums and the external environment. Incorporation of mobility initiatives into wider research activities is important to enrich organisation-wide knowledge exchange. Effective mobility support can be resource-intensive for the individuals involved.

For this to be effective, museums need to raise their profile as research partners. Very often the conservation agenda and the activities undertaken are not well known by external stakeholders, who are also ignorant of the potential they offer.

To score highly, a museum could, for example:

- Obtain from relevant services data and analysis of local development trends, and disseminate these internally among its different units and departments.
- Participate in open meetings, round tables or forums on local development.



- Ease exchanges of knowledge and information with other stakeholders in local development.

### ***3.4.2. The link with the hospitality industry (transport, leisure, hotels and restaurant services, insurances, etc.) should be considered as intrinsic to museum activity***

The contribution of museums to economic development is generally measured through the number of visitors attracted, the length of their visits, and the average of their daily expenditures. For local development, this role of the museum is very important since it appears here as a driver for job and income creation. A museum is a local export industry; the difference with traditional exports is that here it is the consumer that moves and not the product.

There is a potentially positive sum game between museums and the hospitality industry, and this is not a one-way relationship, from museums to hospitality industry: museums, too, can benefit from a vibrant and innovative hospitality industry. However, opportunistic behaviour from either the hospitality industry or from the museums (which is not that frequent) can undermine the image of museums and reduce the economic benefit expected.

To manage this potential, the connection between museums and the hospitality industry must be transparent and built as far as possible in advance. This implies that the loci and time of cooperation need to be scheduled, and information and plans exchanged. It is also a way to offer jointly validated information to potential visitors and tourism agents.

To score highly, a museum could, for example:

- Participate in regular meetings and working sessions with the hospitality industry.
- Think about its own agenda and time schedules, considering data on the behaviour of visitors and tourists collected by the hospitality industry.
- Consider the opportunity for new packages to be offered to visitors and tourists.
- Consider the issue of labels in order to prevent any opportunistic or rent-seeking behaviour from local operators.

### ***3.4.3. The museum demonstrates active involvement in partnerships and relationships with economic stakeholders***

This requires clear incentives for staff, starting with the review, revision or removal of administrative barriers. Incentives for staff to engage in knowledge exchange are not clear and are often limited to individual motivation, out of their regular activity for the museum. Establishing clear objectives and providing incentives, for example, freeing resources (e.g., time for knowledge exchange activities during official working hours), will be crucial to promoting knowledge exchange as a core component of career development.

To score highly, a museum could, for example:

- Present itself as a resource centre for economic stakeholders (entrepreneurs, designers, artisans, SMEs).
- Organise specific displays of its collections and archives in such a way that all the development stakeholders can benefit from the knowledge accumulated by the

museum. This implies efficient management of the museum archives relevant to the scientific, technological, economic and social history of the area.

- Organise a specific staff function for welcoming and holding discussions with economic stakeholders (entrepreneurs, designers, artisans, SMEs).
- Use that opportunity to mobilise new sponsorships.

#### ***3.4.4. Museums should have strong links with universities, incubators, science parks and other initiatives, creating opportunities for dynamic knowledge exchange***

Proximity of museums to knowledge-intensive structures, such as incubators and science parks is very relevant.

Incubation facilities usually have few links with museums due to the specificity of their collections or the traditional profile of their own staff. There is no general rule here, but the organisation of idea generation workshops related to the diverse activities of a museum is one suggestion.

Science parks may have more connections with museums since they are major infrastructure investments, often with a clear regional or local development focus. Usually innovative firms will locate in science parks in order to gain access to higher education institution-based knowledge, research and technology networks, to utilise technical and administrative services, and to benefit from proximity to highly skilled and specialised labour and research. Therefore the connection with museums is not that evident, unless for some museums of science and technology. But the link can be very strong in terms of displaying collections and working on the design of objects. This cross-fertilisation of knowledge is important and can be achieved through the provision of open spaces for collaboration and networking opportunities inside the corresponding museums. Then adaptations of the infrastructure for cross-communication purposes may help knowledge exchange happen. Reviews edited by museums may also be open to this approach.

To score highly, a museum could, for example:

- Make itself visible as a potential partner.
- Outreach some activities to give examples of the use of collection resources and show how the museum works.
- Provide open spaces for collaboration and networking opportunities and adapt the infrastructure for cross-communication purposes.

#### ***3.4.5. Museums should care about evidence for and protection of their intellectual property rights***

The potential benefits for museums of intellectual property are often underestimated. Museums have been created to advance knowledge, and the fact that they are not usually run for profit supports this idea. But when the nature of a collection or research into certain objects offers inspiration for creation and design that will be marketed, it is perfectly acceptable for museums to seek to benefit from these spill-overs, proportionally to their own contribution. In an age when museums are always looking for new incomes and revenues, this consideration is relevant.

Usually attention is focused on selling products in museum shops, and it is true that souvenirs can play a useful branding role. But such attention should be extended to

services and products that are not normally considered or sold in museum boutiques. Major museums already take advantage of such opportunities, but smaller museums could benefit, too, from this opportunity and consequently enrich local development.

To score highly, a museum could, for example:

- Organise a unit specialising in the valorisation of its intellectual property rights.
- Identify new processes or digital tools that are eligible for intellectual property rights.
- Think about strategically branding some local products.

## 4. Urban regeneration and community development

### 4.1. In a snapshot

At the core of many cities, museums are places that contribute to both physical and social design. Their renovation (or construction) can stimulate urban regeneration and bring new life into areas losing traditional economic base. Museums appear to be places where social capital can be built between people and communities when many traditional places of meetings are disappearing. Potential outcomes deal with:

- Better quality of life.
- Higher level of social capital.
- International branding and attractiveness.

**Table 4.1. Key policy options for local governments and museums**

POLICY OPTIONS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS	ACTION OPTIONS FOR MUSEUMS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Integrate museums and their environments in urban design policy.</li> <li>- Support the organisation of social activities for creating social capital.</li> <li>- Promote the international dimension of museums and their collections as an instrument of territorial branding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consider the museum's place in urban design.</li> <li>- Consider the museum's surroundings (gardens, parks, etc.) as an extension of the role of the museum as part of the cultural fabric.</li> <li>- Become a centre of a creative district.</li> <li>- Develop activities contributing to social capital.</li> </ul>

### 4.2. Rationale

A prominent and spectacular argument for the contribution of museums to local development is the impact of major cultural buildings on urban regeneration, the emergence of vibrant creative and cultural quarters and the creation of new bonds and bridges between communities. It has to be remembered that many museums have been designed and built as part of urban regeneration. Actually, the cultural force of the city and its built environment plays a significant role in shaping people's sense of identity. The relative permanence of buildings and land, and the fact that people and communities configure themselves within



The Museum of the City of New York opened its first long-term exhibition, "New York at its Core", in 2017, with a Future City Lab to discuss global warming and urbanism.

©Museum of the City of New York

their framework, ensures that they become sources not only of memory and identity but also of contest over the control and meaning of space itself. This argument for culture-led regeneration mainly originated when culture and museums were given a prominent role in ‘the post-industrial city’, with knowledge and consumption at its core. But there should be a distinction between the regeneration of places and the regeneration of communities:

- In urban regeneration there is a tendency to focus on the spectacular, on the new, and on high art. This movement has become an end in itself through the use of ‘starchitecture’ and the will to brand the city in a global society. A consequence of this is a tendency to gentrify and destroy the traditional milieu.
- In the regeneration of communities, attention is focused on more everyday cultural practices and more open forms of popular and vernacular arts.

Many intangible elements make the assessment of the impact of such efforts difficult. Short-termism of the analysis, limited resources precluding longitudinal evaluation, lack of clarity about what is being claimed and over-emphasis on economic benefits make these assessments more difficult than might be expected and, finally, there is serious concern over the appropriate methods.

### 4.3. Policy options for local government

Museums play a central role in urban design and are considered an important factor of attractivity and quality of life. Many of them are located in the cores of cities, in prestigious buildings, and surrounded by parks and gardens. They can physically give a specific flavour to the historic urban landscape. But at the same time they are very strategic meeting places, offering spaces that recognise variety and diversity, and this dimension is very important in complex and fragmented societies. If a museum is first of all a place where you can visit and experience a collection, it is also an important public space for the community. Local government has therefore to take into consideration these two physical and social dimensions that contribute to the quality of the urban life.



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#### 4.3.1. Consider the museum as a driver for sustainable urban design

Museums are at the core of much contemporary urban design. Both construction and renovation create opportunities and may even be a factor of integration in core city areas that have abandoned many traditional activities, just as they are in more remote areas.

To score highly, local government could, for example:

- Use the image and the ‘neutrality’ of the museum as a point of reference, making the museum a place for participation in debates on urban design and revival of city life, and promote its relations with local development stakeholders.
- Consider that the museum is not only a place for collections but also a permanent source of social activities, which contribute to the local collective good.
- Analyse opportunities to promote the city, its events and its internal mobility design.
- Make the museum a ‘park-museum’ in which the immediate environment of the museum is an element in any visit and the corresponding experience.
- Organise residence by artists, promote the museum as an artistic creative centre or encourage the establishment of cultural quarters around the museum.



Madama Knit: over 200 women conveying in Palazzo Madama to knit together on Saturday.

©madamaknit

#### ***4.3.2. Mobilise the museum as a public place for building up social capital***

Museums are neutral and disinterested places that can attract many people, not only for visits but for events, connections and so on. Local government supports this opportunity as it contributes to a favourable environment.

To score highly, local government could, for example:

- Facilitate the organisation of events by developing corresponding urban services.
- Contribute to the direct organisations of events or activities inside museums, such as permanent schools or creative artistic centres for amateurs.

#### ***4.3.3. Make museums a brand for their area, highlighting its contribution to development and creativity***

Branding local areas is essential in a global economy that can be considered more and more as a conglomeration of niche activities competing for recognition and attractiveness. Museums are an important element since they show that a particular area was not only a place of creativity in the past but can be a driver for sustainable development, bearing in mind its economic, social and cultural dimensions. Here the role of local government is seminal.

To score highly, local government could, for example:

- Cooperate permanently with the museum in seeking international recognition.
- Support the regular organisation of exhibitions or festivals in the museum.
- Support the international labelisation of the museum and its collections.

### **4.4. Action options for museums**

#### ***4.4.1. Treat the museum as a core feature in urban design, not just as ‘starchitecture’***

It is normal to view the museum as a place that lends both branding and meaning to the life of the city. A prominent argument for the instrumental benefits of museums has been therefore the impact of major (new) buildings on urban regeneration and the so-called Guggenheim effect, which emphasises the museum as an architectural icon and a place of recognition. But the challenge here is not so much to produce a glamorous architecture than to make the museum a centre of city life. The concern of the architect should not be only the building but its capacity to influence mental and physical states, to shape the development of networks and communities, to co-produce identities and make some things possible and others not through the design process itself. This challenge concerns not only new museums but also old museums that have to be renovated or expanded. The role of an old museum within a city can be developed to include a garden, a park, a transparent building that reflects the surrounding urban vernacular, all providing new public spaces. Producing a positive effect on a neighbourhood or an environment is not the monopoly of big projects: small community and participatory museums can have very sustainable results. Moreover, it has to be added that the more important the project the higher the risk of displacing population and traditional activities through gentrification: property prices and rents rise, and only lucrative activities will be allowed a place in this new milieu. In this context, museums can therefore be considered a kind of public art if we remember that public art encompasses many goals: disseminating an iconic dimension, animating the sphere of public debate, creating connections and giving meaning to new places.

To score highly, a museum could, for example:

- Test construction and renovation projects on the basis of their impact as urban design.
- Test construction and renovation projects on the basis of the possibility of creating more connections between communities.
- Consider and manage as far as possible the immediate surroundings (gardens, parks, etc.) as an extension of the role of the museum as part of the cultural fabric.
- Test construction and renovation projects on the basis of the ease with which inhabitants and tourists can use the museum.
- Open opportunities for flexible internal spaces in order to welcome different types of experiences, workshops and exhibitions.



©El Pais



Turó de la Rovira: an old war bomb shelter turned into a slum. Now, it is part of the Museum of Barcelona, telling an important part of its social and economic history.

© MUHBA – Museum of the History of Barcelona

#### ***4.4.2. Make the museum a lever of community life***

Is it possible, starting with important buildings and tangible investments, to generate better life for the community animated by intangible values? The purpose of different forms of museum is as much to enhance social cohesion within a city or district as to aestheticize public spaces, which poses the question of experience and interaction inside museums. Considered frequently as a neutral meeting place, a museum can promote face-to-face exchanges, disseminate trust and contribute to raising the level of local social capital, which should then build up social capital between communities. This is important in an age when many traditional places for meetings or community events are disappearing.

This presupposes various strategies. As said already, the first one is to organise the museum as a place for experience for visitors and users. The second one is to allow exchanges between different communities around some common theme in order to overcome differences between cultural traditions that may be reflected in the nature of some parts of collections. A third one is to give more space inside museums to so-called ‘community art’ in order to better respond to the diversity of situations and traditions. This can include exhibitions, events, narratives, knitting circles, community festivals, etc. Here small-scale cultural activities should be taken into consideration as soon as debates on the infrastructure start.

Outreaching is important, too. This movement started mainly in response to the need to meet with communities that were far from traditional users of museums, either for cultural or economic reasons. More and more museums outreach in different forms, but this outreach should not be limited to the dissemination of information or simply selling tickets to people who traditionally do not visit the museum. It should be a movement that results in museums working in different places, smaller places located in different kinds of buildings connected to the central site.

To score highly, a museum could, for example:

- Organise thematic cultural exhibitions that open the way to potential connections between communities and forge connections through artistic, scientific and social themes such as aging, well-being, welfare, etc.
- Consider outreach not only as a temporary advertisement tool but as a process for building up permanent opportunities for exchanging knowledge and connecting values.
- Open dialogue between different forms of artistic expression to give the opportunity to different members of the local area to engage in dialogue and exchange.

#### ***4.4.3. Make the museum a driver for a creative district***

In recent decades many discourses and proposals have considered cultural investment and activity not simply as a way to understand the city but to change it. This encompasses not only constructing or renovating museum buildings but also supporting the emergence of vibrant cultural quarters. Cultural quarters are drivers of regeneration and connect creativeness, entrepreneurialism, cultural production and cultural consumption. Museums are relevant here as places for many scientific and knowledge-based activities, to provide references for designers, and as places for exchanges and resourcing. This dimension may be evident in certain parts of a museum but should be disseminated all around the



museum, implying a need for a vision that considers many connections and the use of adapted premises. This development of *creative places*:

- Is rooted in the ways in which knowledge is formed and shared in the creative industries.
- Is characterised as having high levels of human input, with clusters of small companies operating on a project basis, dense transactional flows of information, goods and services, and complex divisions of labour tying people to places.
- Favours smaller-scale initiatives in contrast to the dominant focus on the big infrastructure projects of the modern industrial city.
- Attracts tourists and visitors to a district because it is a culturally vibrant part of ‘the experience economy’.

Successful creative quarters become places where artists and artisans, designers and workshops may generate new ecology in old parts of the inner city. If they generate cultural and economic benefits, they may also alleviate urban inequalities, rent-seeking processes and population exclusion.

To score highly, a museum could, for example:

- Identify the sectors of the local economy that can use artistic or scientific resources in connection with its collections and activities.
- Ease the use of its collections for artists, artisans and designers.
- Be a facilitator for creating local teaching units or local artistic galleries and workshops.
- Be a stakeholder for local projects that develop culturally creative SMEs.
- Be present in the local governmental structures that think about and manage urban design.

#### ***4.4.4. Make the museum a contributor to rural development***

Rural communities have received much less attention when we look at the role of museums. Moreover, the so-called category ‘rural’ is too simplistic, since it may be applied to either very small or very remote areas. It embraces areas that have seen population growth as a result of migration from towns and become suburban. In such cases such terms as economic impact, creative economy or even community life do not have exactly the same meaning as they do when we look at cities and urban areas. When we consider suburban areas, things may be slightly different: museum activities can be a contribution to the diversification of activities generally, taking into consideration the fact that the profile of rural residents who participate in arts and culture is similar to that of town dwellers.

When we look at very rural areas, collections are often concentrated on immaterial and vernacular heritage. Resources are difficult to mobilise, human resources are not easily available and opening hours are temporary and usually not so long. What, then, are the conditions required to maintain such museums as meeting places and tourist attractions? Very often rural museums rely upon mutualisation of back-office activity, organisation of common exhibitions and the support of volunteers, some of whom are incomers or second-home owners. But decreasing their autonomy would only suppress further their will and their initiative.

It has to be remembered, too, that in rural areas many forms of heritage are closely connected. A rural museum has a more or less clear ethnographic dimension. It has to

support this, mobilising new technologies, networks of associations, and the existing diaspora. These are some of the conditions required to help museums contribute to a sense of place, well-being and cohesiveness.

To score highly, a museum could, for example:

- Consider and organise itself as a centre for associations and local actors for the conservation and valorisation of the cultural heritage of its own area, which may extend beyond the specificity of its collections.
- Mobilise as far as possible volunteers for building up and implementing projects.
- Work in networks with other museums or cultural institutions.
- Be open to the perspective of mutualisation of some inputs and resources, starting mainly with those considered as concerning the back office.

## 5. Cultural development, education and creativeness

### 5.1. In a snapshot

Museums have been mainly created to increase the cultural and educational level of the population. With time, this objective has become more complex: now it is not only education but training; not only knowledge but also creativeness; not only the native population but immigrants and marginalised communities. By conserving and valorising their collections museums offer both cultural and educational experiences. Currently this added value is presented as a link between deductive and inductive educational processes, the mediatisation of objects making people more self-confident, knowledgeable and creative.

Whatever its legal relationship with museums, local government can form important partnerships for local development here. The relationship between local government and museums for education is generally very well recognised, since museums appear as places where educational resources can be mobilised. But this is not so true when we consider adult training, which constitutes one of the most important resources for resilience and sustainable development. Moreover, the role of museums as a source of knowledge is not often recognised. Actually, the collections and archives of museums constitute useful resources for the community. It is very important for local government to recognise this dimension of museums and to support their organisation in order to realise such potential. Potential outcomes deal with:

- Knowledge development;
- Increased levels of self-confidence will facilitate inclusion;
- Higher level of social capital;
- Creativeness.

**Table 5.1. Key policy options for local governments and museums**

POLICY OPTIONS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS	ACTION OPTIONS FOR MUSEUMS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recognise the museums' role in cultural and educational development</li> <li>- Take into consideration that a visit to a museum should be organised as an experience</li> <li>- Support an equilibrium between the needs of local audiences and tourists?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Contribute to cultural and educational development Be a source of reflective experience.</li> <li>- Consider the specificity resulting from educational experiences based on the mediatisation of objects.</li> <li>- Extend activities to include adult training.</li> <li>- Bonding and bridging for social capital</li> </ul>

### 5.3. Rationale

Providing access to collections and education have always been the two main aspects of museum activity. The relative weight of these two activities may change but they are always tied. This bond may also be interpreted as a link between emotion and knowledge, the emotion resulting from the viewing of some masterpiece or of tools created by mankind, the knowledge resulting from the possibility of better understanding our environment and ourselves.

In a creative society this seminal dimension of the museum remains important, although it is sometimes minimised or neglected for various reasons. When they were first created, museums were associated with libraries and archives as the main tools for artistic and cultural development. Nowadays many institutions may play these roles. But a museum remains a strategic institution in as far as it allows visitors to be reflective; it disseminates knowledge as a school of human creativeness; it shows through imaginative



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reason how through reflection about ourselves we can better understand others.

### 5.4. Policy options for local government

Whatever its legal relationship with museums, local government can form important partnerships for local development here. Very often the contribution of museums to local development is reduced to their educational role and their attractiveness for cultural tourism. The relationship between local government and museums for education is generally very well recognised, since museums appear as places where educational resources can be mobilised. But this is not so true when we consider adult training, which constitutes one of the most important resources for resilience and sustainable development. Moreover, the role of museums as a source of knowledge is not often recognised. Actually, the collections and archives of museums constitute useful resources for the community. It is very important for local government to recognise this dimension of museums and to support their organisation in order to realise such potential.

#### *5.4.1. Recognise the museums' role in cultural and educational development*

This function should not be difficult to acknowledge, since it is a very traditional one. But two elements should be taken into consideration. Such activities can provide impact on local development if they are organised on a permanent basis for beneficiaries and not only on the basis of a 'one shot'. This may imply an increase of costs and the need to find additional resources.

To score highly, local government could, for example:

- Recognise local museums as drivers for cultural development and not only as housekeepers of heritage. Clarify the mandate given to a museum by highlighting this objective.
- Support the elimination of information barriers of access to museums.
- Recognise, including in strategic documents and programs, the role of museums in education and adult training.
- Make museums eligible for financial support through educational and training initiatives.
- Ease cooperation between corresponding stakeholders (schools, TVET providers, Universities).

#### ***5.4.2. Take into consideration that a visit to a museum should be organised as an experience***

Organising experiences requires resources of time and space that go beyond those needed for the traditional visit. Very likely this is a difficult challenge to meet, and the solution will demand resources that many museums do not have. But at stake is the contribution museums can make to local development. This means that local government has to support as far as possible the specific organisation and availability of the internal and external spaces of museums, and to make museums eligible for budgets for social experimentation.

To score highly, local government could, for example:

- Think with the museums about the need for these experiences.
- Support the corresponding mobilisation of resources.
- Make available spaces outside museums if required.

#### ***5.4.3. Support an equilibrium between the needs of local audiences and tourists***

Local governments may see museums as key to attracting tourists to their area, and support mainly this touristic function of museums. This certainly should not to be neglected, but a museum should also be useful to the local population.

To score highly, local government could, for example:

- Cooperate with museums, educational institutions, tourism offices and tour operators in managing museum timetables.
- Create incentives to reach out to families and adults (e.g. through school visits).

## **5.5. Action options for museums**

### ***5.5.1. The reflective visitor***

Promoting reflectiveness and self-awareness of individuals as both cognitive and affective agents is at the core of museums' mission. At the same time the same effect can result from many cultural experiences—a play or a film, a live concert or an art exhibition, a video game or a novel. Museums specifically help us to learn more about our environment and ourselves through their collections of objects and masterpieces. By displaying an inventory of past creativity they influence the way we think about many past and contemporary issues and can provoke reflection in, or present challenges to, people used to rigid modes of thinking. They may generate not only reflections about an individual's own life but also enable him or her to see the world differently.

This result will depend on the degree to which the visit becomes an experience. It is often claimed that a museum visit can be the source of a reflective experience, but this does not happen automatically. If emotion is to be employed as the source of such an experience, the visit must be organised in such a way that it both frees the emotions and



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provides the elements necessary to understand the significance of an object or an artistic masterpiece. A museum should be the starting point of a journey: it should open pathways that can be explored. So the consequences that result from the way a museum is organised are very important. A well-organised visit that can become a source of reflective experience requires space, media and mediators to enrich traditional displays.

To score highly, a museum could, for example:

- Organize the visit as an experience that stimulates creativity.
- Provide information that gives the story of the objects on display in such a way that it can be made use of after the visit through virtual visits.
- Follow up the reaction of visitors not only immediately after their visit but also later on.
- Take into consideration visitors' opinions and judgements.

### 5.5.2. *The educated visitor*

A visit to a museum is often supposed to create new knowledge and contribute to raising educational levels. Here the difference with other institutions such as schools and universities is mainly based on the fact that this knowledge has its source in the emotions, and that it builds itself through a very inductive process. This process of knowledge-gathering is often presented as boosting such skills as empathy, understanding and valuing. This way of thinking is very important: when educational systems fail to connect with the personalities of some young people, museums can be more efficient. Some go further by claiming that museum-engagement can provide us with 'rehearsal-type' situations where we can practise our moral responses and that this can then improve self-understanding, wherever we live or whatever our way of life.

Here, too, this process implies important organisational issues. The visit by itself may not create in depth knowledge, but only communicate piecemeal information and memories. This means that a visit should be organised in such a way that it becomes an experience, or even as a kind of workshop that allows the development of this inductive process. It has to be prepared upwards; to open the possibility of discussion, testing and exchange; and to go on with simulation, and creation. It probably needs to be completed with

documentation and written or audio-visual support. This is an important challenge for any museum, since it is asking for time, space and resources that many museums do not have.

To score highly, a museum could, for example:

- Identify its own potential for education and professional training according to the nature of its collections, work and operation.
- Identify the educational and training needs within its staff, relative to its collections, work and operation.
- Design a corresponding budget necessary to implement such educational and training programs.
- Consider that the spaces used for these programs can be both internal and external to the museum, while bearing in mind relevant protective and conservational measures.

### *5.5.3. The enlightened citizen: bonding and bridging for social capital*

Reflection about oneself and about others is necessarily intertwined, but it is helpful to focus separately on the research that has explored how cultural engagement may create a better understanding of others. A simplistic view of this process is often reduced to the fact that people meet one another inside museums. As a meeting place the museum is therefore considered a driver of social capital. Moreover, as a meeting place for cultural dialogue, the museum may bridge the gap with people we might otherwise rarely meet, which means that it helps in better understanding the cultural differences.

There exists a basic distinction between identifying with how someone feels, on the one hand, and imagining how we would feel in that situation, on the other. The second one locates what Adam Smith calls ‘sympathy’ in the domain of imaginative reason. Art forms such as drama, literature or film—where the other is represented in the work itself—might be more obvious candidates than museum visits for facilitating this fabric of sympathy. But museums, too, can be an opportunity to better feel the situation of the other. Displaying photographs in museums can play this role, not only through the photographs themselves but also by depicting objects with the people who use them.

The process cannot be only factual, as it has significant ‘value’ content. An object that has a specific meaning in a Robinson Crusoe world may have a new meaning when transformed into a tool with a role in human relationships. The way collections are displayed and interpreted is a part of this social process that makes a museum a source of ‘sympathy’ and a contribution to citizenship. The consideration of a museum as a space for cultural dialogue is an important requirement for the implementation of this proposal, although the scientific information that is delivered at the same time is important, too.

To score highly, a museum could, for example:

- Create opportunities to connect with potential visitors through exhibitions and presentations, including people with disabilities.
- Consider that thematic activities are useful, and favour if possible this approach without compromising the meaning of a collection through other means of presentation.
- Reach out to persons who do not traditionally go to museums, not necessarily as future visitors but also as potential contributors and volunteers.
- Identify through social services budgets that could be mobilised to support these activities.

## 6. Inclusion, health and well-being

### 6.1. In a snapshot

Traditionally local government does not consider museums as a direct actor of social development, beyond their educational role. But museums contribute more and more to better individual and collective well-being. Many initiatives appear significant in the domain of health, particularly when we look at the issues of the aging population. Other initiatives relating to rehabilitation and the boosting of self-confidence are also significant, but are sometimes neglected since their effects are only evident in the long run.

Local government could consider museums as resources for building up both social capital and social welfare. Local government should recognise this potential role, namely by associating museums with the operation of social institutions that intervene at the local level. Potential outcomes deal with:

- Changing people's perception about their problems and making them more proactive in improving their own lives.
- Making people more self-confident and upgrading their capacities, with special consideration for marginalised groups.
- Alleviating demands for medical treatment and making higher the probabilities of rehabilitation

**Table 6.1. Key policy options for local governments and museums**

<b>POLICY OPTIONS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS</b>	<b>ACTION OPTIONS FOR MUSEUMS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recognise the role of museums in this domain and facilitate corresponding partnerships with other social institutions.</li> <li>- Ease legal and funding eligibility, remove constraints and tackle management issues that may prevent the involvement of museums in this field.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- At the individual level, facilitate a better understanding of our environment.</li> <li>- Distil and disseminate new concepts about ways of life through exhibitions and experiences.</li> <li>- Alleviate the stress of medical treatments and diseases (although museums evidently cannot be considered as health institutions).</li> <li>- Contribute to the rehabilitation of prisoners and ex-offenders.</li> </ul>

### 6.2. Rationale

Museums have rarely been considered drivers for inclusion, health and well-being. By examining their history and their corresponding initiatives, however, we find an increasing number of contributions being made to these agendas, either through



experiences around objects and artefacts or the use of museums as dedicated places for cultural exchanges.

If the social dimension of the museum has, for a long time, focused on its educational contribution, this dimension is wider now. Nowadays, services delivered by museums contribute to promoting the confidence and capabilities of people excluded from the mainstream for various reasons: poverty, sickness, unemployment, illiteracy, disability and detention. The expected outcomes deal with changing the perception of such people towards their various problems and issues, making them more proactive in improving their own lives, upgrading their skills, alleviating their suffering and maintaining a good level of well-being.

This does not mean that museums are hospitals, social centres or employment agencies. Very likely these actions will involve a strong partnership dimension with dedicated social institutions. Moreover, it has to be remembered that the realisation of any expected effect upon well-being takes time, much more time than other effects such as variation in the numbers of visitors or sales in museum shops. Specific indicators are needed to take these various dimensions into consideration.



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### 6.3. Policy options for local government

Traditionally local governments do not consider museums as direct actors of social development, beyond their educational role. But museums contribute more and more to better individual and collective well-being. Many initiatives appear significant in the domain of health, particularly when we look at the issues of the aging population. Other initiatives relating to rehabilitation and the boosting of self-confidence are also significant, but are sometimes neglected since their effects are only evident in the long run.

#### GUGGENHEIM FOR ALL Reaching Students on the Autism Spectrum



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Local government could consider museums as resources for building up both social capital and social welfare. Local government should recognise this potential role, namely by associating museums with the operation of specialised institutions that intervene at the

local level. These institutions include employment agencies, social service centres, hospitals, prisons, etc. The role of local government is certainly not to create competition or, even worse, create confusion: it is, very simply, to ease partnerships and encourage cooperation in terms of resources and skills, whatever the framework of the institutions involved.

### ***6.3.1. Recognise the social dimension of museums for social welfare***

Local government has to recognise the potential of museums for social well-being and social welfare. It needs to emphasise this role and give the museums the available data on the social needs of the local community. It should encourage and support partnerships between museums and relevant social institutions.

To score highly, local government could, for example:

- Consider that the value produced by a museum contributes to the well-being and welfare of the local people, and recognise this through local development programs.
- Make available to museums comprehensive local socio-economic information.
- Ease partnerships between museums and other relevant social institutions.
- Identify costs that could be shared by and funded with other organisations.
- Consider that the values produced by the museum contribute to the well-being and welfare of the local people.

### ***6.3.2. Support the connection of museums with employability issues***

Local government should consider the role of museums in making people more self-confident and skilled. Very likely these skills will be more generic than specific, but in a situation of rehabilitation they are as relevant as any others.

To score highly, local government could, for example:

- Make available to museums local labour market data (unemployment, qualifications, etc.).
- Establish or be a partner in a dialogue with labour market and educational organisations at the local level and make them share very transparently and regularly their strategies.
- Make museums eligible to professional education and training funds and programmes.

### ***6.3.3. Support involvement of museums in well-being and health***

The issue is not to transform museums into hospitals or health centres, which would be totally irrelevant. The main issue is to develop inside museums, or in other places with the support of museums, actions and programs that make people understand the issues of health in their current life and maybe support skills that have been undermined.

To score highly, local government could, for example:

- Make available to the museums information about the health and sanitary conditions of the local area.
- Establish a dialogue between local health organisations and museums.
- Fund exhibitions and research programs for making local people better informed on health and environmental issues.

- Support the introduction of cultural activities, exhibitions and workshops in health institutions.

#### ***6.3.4. Support initiatives by museums facilitating desistance from crime and rehabilitation***

These actions are very difficult since many prisons are nationally managed. But some people will have to be reintegrated in their local milieu, so supporting the initiatives of prisons and third parties in that direction will be beneficial for local development.

To score highly, local government could, for example:

- Ease communication with prisons or similar social institutions and the implementation of joint programs (although here many of these institutions are centrally organised and managed).
- Consider the provisional lending or displacement of some elements of collections outside museums, and use days when museums are closed for specific visits.
- Support financially programs and experiences that can enrich the processes of desistance from crime and requalification.

### **6.4. Action options for museums**

#### ***6.4.1. Museums can promote self-confidence and upgrade capabilities for excluded or marginalised people through the discovery and use of their collections and the experiences resulting from their use***

Museums can act not only through the mediation of objects but also as a *neutral* place where traditional social and community frontiers and conflicting viewpoints can be overcome.

To score highly, a museum could, for example:

- Ensure continuous access to main sources of information on the socio-economic situation of its local area, and more precisely labour market data.
- Establish or be partner in a dialogue with labour market and educational organisations at the local level and make them share very transparently and regularly their strategy.
- Develop a supply of continuous training that, in time, makes the museum a partner in this field of activity.
- Identify costs that could be shared and funded.

#### ***6.4.2. Museums can contribute to healing people facing physical and mental sickness through the use of their collections or the development of experiences***

There are many areas in which cultural engagement has been shown to be beneficial to health. Much needs to be done to improve evaluation and provide evidence, though this has proved challenging given the complexity of variables and contexts. Diversity of evidence and methods of evaluation are not surprising: those appropriate for public and community health projects will be different from those testing the effectiveness of therapies in clinical settings, while epidemiological studies of large population groups over time will need yet other approaches.

The practice of art as therapy and the importance of art and design in the hospital environment are important ways in which art and culture are now seen as contributing to health, aging and well-being. This dynamic field of research is characterised by a diverse range of subjects and approaches: from clinical outcomes to effects upon healthcare settings and community health; from physiological to mental health benefits; from targeted interventions to the effects of broader arts in health projects; from time-specific arts therapies to the effects of long-term arts engagement; from the acute to the preventative and, of course, health being seen not simply as the absence of illness or disease. Above all, arts and health is about complex phenomena and complex interventions, even in what might appear to be straightforward therapies. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that evaluation and evidence present significant challenges.

To score highly, a museum could, for example:

- Ensure its continuous access to main sources of information on the sanitary and social situation of its local area.
- Establish or be a partner in a dialogue with health organisations at the local level and make them share very transparently and regularly its own strategy.
- Create and support interdisciplinary structures inside the museum, and with its environment, and promote shared facilities across its departments in order to support them.
- Identify costs that could be shared and funded with other organisations.

#### ***6.4.3. Museums can contribute to well-being by disseminating types of information and behaviours, making people more conscious of their own state of well-being***

Arts and health interventions in communities rather than in a medical environment have been significant since the late 1980s, and there already existed a tradition of such interventions in countries where museums of health had been created. Multi-agency partnerships were formed by arts organisations, local authorities, and public and charitable agencies. The objective was derived from the social model of health, using community arts activities to engage people in thinking about their own health and to help individuals in disadvantaged areas (and with health problems) to build up their capacity to address them. Moreover, many studies have shown an association between long-term arts engagement and positive health outcomes after taking into account relevant social, economic and demographic variables. For example, shared reading of museum manuscripts led to improvement in an individual's sense of purpose by increasing a belief in the value of their contributions in their past and present life. As another example, study groups into the built environment or collections demonstrate a different kind of well-being benefit—personal growth through the acquiring of knowledge and skills. Each activity improved well-being, but in different ways.

To score highly, a museum could, for example:

- Organise continuous access to main sources of information on the health and well-being of its local area.
- Establish or be a partner in a dialogue with other community and health organisations at the local level and make them share very transparently and regularly its own strategy.
- Establish programs for dialogue and decision involving staff, visitors and users (for instance, research groups).

- Identify costs that could be shared with other museums or institutions.

#### ***6.4.4. Museums can contribute to the rehabilitation of prisoners, ex-offenders and people on probation***

There are many initiatives that use museum activities with prisoners, ex-offenders and those on probation and parole. If we look for a straightforward impact on re-offending rates, it is neither as consistent nor as convincing as some claim, yet many in the criminal justice system are supportive of arts initiatives because they know that arts activity benefits participants, changing them in ways that reflect their individual contexts, even if the evidence for the effects on reoffending is genuinely unclear. It is relevant to ask whether personal change delivers the instrumental benefits sought, but it should not deflect attention from the significance of that personal change itself.

Analysis of how offenders move away from criminal activity now focuses on the concept of ‘desistance’ from crime, which helps explain why personal change has become more prominent than reoffending rates in the analysis of arts in prisons. If desistance is not an event but a process, then it is unlikely to be adequately tested by knowing whether an offender has reoffended in a given timeframe, as opposed to evaluation of a journey of change that can be effectively tracked only through the intermediary steps that may lead to desistance from crime. Indicators of the process of desistance include improved confidence, motivation and self-esteem, an ability to accept ambiguity, to form more open and positive relationships, and developing an identity as someone who sees options and is willing to go through the learning process to achieve an alternative future. But few would claim that museum projects could lead to desistance by themselves.

To score highly, a museum could, for example:

- Organise a permanent dialogue with specialised institutions and corresponding local NGOs.
- Consider the provisional lending or displacement of some elements of collection outside museums, and use days when museums are closed for specific visits.
- Organise workshops that can enrich the processes of desistance and requalification.
- Associate cultural programmes for prison staff with programmes for prisoners.
- Identify corresponding operational costs and funding sources.

#### ***6.4.5. Work in partnership with corresponding social institutions in charge of such issues***

Museums cannot be considered the main driver of health, re-employment of unemployed people or rehabilitation of convicted people. Other institutions have primary responsibility for these groups, and museums can only work in cooperation with them to help tackle such issues. Therefore the role of the museum must be understood as being that of support for other institutions:

- This implies that the needs of the staff of social organisations other than museums must be taken into consideration. Arts initiatives explicitly devised to bring together professional caregivers and those for whom they care, or initiatives where the depth of carers’ engagement makes it a collaborative activity, are the most relevant here.
- As with professional caregivers, benefits for informal carers often emerge as a by-product of programs for those for whom they care.

- This also implies a very trustful partnership between museums and social institutions.
- Finally, this implies a good connection between staffs that have different cultures.

To score highly, a museum could, for example:

- Organise a regular connection and dialogue with job centres, hospital and health centres, and prisons.
- Design programs not only for the target group but for the staff of these other organisations.
- Revise the regulation that allows the museum to outreach its activities and to be eligible for funding from social budgets.
- Identify costs that could be shared with other museums or institutions.

#### ***6.4.6. From an internal point of view, undertaking such actions implies new prospects and requirements for the organisation of museums***

This perspective presents a lot of challenges for any museum. Firstly, the museum has to make itself recognisable as an agent of social change by the local milieu and local government. Secondly, the museum should benefit from funding available for the implementation of such objectives and be eligible for funding from corresponding budgets. Thirdly, the museum should mobilise and train the human resources that will allow these joint actions, preparing its own staff or subcontracting some activities. Fourthly, it means that the museum will probably need to externalise some of its activities, which may imply new regulation for the temporary and conditional movement of collections. Finally, museums will need to step back from the established hierarchy of evidence that places randomised controlled trials and experimental approaches at the top, not least in contexts such as mental health, where outcomes have to be subjectively validated by the participants, and where intended outcomes may not translate straightforwardly into measurable health improvements on clinical scales. The best balance of quantitative and qualitative evidence will depend on the nature of the intervention and the character of the knowledge being sought.

To score highly, a museum could, for example:

- Establish structures for dialogue and decision-making, such as research groups with other relevant social organisations.
- Promote information and stimulate proposals of action across its units.
- Mobilise new sources of funding supported by social welfare budgets.
- Identify costs that can be shared with other museums or institutions.
- Design assessment systems that fit with more experimental programs.
- Share corresponding information and results with other partner-institutions.

## 7. Managing the relationship between local government and museums to maximise the impact on local development

### 7.1. In a snapshot

Museums can contribute to local development as both drivers and enablers. The very fact that they are knowledge hubs allows them to design and sometimes deliver new services that create more sustainable development. This implies, from one side, consideration of the creative potential of museums by all the stakeholders in local development, and, from the other side, new management frameworks taking into consideration local development issues and perspectives.

**Table 7.1. Key policy options for local governments and museums**

POLICY OPTIONS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS	ACTION OPTIONS FOR MUSEUMS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consider museums as potential drivers and enablers for local development.</li> <li>- Ease partnerships between local development stakeholders and museums.</li> <li>- Ease synergies between museum initiatives and local government programmes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organise sustainable conservation and corresponding scientific activities and thus maintain the potential of museums as knowledge hubs.</li> <li>- Make available an information system on local development perspectives and issues.</li> <li>- Build up partnerships with economic and social stakeholders for local development.</li> </ul>

### 7.2. Rationale

The various contributions that are described above present some new management challenges for museums. If their traditional role is conserving collections and making them available for individuals and associations, this highlights the potential contribution of collections to individual, social and economic actors. Very likely, museums will not manage directly some of the new development services being considered, but they may design and support their existence with or through other partners. Once more, this new extrinsic view need not to be in opposition to a more intrinsic vision of museums, but considered as an extension of its activities in a complex and creative society.

In this perspective, new needs appear in terms of information, partnership-building, skill diversification and intellectual property rights protection. Probably, too, this perspective will enable museums to benefit from new types of resources, whatever their form.

### 7.3. Policy options for local government

This guide cannot take into consideration all dimensions of museum management. Moreover, the corresponding stakes, issues and solutions will depend on the very nature

of the legal relationship between local government and individual museums. What is considered here is the dimension of management that makes museums enablers, drivers and players of local development. From that point of view the links between museums and institutions that influence local development are essential. These links can be screened in terms of availability of information, institutional partnership between museums and private institutions as well as public ones, coordination of incentives, and pooling and mutualisation of resources, etc.

### ***7.3.1. Recognise the potential of museums for local development***

The role of local government depends on the legal status of the museum. Two distinct cases appear here. In some cases local government directly manages the museum. In other cases there is no direct or delegated legal relationship between the museum and local government management. In the first case, the challenge for local government is to let the museum define and undertake its actions, as well as controlling the museum. The balance is often difficult to find because some museum resources may actually depend directly on local government (housekeeping, maintenance, staff, etc.). This requires clear rules of funding defined not only in the short term but also in the medium term. In the second case local government appears as a stakeholder, but a specific stakeholder, since its decisions directly influence the policy and actions of the museum. This requires that the definition of the strategies be as coordinated as possible, so that expected contributions from local government to the operation of the museum and of the museum to local development appear logical.

To score highly, local government, for example, could:

- Back the scientific needs of museum and mobilise specialised human and technical resources.
- Mutualise the conservation services of different local museums.

### ***7.3.2. Provide a long-term perspective to the relationship between local government and museums***

A traditional difficulty faced by museums is the fact that their relationship with local governments is logically designed on an annual basis, due to fiscal principles. But the time perspective of local development initiatives is generally much longer. It becomes necessary to stabilise matters as far as possible as regards mutual commitments, and a contractual basis can contribute to enforce this correspondence.

To score highly, local government, for example, could:

- Have a look at the museum as a development actor.
- Ensure full participation of the museum in forums and meetings on the future of the local area.
- Organise an action program with the museum on a medium or long-term basis.
- Encourage museums to take the initiative in the cultural field as well as in other socio-economic fields.
- Agree with the museum on a selected number of indicators.
- Give a contractual form to these commitments.



### ***7.3.3. Encourage and implement the pooling of resources between museums and stakeholders***

When institutions work in the same direction, the pooling of resources is more than logical. It allows each of them to benefit from such cooperation. This is recognised when various museums belonging to the same geographical area share common objectives. It should also apply when cultural institutions and non-cultural ones coordinate their programmes and resources to attain the same objective. This will logically result in economies of scale, but it may also provide the realisation of economies of scope. But these processes of pooling and/or mutualisation have to be clearly designed with corresponding local government in order to avoid any budgetary conflicts.

To score highly, local government could, for example:

- Create incentives for pooling of resources between local institutions and museums.
- Mutualise some common services through the organisation of platforms.
- Make its training system available for museum staff.
- Contribute to a fair partnership between museum and local tourism office.

### ***7.3.4. Make sure that local financial and revenue regulations are incentivising for museums***

Managing museums for local development is not in the nature of museums that have been created for conserving, inventorying, curating and presenting collections. In a sense this may be considered a relatively new field of activity. This means that it is in the interest of local government to create some incentives for museums, since they will have to support ‘menu costs’—reshaping costs, reorganisation costs and so on. Naturally these incentives have to be financially funded, with an assessment system corresponding to the objectives.

To score highly, local government could, for example:

- Organise a clear financial partnership on spill-overs gains created by museums.
- Commit itself to reinvesting the net revenues of museums in their future development when this net revenue is controlled by local government.

### ***7.3.5. Enhance the mobilisation of volunteers***

The role of volunteers is very important as it supports the initiatives taken by museums for local development. This is not so much because it may be a financial advantage but because it brings with it new information, skills and competencies for actions that are very often complex and difficult to manage. Local government should be interested in such mobilisation, which offers another advantage: it increases local social capital and empowers mutual stakeholders. Therefore, local government should encourage this movement.

To score highly, local government could, for example:

- Share information about volunteering more widely at the local level.
- Take charge of the financial costs relating to the organisation of volunteering in museums (training and other associated costs).
- Design valorisation labels for volunteers.

## 7.4. Action options for museums

### *7.4.1. Creativity should be a major part of museum strategy within the cultural, social and community environment*

A museum should see itself as a creative organisation and environment, held together by a common vision, values and mission. Creativity means not necessarily something that is absolutely new but the capacity to take into consideration the cultural and scientific needs of its environment and to deliver the corresponding services. Then museum can be a driving force for entrepreneurship and innovation in regional, social and community development. For a broad identification and acceptance of museum strategy—from top management, the senior level of the institution, to all other stakeholders both within and outside the museum—a common understanding of the meaning and relevance of this exercise will need to be developed. Many barriers can exist here, intellectual, informational or even conflicting values. Then an effective leadership should engage different viewpoints; provide alternative interpretations that have resonance and meaning; and fit all of this into a shared vision of the future that may be understood by all the relevant actors and partners.

A deep commitment at senior management level of a museum is needed to drive implementation of the creative museum agenda. According to national and local traditions, a varying mix of academic and management resources will need to be defined. The issue is not to define an optimal weighting of such resources but to be sure that there is a clear and transparent decision centre that can be considered as responsible for strategy implementation. The corresponding institutional design is therefore flexible: initially this may be a part-time role, but over time it should move towards a small team of dedicated individuals and include external champions.

A strategy in itself does not guarantee the existence of a creative culture. This strategy has to be supported by permanent examples, actions and role models.

To score highly, a museum could, for example:

- Be actively involved in the development and implementation of local, regional and/or national economic and social strategies.
- Have a strong presence in its communities, for example, by supporting local cultural and artistic activities.
- Have a mission statement and written strategy, setting out a vision for the future of the institution and recognising its role in local development.
- Articulate a clear implementation plan to achieve its strategy and vision with clear objectives and performance indicators.
- Provide examples of how the strategy and vision create opportunities across all aspects of the institution and its wider community.
- Provide a strategic roadmap presented in a simple format that is widely communicated throughout the museum and make sure that it is understood as a priority by staff, visitors and stakeholders.
- Ensure that there is a dedicated person at a high level/senior management responsible for the implementation of the vision and strategy.

### *7.4.2. Is conservation and knowledge production sustainable?*

Museums are expected to plan strategically and act ethically with respect to collections and stewardship matters. Since there are different ways to manage, house, secure,

document and conserve collections, one must consider many facets of an institution's operations that, taken together, demonstrate the effectiveness of its collections and stewardship policies, procedures and practices, and assess them in the light of varying factors.

Good standards of conservation and knowledge production require that:

- A current, approved, comprehensive collections management policy is in effect.
- Human resources are sufficient, and the staff has the appropriate education training and experience to fulfil the museum's stewardship responsibilities.
- A system of documentation, records management and inventory is in effect to describe each object and its acquisition (permanent or temporary), its current condition and location and movement into, out of and within the museum.
- The intellectual property rights resulting from the use of museum resources are designed and protected.

To score highly, a museum could, for example:

- Have written mission statement or collections documents (e.g., collections management policy, collections plan, etc.) clear enough to guide collections and stewardship decisions.
- Have a conservation plan that includes strategic planning, observatory devices, preventive conservation and definition of degrees of emergency.
- Organise continuous training of its administrative and technical staff concerning conservation and a system of updating information in archives.
- Be vigilant about its intellectual property rights.

#### **7.4.3. Working in partnership with local development stakeholders**

Organising regular exchange and consultation meetings between museum staff and various economic and social stakeholders at the local level is a good starting point to break down formal boundaries. Examples are get-togethers with informal updates by different groups, formal information meetings, and thematic retreats. The objectives are:

- To create an environment that promotes awareness of what a creative organisation entails.
- To enhance exchange and collaboration.
- To identify and address barriers, which will lead, in the long run, to the emergence of a development culture in the museum.

Linking with issues of local/global societal relevance—cultural diversity, global warming, demographic change and the use of smart appliances—can promote interdisciplinary access to collections and research, and also link the two. It is desirable to recognise and reward external stakeholders for bringing in human (skills and knowledge), financial, and social (networks) resources that are not (sufficiently) available inside museums. This could be done through a three-stage process comprising the identification of potential external stakeholders, the evaluation of their contributions against criteria established by the museum, and the creation of different kinds of status and awards to recognise and sustain their contribution. But this connectivity of museums with their economic and social environment presupposes that inside the museum itself all departments are also connected so as to establish common recognition of challenges and perspectives.

Inside the museum, there should exist a model in place for coordinating and integrating corresponding activities across the museum. Various models could be considered: the organisation of a dedicated unit with close links to senior management; a specific person in charge of such activity; a small centre to facilitate access to and increase visibility of creative promotional activities. But whatever the selected design, this strategic unit should be able to screen and dialogue with all departments, and avoid duplication of work both inside the museum and within the surrounding ecosystem.

Another aspect has to be considered here: to decrease costs, many museums have an interest in cooperating in common organisation of ‘back-office’ services. The clustering of museums is important as it means that any competition between museums can be transformed in a positive sum game.

To score highly, a museum could, for example:

- Organise permanent access to main sources of information based on the socio-economic situation of its local area.
- Establish or be partner in dialogue with other organisations at the local level and to share very transparently and regularly its own strategy.
- Promote shared facilities across its departments.
- Establish structures such as research groups to facilitate dialogue and decision-making involving staff, visitors and users.
- Create and support interdisciplinary structures inside the museum and between the museum and its environment.
- Identify costs that can be shared either with other museums or institutions.
- Avoid any duplication of work.

#### ***7.4.4. The museum should give support and recognition to volunteers who contribute to the implementation of museum objectives***

Volunteers have always played a role in the history of museums, but in different ways. One of the most traditional was through associations of friends that contributed to funding, gave objects and spent time organising and delivering museums’ services. This type of association is not so common today as it used to be and this is evident in many rural areas. But volunteering is still a strategic resource for museums: not only do volunteers make available qualified resources but they can also help to bridge gaps between the perspective of museums and local development issues.



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Difficulty frequently arises from the fact that there is often confusion between volunteers and unpaid workers. The latter offer non-specific skills and may be interpreted by paid staff as a source of competition. The recognition of this issue must not mean that volunteers are seen as lacking importance or strategic significance, and museums should continue to mobilise them as far as needed.

To score highly a creative museum could, for example:

- Recognise the place of volunteers in its own organisation and agenda.
- Agree to mobilise spaces, printed materials and funds to enable volunteers to participate in to the life of the museum.
- Support cooperation between volunteers in different departments and units.

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