



18  
MAY  
2015

# MUSEUMS FOR A SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY



## MUSEUMS: HOW TO PREPARE YOUR INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM DAY



INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF MUSEUMS  
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MUSEES  
CONSEJO INTERNACIONAL DE MUSEOS

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## PRESS RELEASE

### Launch of International Museum Day 2015 Museums for a sustainable society

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The worldwide community of museums will celebrate **International Museum Day** on and around **18 May, 2015**.

This year's theme for the event will be **Museums for a sustainable society**. It highlights the role of museums in raising public awareness about the need for a society that is less wasteful, more cooperative and that uses resources in a way that respects living systems.

ICOM President, Prof. Dr Hans-Martin Hinz, adds: "Museums, as educators and cultural mediators, are adopting an increasingly vital role in contributing to the definition and implementation of sustainable development and practices. Museums must be able to guarantee their role in safeguarding cultural heritage, given the increasing precariousness of ecosystems, situations of political instability, and the associated natural and man-made challenges that may arise. Museum work, through education and exhibitions for example, should strive to create a sustainable society. We must do everything we can to ensure that museums are part of the cultural driving force for the sustainable development of the world."

The **International Council of Museums (ICOM)** established **International Museum Day** in 1977 to increase public awareness of the role of museums in the development of society, and it has been steadily gaining momentum ever since. In 2014, International Museum Day garnered record-breaking participation with more than 35,000 museums hosting events in some 145 countries.

Visit the International Museum Day official website:  
<http://imd.icom.museum>

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## About the International Council of Museums (ICOM)

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The International Council of Museums (ICOM), created in 1946, is a worldwide organisation of museums and museum professionals. ICOM is committed to promoting and protecting natural and cultural heritage, present and future, tangible and intangible. With more than 32,000 members in 135 countries, the ICOM network is made up of museum professionals from a wide range of museum and heritage related disciplines.

ICOM promotes standards of excellence in the museum field, in particular through its *ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums*, a standard-setting tool for museums, which includes basic principles for museum governance, the acquisition and disposal of collections, and rules for professional conduct. ICOM's other activities include fighting illicit traffic in cultural goods and promoting risk management and emergency preparedness to protect world cultural heritage in the event of natural or man-made disasters.

In order to carry out these activities, ICOM partners with entities such as ICCROM, INTERPOL, the World Customs Organisation, the World Intellectual Property Organization, and maintains a long-standing collaboration with UNESCO. The UNESCO-ICOM Museum Information Centre, created in 1946, gathers the most comprehensive collection of ICOM publications including *ICOM News*, *ICOM Red Lists*, publications by International Committees and conference proceedings.

ICOM's commitment to culture and knowledge sharing is reinforced by its 31 International Committees, which are dedicated to a wide range of museum specialities and conduct advanced research in their respective fields for the benefit of the museum community. The organisation's International and National Committees, Regional Alliances and Affiliated Organisations hold conferences and symposiums worldwide that focus on pre-defined themes with a view to fostering exchange among museum professionals of all nationalities. In addition, ICOM organises International Museum Day each year, a worldwide event held on and around 18 May, to increase public awareness of the role of museums in the development of society.

Website: <http://icom.museum>



# International Museum Day

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## What is International Museum Day?

Every year since 1977, ICOM has organised International Museum Day (IMD), which represents a unique moment for the international museum community. On this day, participating museums plan creative events and activities related to the International Museum Day theme, engage with their public and highlight the importance of the role of museums as institutions that serve society and its development.

The objective of International Museum Day is to raise awareness of the fact that, "Museums are an important means of cultural exchange, enrichment of cultures and development of mutual understanding, cooperation and peace among peoples." Organised on and around 18 May each year, the events and activities planned to celebrate International Museum Day can last a day, a weekend or a whole week.

Participation in International Museum Day is growing among museums all over the world. In 2014, more than 35,000 museums participated in the event in some 145 countries.

## A little bit of history

### Crusade for Museums

Before officially creating International Museum Day, ICOM gathered the international museum community for a 1951 meeting called *Crusade for Museums*, to discuss the theme "*Museums and Education*." The idea for International Museum Day was inspired by the framework for museum accessibility that was developed at this meeting.

### The 1977 Resolution

International Museum Day was officially established in 1977 with the adoption of a resolution during the ICOM General Assembly in Moscow, Russia to create an annual event "with the aim of further unifying the creative aspirations and efforts of museums and drawing the attention of the world public to their activity." International Museum Day was meant to convey the message that "Museums are an important means of cultural exchange, enrichment of cultures and development of

mutual understanding, cooperation and peace among peoples."

### Uniting the museum community on one theme

As the event attracted more and more museums, and increasingly favoured diversity in unity, ICOM suggested a theme for the first time in 1992: *Museums and Environment*.

### Creation of a universal identity

In 1997, ICOM launched the first official poster of the event on the theme of fighting illicit traffic in cultural goods. The poster was adapted by 28 countries.

### Strengthening communication

In 2011, institutional partners, a website and communications kit for International Museum Day were introduced, marking a turning point for the event. ICOM was also patron of the European Night of Museums for the first time that year, an event that takes place on the Saturday closest to 18 May each year.



## International Museum Day 2015

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Each year's International Museum Day theme is proposed by ICOM's network and aims to promote museum issues within society.

In 2015, the event will celebrate the theme: ***Museums for a sustainable society***.

One of the most important contemporary challenges shared by people all over the world is to adapt new ways of living and developing within the limits of nature. This transition towards a sustainable society requires inventing new methods of thinking and acting. Museums play a key role in this transition, promoting sustainable development and serving as real laboratories for best practices. Modern museums must take a strong position in this context and make their voices heard.

The theme ***Museums for a sustainable society*** recognises the role of museums in raising public awareness about the need for a society that is less wasteful, more cooperative and uses resources in a way that respects living systems.

Bringing museums to the forefront of this model of a sustainable society, the International Museum Day theme aims to foster awareness among the whole society about the current consequences of human action in our planet and the absolute necessity of changing its economic and social model.

*Museums, as educators and cultural mediators, are adopting an increasingly vital role in contributing to the definition and implementation of sustainable development and practices. Museums must be able to guarantee their role in safeguarding cultural heritage, given the increasing precariousness of ecosystems, situations of political instability, and the associated natural and man-made challenges that may arise. Museum work, through education and exhibitions for example, should strive to create a sustainable society. We must do everything we can to ensure that museums are part of the cultural driving force for the sustainable development of the world.*

- Prof. Dr Hans-Martin Hinz, ICOM President



## Your key role as a museum

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To ensure International Museum Day fulfils its ambitions, we need your help!

You are the ambassadors of International Museum Day. Thanks to the activities that you organise and the strong connections you develop with your public, this event continues to be a success year after year.

In addition to the activities you plan, your participation in International Museum Day is an opportunity for you to:

- **Implement partnerships** (*p. 14*) with schools, associations, other museums, etc. to promote the event as a moment of sharing and collaboration;
- **Use and disseminate the graphic materials of the event** (*p. 12*), in order to spread the news of your activities efficiently throughout the world;
- **Spread information** about International Museum Day to the public via your web spaces (website, social media, etc.);
- **Send a press release** about International Museum Day or organising a press conference as a means to ensure the visibility of your museum and of the event;
- **Gain international visibility about your activities** before and after the event: by sharing information about your International Museum Day activities with ICOM, allowing us to spread the news throughout our network and beyond through social networks and our website dedicated to the event. It also allows us to enrich our archives with International Museum Day activities from each year's celebration.



# How to organise your International Museum Day

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International Museum Day draws the attention of both the general public and museum professionals around the world. We hope that you will plan your own activities for the 2015 edition of the event, following the general principles of International Museum Day and that the examples of past International Museum Day activities, be they original or conventional, with limited budget or broad-based activities, will provide inspiration for your own preparations.

We recommend that you follow eight important steps:

## 1. Target a specific public

Regular visitors? A new public? Socially-disadvantaged persons? Specific public: children, teenagers, senior citizens, handicapped persons, etc.? In the next chapter, you will see examples of activities that target different publics.

## 2. Define your objectives

To reach a new public? To attract various types of visitors? To enhance the museum's visibility? To highlight your participation in the community? To be heard by public authorities? To make your institution known to potential partners?

## 3. Position your museum

The objectives you set can also be related to the positioning of your museum. International Museum Day helps to show the importance of museums in society and to highlight their different aspects. You need therefore to find the positioning that best suits your institution. Is it an innovative museum? A museum that listens to social issues? A dynamic museum? A museum in contact with the public? A museum that generates tourism?

## 4. Forge institutional partnerships and sponsorships

International Museum Day is an opportunity to create local, national or international partnerships, regarding anything from collections, to mediation or financing. Collaboration can be implemented with other

museum professionals, other museums, associations, private companies, and more.

## 5. Develop a precise budget

International Museum Day's activities can be organised in large structures as well as small institutions. The necessary human and financial resources will also depend on the visibility you choose to give to the event.

## 6. Create an unexpected programme

In the next chapter, we will give you some ideas with examples of successful International Museum Day activities in the past. An unexpected activity programme is key to your success!

## 7. Develop a communications and promotion strategy

We have developed a set of communications tools (*p. 12*) to help you implement your strategy. ICOM and its network can also be one of your communication channels.

## 8. Make a post-event evaluation

It is important for you to analyse the success of your International Museum Day and its effective impact. It is therefore essential to define criteria of success depending on your objectives. Some examples of good performance indicators include: attendance, creation of long-term partnerships and the number of media sources that diffused information about the event.



## Create your activity programme

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International Museum Day is an occasion to honour museum audiences and to offer a wide range of special activities, depending on your target public.

It is best to define your activity programme in relation to the theme suggested for International Museum Day 2015: **Museums for a sustainable society.**

### Examples of activities for a general public

◉ Free entry or free guided visits

*Free entry is an option, but the financial cost that it generates must be taken into account. A free entry policy should be supported by an interesting educational programme to attract the public to your museum.*

◉ Discounts on some services offered by the museum

*Johannesburg Art Gallery in South Africa offered a 10% discount on publications and on the Association of Museum Friends' membership fee for 18 May. (2012)*

◉ Open day, longer opening hours or late-night openings

*Activities organised in European museums for European Night of Museums are excellent examples.*

◉ Visits of storage areas or scholarly research collections; display of recently restored collections

*National Museum of Lagos in Nigeria exhibited items usually kept in storage. (2013)*

◉ Exhibitions, activities, conferences or guided tours based on the International Museum Day theme

*Borjomi Local Museum in Georgia held a conference on the theme "the museum as a space for dialogue of generations." (2013)*

◉ Practical workshop or visits led by a museum professional

*Bank of Canada's Currency Museum in Ottawa organised meetings between conservators and visitors/collectors (of stamps, bottle caps, comics, etc.) to share their passion. (2013)*

◉ Meeting with partners, fundraising events

*Fort Smith Regional Art Museum in the US held a "White Party" fundraiser, preparing for the museum's opening in 2013. (2012)*

◉ Inaugurations, openings of new museum space

*Verkehrsmuseum (transport museum) in Dresden, Germany inaugurated the "Adventure Flying Lab" and the new educational programme on air travel. (2012)*

◉ Special cultural activities: concerts, theatre or dance shows, artistic performances, films screening, etc.

*The Samarkand State Museum of Cultural History in Uzbekistan organised an impressive performance with the award-winning children's dance ensemble Jonona, followed by a musical slide show displaying the Samarkand region's historical heritage. (2010)*



### ◉ Unusual visits

*In Peru, the Pachacamac Site Museum scheduled an outdoor interactive project called “Paint and Identify in the Pintado Temple” to remind visitors of the paintings that once decorated the monument. (2013)*

### ◉ Activities based on interaction using, for example, social media or virtual visits, etc.

*Sharjah Museums in the United Arab Emirates carried out an Instagram project called #heartifact, inviting the public to photograph objects that are meaningful to them and post them along with a short description. The museum then created a collage of the images and shared it with the public on International Museum Day. (2014)*

### ◉ Games, contests, awarding of prizes

*The Pakistan Museum of Natural History in Islamabad held two competitions, one rewarding the best photograph, the other the best drawing on the theme of nature. (2013)*

### ◉ All-day tour to several museums of your region

*In Puebla, Mexico, a bike tour was organised with explanations on the history of the city’s museums. (2013)*

### ◉ Activities “outside the walls”

*In Itu, Brazil, the Museu da Energia organised an event called Arte no Beco (Art in the Alleyway), bringing the museum to the street to raise awareness on the significance of museums and heritage preservation. (2014)*

## Examples of activities to...

### ◉ Target professionals and academics

International Museum Day can be a great occasion for professional get-togethers. Some possible professional activities include:

- Professional meetings in the museum or through ICOM’s National Committees
- Conferences, colloquiums, seminars, roundtables, task forces, debates, international forums
- Discussions about museum operations, such as inventory, security issues, etc.
- Discussions about legislation and cultural policies
- Promotion of the *ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums* and distribution of the document
- Twinning of museums on a regional, national and international level
- Organisation of exhibition exchanges
- Creation of national and international cooperation programmes
- Partnership with university centres
- Publish articles on the theme in specialised journals, newsletters, information letters, etc.

### ◉ Target young children and teenagers

Your museum is encouraged to create educational programmes to help raise awareness among young generations about the role of museums in society. To do so, it could be useful to contact schools and decide together on a pedagogical programme suitable for the theme “Museums for a sustainable society.”

You could, for example:

- Create a learning kit for teachers (educational cards, brochures, tools for activities...);



- Organise activity workshops such as role-plays, competitions, treasure hunts;
- Create a visitor programme adapted to children;
- Partner with young people to launch an exhibition on the theme of sustainability;
- Develop a twin programme between your museum and a learning institute.
- *Tip:* Teenagers may be more likely to take an interest in interactive exhibitions and activities that include museum experts who can reply to questions about the museum.

**For more inspiration:**

- Check our Facebook fan page <http://www.facebook.com/internationalmuseumday>
- Take a tour of our collection of Tweets  
<https://twitter.com/IcomOfficiel/timelines/451343459744350209>
- Find activities planned in your area  
[https://mapsengine.google.com/map/viewer?mid=z7IWgA2YHKxo.k3zymbAMoqzl&cid=mp&cv=tkBX\\_9CE6vs.en](https://mapsengine.google.com/map/viewer?mid=z7IWgA2YHKxo.k3zymbAMoqzl&cid=mp&cv=tkBX_9CE6vs.en).

**Do you want to be part of our social media initiative? Follow the instructions on Page 13.**



## Communications tools at your disposal

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### Official poster and its variations (postcard and web banner)

Each year, ICOM creates an International Museum Day poster, as well as a postcard and web banner, linked to the theme of the year, enabling participating museums to illustrate the theme and to attract visitors with an appealing design.

You can download the poster, the postcard and the web banner for 2015 on the International Museum Day website: <http://imd.icom.museum>



In 2014, thanks to you, the poster was available in 32 different language versions. This year, ICOM Committees will assist us in providing you with International Museum Day poster for 2015 and additional tools in your own language(s).

If you wish to use the poster in a language that is not available, do not hesitate to contact your [ICOM National Committee](#).

The poster we provide contains a blank space at the bottom left where information about your museum, your partners and the activities you are planning to organise can be easily inserted. However, the official logos must not be removed. You may also send an email to [imd@icom.museum](mailto:imd@icom.museum) to receive an editable InDesign version if you wish to modify the poster's format.

We invite you to print and hang the poster in your museum during International Museum Day. You can also adapt this image in many ways and on any media, according to your wishes. **Warning:** you cannot use this image for commercial purposes.

In order to disseminate and archive your creations for our records, we would be grateful if you could send us any modified designs made from the International Museum Day 2015 image.



## International Museum Day 2015 website and social media



International Museum Day has a dedicated website that complements the ICOM website. The International Museum Day website address is: <http://imd.icom.museum>



International Museum Day is also on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/internationalmuseumday>

### **Please feel free to participate on Facebook by:**

- Liking our Facebook page
- Mentioning (@International Museum Day - ICOM) in you posts, comments or photos to spread the information about this Facebook page
- Leaving a comment or a post on the Facebook page



Finally, if you are on Twitter, you may publish your International Museum Day activities with the hashtag: #MuseumDay and mention us [@ICOMOfficial](https://twitter.com/ICOMOfficial)



## Find financial partners

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### You can look for three different kinds of support:

- **Financial support:** financial aid for the everyday functioning of a structure or for a special event such as International Museum Day. This support can come from private companies or public administrations.
- **In-kind sponsorship:** a company can donate products for your event, such as for a reception, or it can print or disseminate the leaflets of your event free of charge.
- **Skills sponsorship:** a company can make its staff available to you free of cost, for example the communications department. This kind of sponsorship is on the rise in particular for educational programmes.

### To give visibility to your partners, you may offer to:

- Insert their logo in all the communications tools created for the event and particularly in the poster.
- Insert information about the partner in the press kit and press releases.
- Organise the International Museum Day launch jointly with your partners.
- Invite partners to participate in your activity programme or to disseminate documents during your International Museum Day event.
- Organise a reception for networking purposes, if you have a number of sponsors.
- Publish the company's advertisements in one of your communication outlets.



## Partner: The European Museum Forum (EMF)

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**The European Museum of the Year Award 2015** will be celebrated on 16 May at the Riverside Museum in Glasgow, United Kingdom.

Since September 2013, ICOM has collaborated with the European Museum Forum (EMF), which organises the European Museum of the Year Award (EMYA) each year.

Established the same year as International Museum Day, EMYA is awarded to a museum that has attracted and welcomed its visitors using high museum standards and innovative approaches. This award values museums whose development and innovation in terms of communication, presentation and interpretation have impacted museum standards within Europe.

This event encourages excellence in European museums and is an opportunity for networking and debating contemporary museum issues.

Website: <http://www.europeanmuseumforum.info>

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/European-Museum-Forum/320602279826>

## Partner: European Night of Museums

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Since 2011, ICOM has been sponsoring the European Night of Museums, which is celebrated every year on the Saturday just before International Museum Day.

This year, the European Night of Museums will be held during the night of 16 to 17 May 2014. Created in 2005 by the French Ministry for Culture and Communication, the event inspires museums to open their doors to the public until 1:00 a.m. and free of charge. By welcoming the public at night, museums provide visitors with a new perspective on their collections, applying a more creative and sensory approach.

Last year, museums from 33 European countries mobilised to make the 10th edition of the event a magical one for the many night owls who attended. Over the course of the night, various activities are planned, bringing in a young public that may be more difficult to reach during traditional museum hours.



## Contact

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For more information, please contact your National Committee. The list of National Committees is available on the following webpage:

<http://icom.museum/the-committees/national-committees/>

You can also contact **ICOM General Secretariat:**

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Have a great  
International Museum Day 2015!



#MuseumDay



[www.imd.icom.museum](http://www.imd.icom.museum)



[www.facebook.com/internationalmuseumday](http://www.facebook.com/internationalmuseumday)

