

MUSEUMS
ASSOCIATION

BUSINESS PLAN 2017-2020



The Museums Association (MA) is a dynamic membership organisation that campaigns for socially engaged museums and a vibrant and inclusive workforce. It is the only professional body for all museums in the four nations of the UK. This business plan covers the work of the MA for the period from April 2017 to March 2020. It has been shaped by the people we serve and it is the result of detailed research, evaluation and collaboration. It sets out a new mission and new values for the organisation, alongside a vision for the sector. Three key aims draw together our work over this period. These are supported by sections detailing priorities and actions for each of our core areas of work.

CONTEXT

Museums face great challenges, some unique to the sector, but many reflecting wider societal and global issues. The Brexit vote and US elections represent significant change and sit alongside a rise in intolerance in society. This is the backdrop to this business plan, together with economic pressures, austerity, local government in crisis, increasing inequalities, social and political upheavals, demographic changes, and recognition of national differences within the UK.

There are values that are worth fighting for, and our campaign for museums to be more radical, participatory, democratic and socially engaged is both timely and critical. Museums are places of hope and creativity and to thrive they must face these challenges hand in hand with the communities they serve. It is these communities that value museums as places where they can understand the past, debate contemporary concerns and shape the future. Museums must be dynamic, challenging, inclusive and impactful if funders, politicians and the public are to see them as places worth investing in.

There are also great opportunities. Museums are trusted as places where communities can come together and share experiences, and they can make a significant contribution to a more democratic, inclusive and equal society. Changes in technology and how we communicate and socialise offer new ways for museums to connect with audiences. And demographic changes provide new opportunities for museums to offer meaningful cultural inclusion, and work with audiences to tell rich, varied and diverse stories.

THEMES

National distinctiveness

We are the only membership body in the sector for the four nations of the UK and we must be dynamic and democratic to meet the needs of our members. We recognise the growing cultural, legislative and constitutional distinctiveness of the four nations and we will further develop our nations policy to ensure equitable treatment for all members. We recognise national differences and commonalities and the diversity in the sector that is one of its most important assets.

Digital engagement

We will embrace the digital environment and seek to utilise new technology and digital opportunities to bring about more equal access to our work for all our members and to offer different products and enable enhanced membership engagement.

Collaboration and partnerships

We will continue to lead the sector, and to do this collaboration is vital – both with our members and with other organisations. We will seek out strategic partnerships, build alliances, and work with funders, inside and outside of the museum sector, to deliver our vision.

International working

Our recent policies – Museums Change Lives and the new Code of Ethics – have received international acclaim and we are viewed as a serious global player in museum thought leadership. We will build on this, developing our international membership and contributing and learning from museums across the world that are leading social change.

Leading change

We will be an activist organisation, leading radical change in the sector to help museums meet the challenges our communities face.

MISSION

Inspiring museums to change lives

VISION

Inclusive, participatory and socially engaged museums at the heart of their communities

VALUES

We have the **courage** to say what we believe

We are passionate about delivering **diversity** and **equality**

We work **collaboratively, inclusively** and **ethically**

We **lead change** by example

AIMS

Develop and grow a vibrant and dynamic network of members

Campaign and advocate for museums to change lives

Inspire and develop the workforce to deliver our vision for the sector

