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# Museums and the Sustainable Development Goals

A how-to guide for museums, galleries,  
the cultural sector and their partners



# How can museums help put the world on a path to a sustainable future, through working to support the Sustainable Development Goals?



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supports the SDGs



**C**urating Tomorrow is a consultancy for museums and the heritage sector, helping them draw on their unique resources to enhance their contributions to society and the natural environment, the Sustainable Development Goals, climate action and nature conservation. Curating Tomorrow also applies the museum-based skill of curating to thinking about and addressing real-world challenges, not necessarily involving museums or museum collections.



Curating Tomorrow draws on high-quality information and research; combines creativity and imagination with focus, selection and attention to the real world; and has a strong focus on supporting positive change. Depending on the context, this could involve curating collections, research, ideas, partnerships, exhibitions, events, consultations, policies and/or strategies together to address key challenges and questions. It will always involve enhancing your social and environmental impact through focused action directed to positive goals. Everyone has a part to play, Curating Tomorrow can help them play it.

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# Contents

06 Introduction

---

10 Our world today

---

12 The SDGs: a vision worth sharing and supporting

---

14 The SDGs are about human and environmental rights

---

22 Getting to know the SDGs

---

28 How are the SDGs relevant to museums?

---

38 Museums' contributions to the SDGs

---

1. Protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage, both within museums and more generally

2. Support and provide learning opportunities in support of the SDGs

3. Enable cultural participation for all

4. Support sustainable tourism

5. Enable research in support of the SDGs

6. Direct internal leadership, management and operations to support the SDGs

7. Direct external leadership, collaboration and partnerships towards the SDGs

---

68 How to play your part

---

74 How the seven suggested key activities contribute to the SDGs

---



# Introduction

This guide is intended to help empower museums (small, large and of any kind, anywhere), museum workers, museum networks and their partners to contribute to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs for short).

**T**he SDGs are the most ambitious global programme ever, addressing a wide range of social and environmental challenges in order to set the world on a path to a sustainable future by 2030. The SDGs were unanimously agreed to by the 193 Members of the United Nations in September 2015. They are explained in ‘Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’.<sup>1</sup> The SDGs are also sometimes referred to as the 2030 Agenda or the Global Goals, but they all mean the same thing.

<sup>1</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

## An invitation to museums, and every other sector

The SDGs are not just for governments: they are an invitation to all sectors of society, in all places, to collaborate and participate in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. The SDGs are an incredible opportunity for anyone, any organisation, and any sector to collaborate in pursuit of common goals, leveraging their skills, capacities and unique resources. Museums have a great deal to offer this Agenda, and some of the SDGs will not be achieved without museums. This guide aims to help museums, and you, play your part. There is no single right way to contribute to the SDGs and, so long as the principles of sustainability are followed, no wrong way. The SDGs are also not about continuing with business as usual, but about clear, committed, focused action to enhance positive impacts and reduce negative impacts.

## Empowerment everywhere

This Guide is intended to help empower museums to play their fullest part in the SDGs. It doesn't claim to have all the answers, but it is a start, and it's been developed to be useful and practical, and sensitive to the fact that different countries, different museum types and different role types each face particular issues. There are many different realities facing museums and those working in and with them, just as there are different realities in terms of social and environmental issues around the world.

The beauty of the SDGs is that they are universal, and also that they enable everyone to find their own access point to them.



## What are ‘sustainability’ and ‘sustainable development’?

Sustainability in a narrow sense means the ability to last or continue for a long time (‘maintainable’ and ‘tenable’ are similar in meaning). It has come to have a broader sense, which is around the connections between the environment, society and the economy. Environment, society and economy are often referred to as the three pillars or three dimensions of sustainability.

The concept of sustainable development largely grew from the work of the Brundtland Commission (1987), established by the World Commission on Environment and Development, and was defined as “sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.<sup>2</sup>

The concept has developed over time, and has been the subject of criticism as some so-called sustainable development was not sustainable. Increased [economic] growth at the expense of the environment or that drives inequality and exploits disadvantaged people is not at all sustainable. Despite this criticism, the concept is still widely used, and it can be profoundly positive. In this booklet, ‘sustainable development’ is used to mean focused activity (development) that seeks to achieve a more harmonious balance of social, economic and environmental considerations, ensuring that development in one dimension of sustainability is not having negative impacts on other dimensions and is preferably having positive impacts.

It is about achieving a future where people, communities, society and nature better support one another in a balanced way (accepting that the division between society and nature is not a straightforward or clear-cut one). That makes ‘sustainability’ the destination, and ‘sustainable development’ activity that helps achieve ‘sustainability’. ‘Sustainable development’ can be summarised as working to do more good, and do less harm.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.un-documents.net/ocf-02.htm#IV>

# Our world today

In 'Transforming Our World', the current global situation was described in the following terms:


“Billions of our citizens continue to live in poverty and are denied a life of dignity. There are rising inequalities within and among countries. There are enormous disparities of opportunity, wealth and power. Gender inequality remains a key challenge. Unemployment, particularly youth unemployment, is a major concern. Global health threats, more frequent and intense natural disasters, spiralling conflict, violent extremism, terrorism and related humanitarian crises and forced displacement of people threaten to reverse much of the development progress made in recent decades. Natural resource depletion and adverse impacts of environmental degradation, including desertification, drought, land degradation, freshwater scarcity and loss of biodiversity, add to and exacerbate the list of challenges which humanity faces.

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time and its adverse impacts undermine the ability of all countries to achieve sustainable development. Increases in global temperature, sea level rise, ocean acidification and other climate change impacts are seriously affecting coastal areas and low-lying coastal countries, including many least developed countries and small island developing States. The survival of many societies, and of the biological support systems of the planet, is at risk.”



Acknowledging the progress that was made in reducing poverty in the Global South through the Millennium Development Goals (2005-15), ‘Transforming Our World’ notes that previous attempts to address challenges one at a time have not made sufficient advances:

**“A new approach is needed. Sustainable development recognises that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, combating inequality within and among countries, preserving the planet, creating sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and fostering social inclusion are linked to each other and are interdependent.”**



The 2030 Agenda is realised through the pursuit of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These aim to address the greatest challenges facing society and the environment by 2030, including ending poverty and bringing prosperity (in all its forms) to all, social inclusion, environmental sustainability, and peace and good governance to all countries and all people. The 2030 Agenda is “a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. It also seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom.” The SDGs, and 169 targets that contribute to them, are a blueprint for addressing the world’s most pressing challenges. They came into effect on 1 January 2016 and will run until 2030. ‘The SDGs’ doesn’t just mean the goals and targets themselves, but includes the background, vision and implementation of the 17 Goals.

# The SDGs: a vision worth sharing and supporting

The UN's vision for 2030, and the role of the SDGs, is set out in 'Transforming Our World' as follows:

## “OUR VISION

In these Goals and targets, we are setting out a supremely ambitious and transformational vision. We envisage a world free of poverty, hunger, disease and want, where all life can thrive. We envisage a world free of fear and violence. A world with universal literacy. A world with equitable and universal access to quality education at all levels, to health care and social protection, where physical, mental and social well-being are assured. A world where we reaffirm our commitments regarding the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation and where there is improved hygiene; and where food

is sufficient, safe, affordable and nutritious. A world where human habitats are safe, resilient and sustainable and where there is universal access to affordable, reliable and sustainable energy.

We envisage a world of universal respect for human rights and human dignity, the rule of law, justice, equality and non-discrimination; of respect for race, ethnicity and cultural diversity; and of equal opportunity permitting the full realization of human potential and contributing to shared prosperity. A world which invests in its

children and in which every child grows up free from violence and exploitation. A world in which every woman and girl enjoys full gender equality and all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment have been removed. A just, equitable, tolerant, open and socially inclusive world in which the needs of the most vulnerable are met.

We envisage a world in which every country enjoys sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and decent work for all. A world in which consumption and production patterns and use of all natural resources – from air to land, from rivers, lakes and aquifers to oceans and seas – are sustainable.

One in which democracy, good governance and the rule of law, as well as an enabling environment at the national and international levels, are essential for sustainable development, including sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development, environmental protection and the eradication of poverty and hunger. One in which development and the application of technology are climate-sensitive, respect biodiversity and are resilient. One in which humanity lives in harmony with nature and in which wildlife and other living species are protected.”<sup>3</sup>

That is surely a vision worth sharing and helping achieve. If it sounds ambitious, that is because it is.

<sup>3</sup> ‘Transforming Our World’, paragraphs 7-9.



# The SDGs are about human and environmental rights

The SDGs are a rights-based agenda, so it is important to understand what rights people have.

## Human rights

**H**uman rights are outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which is the foundation for international and national laws around Human Rights. This milestone document was announced in 1948, in the aftermath of the horrors of the Second World War, to ensure that the atrocities that had occurred were a thing of the past and not the future.<sup>4</sup> There are 30 Human Rights. The first and last Articles are, arguably, the most important: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights” and “No-one can take away your human rights”, respectively.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

**The 30 Human Rights are (in simplified form)<sup>5</sup>:**

**1. We Are All Born Free & Equal.**

We are all born free. We all have our own thoughts and ideas. We should all be treated in the same way.

**2. Don't Discriminate.**

These rights belong to everybody, whatever our differences.

**3. The Right to Life.**

We all have the right to life, and to live in freedom and safety.

**4. No Slavery.**

Nobody has any right to make us a slave. We cannot make anyone our slave.

**5. No Torture.**

Nobody has any right to hurt us or to torture us.

**6. You Have Rights No Matter Where You Go.**

I am a person just like you!

**7. We're All Equal Before the Law.**

The law is the same for everyone. It must treat us all fairly.

**8. Your Human Rights Are Protected by Law.**

We can all ask for the law to help us when we are not treated fairly.

**9. No Unfair Detainment.**

Nobody has the right to put us in prison without good reason and keep us there, or to send us away from our country.

**10. The Right to Trial.**

If we are put on trial this should be in public. The people who try us should not let anyone tell them what to do.

**11. We're Always Innocent Till Proven Guilty.**

Nobody should be blamed for doing something until it is proven. When people say we did a bad thing we have the right to show it is not true.

**12. The Right to Privacy.**

Nobody should try to harm our good name. Nobody has the right to come into our home, open our letters, or bother us or our family without a good reason.

**13. Freedom to Move.**

We all have the right to go where we want in our own country and to travel as we wish.

**14. The Right to Seek a Safe Place to Live.**

If we are frightened of being badly treated in our own country, we all have the right to run away to another country to be safe.

**15. Right to a Nationality.**

We all have the right to belong to a country.

**16. Marriage and Family.**

Every grown-up has the right to marry and have a family if they want to. Men and women have the same rights when they are married, and when they are separated.

**17. The Right to Your Own Things.**

Everyone has the right to own things or share them. Nobody should take our things from us without a good reason.

**18. Freedom of Thought.**

We all have the right to believe in what we want to believe, to have a religion, or to change it if we want.

**19. Freedom of Expression.**

We all have the right to make up our own minds, to think what we like, to say what we think, and to share our ideas with other people.

**20. The Right to Public Assembly.**

We all have the right to meet our friends and to work together in peace to defend our rights. Nobody can make us join a group if we don't want to.

**21. The Right to Democracy.**

We all have the right to take part in the government of our country. Every grown-up should be allowed to choose their own leaders.

**22. Social Security.**

We all have the right to affordable housing, medicine, education, and childcare, enough money to live on and medical help if we are ill or old.



**23. Workers' Rights.**

Every grown-up has the right to do a job, to a fair wage for their work, and to join a trade union.

**24. The Right to Play.**

We all have the right to rest from work and to relax.

**25. Food and Shelter for All.**

We all have the right to a good life. Mothers and children, people who are old, unemployed or disabled, and all people have the right to be cared for.

**26. The Right to Education.**

Education is a right. Primary school should be free. We should learn about the United Nations and how to get on with others. Our parents can choose what we learn.

**27. Copyright.**

Copyright is a special law that protects one's own artistic creations and writings; others cannot make copies without permission. We all have the right to our own way of life and to enjoy the good things that art, science and learning bring.

**28. A Fair and Free World.**

There must be proper order so we can all enjoy rights and freedoms in our own country and all over the world.

**29. Responsibility.**

We have a duty to other people, and we should protect their rights and freedoms.

**30. No One Can Take Away Your Human Rights.**

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.youthforhumanrights.org/what-are-human-rights/universal-declaration-of-human-rights/articles-1-15.html>



“HUMAN RIGHTS AND  
THE ENVIRONMENT  
ARE INTERTWINED”

## Environmental rights

“Human rights and the environment are intertwined; human rights cannot be enjoyed without a safe, clean and healthy environment; and sustainable environmental governance cannot exist without the establishment of and respect for human rights. This relationship is increasingly recognised yet paradoxically environmental rights are increasingly violated. Environmental rights are composed of substantive rights (fundamental rights) and procedural rights (tools used to achieve substantial rights).”<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.unenvironment.org/explore-topics/environmental-rights-and-governance/what-we-do/advancing-environmental-rights/what-0>

# Everyone has the following environmental rights:

## Substantive Rights

- To a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.
- To protection against discrimination and have equal protection of the law, in relation to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.
- To freedom from threats, harassment, intimidation and violence whilst working on human rights and the environment.
- To freedom of expression and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.
- To freedom of association and peaceful assembly in relation to environmental matters.
- To self-determination; to freely determine your political status and freely pursue your economic, social and cultural development.
- To, for your own ends, freely dispose of your natural wealth and resources without prejudice to any obligations arising out of international economic co-operation, based upon the principle of mutual benefit, and international law. In no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence.
- To not be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.
- To not be subjected to arbitrary interference with your privacy, family or home.

### Procedural Rights

- To seek, receive, and impart environmental information.
- To participate in public decision-making about environmental matters.
- To equal access to public service in their country.
- To effective legal remedies for violations of these rights.
- To be informed, at the time of arrest, of the reasons for arrest and shall be promptly informed of any charges against one.
- To be brought promptly before a judge or other officer authorized by law to exercise judicial power, after arrest, and shall be entitled to trial within a reasonable time or to release. It shall not be the general rule that persons awaiting trial shall be detained in custody, but release may be subject to guarantees to appear for trial, at any other stage of the judicial proceedings, and, should occasion arise, for execution of the judgement.
- To compensation after unlawful arrest or detention.

### State Obligations

States have an obligation to protect environmental rights. This involves ensuring the provision of the above rights as well as the obligations:

- To require the prior assessment of the possible environmental and human rights impacts of policies and projects.
- To ensure that they comply with their obligations to indigenous peoples and members of traditional communities.
- To ensure the effective enforcement of their environmental standards against public and private actors.

### Private Sector Obligations

Businesses have a responsibility to respect environmental rights. This means that they should avoid infringing on the human rights of others and should address adverse human rights impacts with which they are involved. This includes the obligations:

- To develop policies that respect environmental rights.
- To undertake due diligence processes to identify, prevent, mitigate and account for how they address their impacts on human rights.
- To create processes to enable the remediation of any adverse human rights impacts that they cause or to which they contribute.

# Getting to know the SDGs

The SDGs follow on from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which aimed to address the basic needs of the world's poorest countries from 2000-15. However, unlike the MDGs, the SDGs cover all countries as it is not possible to ensure a fair, sustainable future without considering the needs of all people, and global natural resources and environments.

The SDGs are anchored in the principles of

- 1) protecting and promoting human rights and environmental rights, which underpin the possibility for dignity, peace and sustainable development;
- 2) equality, as reducing inequalities is essential for protecting and promoting human rights, and tackling discrimination and exclusion;
- and 3) sustainability, through a long-term perspective to accommodate intergenerational equity, justice and a world fit for present and future generations.<sup>7</sup>

Importantly, the SDGs follow a principle of 4) 'leave no-one behind'.

<sup>7</sup> See <https://whc.unesco.org/en/sustainabledevelopment/>



The SDGs can be summarised as being made up of ‘five Ps’: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership. The first three relate to the three dimensions of sustainability (social, environmental, economic), while peace and partnership enable and support the pursuit of sustainability:

**People:** to end poverty and hunger, in all their forms and dimensions, and to ensure that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality and in a healthy environment.

**Planet:** to protect the planet from degradation, including through sustainable consumption and production, sustainably managing its natural resources and taking urgent action on climate change, so that it can support the needs of the present and future generations.

**Prosperity:** to ensure that all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives and that economic, social, and technological progress occurs in harmony with nature.

**Peace:** to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development.

**Partnership:** to mobilise the means required to implement the 2030 Agenda through a revitalised Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, based on a spirit of strengthened global solidarity, focused in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and with the participation of all countries, all stakeholders and all people.

The 17 SDGs are outlined on the following pages, demonstrating the great breadth and ambition of the SDG Agenda.<sup>8</sup> Although it is tempting to consider the Goals separately, they also need to be considered in their entirety, to ensure that action for one Goal does not come at a cost to another. Museums have a distinctive contribution to make towards the achievement of some of the SDGs, and these key contributions are explored in more detail in later sections; however, museums, museum workers and museum networks should also consider how they can support (and not impede) the overall achievement of all Goals.

It can be tempting to try to divide the Goals into groups, around 'environment', 'society' and 'economy' (based on the three dimensions of sustainability), but this is very undesirable and doesn't work in practice: all three dimensions of sustainability have to be considered for each Goal, and many Goals cover two or more dimensions of sustainability.







It is also worth noting that the Goals should be understood through their full title, not the short title that features on the commonly seen icons for each Goal. For example, the short title 'Zero hunger' does not fully represent the range of concerns of Goal 2, 'End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture', which includes social, economic and environmental considerations.







The Goals and targets are no doubt not perfect, but they are a major step forwards in supporting collaboration directed to a positive social and environmental purpose. The SDGs are the best blueprint across nations and sectors for achieving sustainability. Achieving the Goals would be a profoundly positive transformation for society and the environment. The SDGs have already gained a lot of traction with a wide range of governments and sectors, and they will contribute to the shaping of policies, strategies, funding and action across a wide range of sectors until 2030. The SDGs also have strong relevance to museums and the cultural sector more broadly. The more people, organisations and networks get on board with them, the more will be achieved.






<sup>8</sup> Adapted from [http://ap-unsdsn.org/wp-content/uploads/University-SDG-Guide\\_web.pdf](http://ap-unsdsn.org/wp-content/uploads/University-SDG-Guide_web.pdf) (Annex A)





Sustainable Development Goals		Description / key challenges
 <p><b>1</b> NO POVERTY</p>	<p>SDG 1: End poverty in all its form everywhere</p>	<p>Expand support for the poor and address the root causes of poverty. Developing countries will need special support.</p>
 <p><b>2</b> ZERO HUNGER</p>	<p>SDG 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture</p>	<p>Ensure everyone has access to safe, nutritious food on a regular basis and a healthy diet; and that agriculture is resilient and operates in harmony with nature.</p>
 <p><b>3</b> GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</p>	<p>SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages</p>	<p>Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health services, prevent infectious diseases, and tackle public health issues.</p>
 <p><b>4</b> QUALITY EDUCATION</p>	<p>SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all</p>	<p>Everyone has good-quality education that enables them to participate fully in society, achieve their potential, and live in harmony with other people and with nature.</p>
 <p><b>5</b> GENDER EQUALITY</p>	<p>SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls</p>	<p>Eliminate all forms of sexual discrimination, violence and harmful practices against women and girls, and uphold sexual and reproductive health and rights, so they are able to participate fully in public, economic and political life.</p>
 <p><b>6</b> CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION</p>	<p>SDG 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all</p>	<p>Ensure everyone has a reliable, safe water supply and good quality sanitation, managed in harmony with nature, in the context of climate change and competition for water.</p>

Sustainable Development Goals	Description / key challenges
 <p><b>7</b> AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY</p>	<p>SDG 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all</p> <p>Ensure everyone has access to electricity, clean fuels and technologies for cooking, and increasing the use of renewable energy everywhere.</p>
 <p><b>8</b> DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</p>	<p>SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all</p> <p>Protect employee rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, especially those in precarious employment. Support the development of economies where everyone benefits, and that operate in harmony with nature.</p>
 <p><b>9</b> INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE</p>	<p>SDG 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation</p> <p>Develop good-quality, sustainable and resilient infrastructure. Foster innovation and research that will advance sustainable development.</p>
 <p><b>10</b> REDUCED INEQUALITIES</p>	<p>SDG 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries</p> <p>Reduce inequalities in income and opportunity between and within countries, linked with gender, age, disability, ethnicity or other shared characteristic.</p>
 <p><b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</p>	<p>SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</p> <p>Develop cities, towns and communities that are sustainable as places for people and communities to live and work in, and in harmony with nature, in the context of rapid social change and a changing climate.</p>
 <p><b>12</b> RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</p>	<p>SDG 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns</p> <p>This Goal is key to achieving a wide range of other Goals, embracing the challenge of producing and consuming less, encouraging reuse and reducing waste, reducing pollution and using natural resources in sustainable ways.</p>

Sustainable Development Goals		Description / key challenges
	<p>SDG 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts</p>	<p>This Goal will require both 1) the incorporation of measures to fight climate change into national planning, strategies and policies and 2) greater public awareness and education on reducing climate impacts and finding ways to live with climate impacts.</p>
	<p>SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development</p>	<p>Enhance scientific research, and reduce the impacts of human activity on the oceans and marine life.</p>
	<p>SDG 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss</p>	<p>Sustainably manage land-based habitats and natural resources such as forests, restore damaged landscapes and halt the spread of deserts. Safeguard biodiversity and ecosystems.</p>
	<p>SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</p>	<p>Ensure everyone has access to justice and information. Transparent and accountable institutions are necessary for achievement of this and other goals.</p>
	<p>SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Finance</p>	<p>Partnerships within and between communities, sectors and countries are essential to achieving the SDGs.</p>

# How are the SDGs relevant to museums?

In 2015, UNESCO produced a very useful Recommendation concerning the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, their Diversity and their Role in Society.<sup>9</sup>

This highlighted the strong connections between museums and sustainable development:

<sup>9</sup> <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000246331>



“The protection and promotion of cultural and natural diversity are major challenges of the twenty-first century. In this respect, museums and collections constitute primary means by which tangible and intangible testimonies of nature and human cultures are safeguarded. Museums as spaces for cultural transmission, intercultural dialogue, learning, discussion and training, also play an important role in education (formal, informal, and lifelong learning), social cohesion and sustainable development.

Museums have great potential to raise public awareness of the value of cultural and natural heritage and of the responsibility of all citizens to contribute to their care and transmission. Museums also support economic development, notably through cultural and creative industries and tourism. This Recommendation draws the attention of Member States to the importance of the protection and promotion of museums and collections, so that they are partners in sustainable development through the preservation and protection of heritage, the protection and promotion of cultural diversity, the transmission of scientific knowledge, the development of educational policy, lifelong learning and social cohesion, and the development of the creative industries and the tourism economy.”

The International Council of Museums supports sustainability and sustainable development through its core principles, for example, that “Protection of culture and the natural world is a moral duty of individuals, communities and governments, regional and national... Since its foundation in 1946, ICOM has been at the forefront of the protection of cultural and natural heritage and is still at the cutting-edge of this great enterprise in a world which is dangerously unstable, and riven with economic, social, cultural, educational and health inequalities.”<sup>10</sup>

The International Council of Museum’s Code of Ethics outlines museums’ responsibilities and roles in society.<sup>11</sup> While support for sustainability and sustainable development are not explicit in the Code, they are implied throughout, in that museums are collections-based institutions in the service of society. Increasingly, ICOM recognises the key roles that it and its members have to play in securing a sustainable future. In 2018, ICOM established a Working Group on Sustainability to help advance ICOM’s contributions to sustainability and sustainable development. ICOM noted “Museums offer an existing global infrastructure. They are uniquely placed to facilitate collective action by building networks, raising public awareness,

and supporting research and knowledge creation. They can enhance sustainability and climate change education by working with and empowering communities to bring about change to ensure a habitable planet, social justice and equitable economic exchanges for the long term.”<sup>12</sup>

OECD/ICOM have expressed that “today museums play a crucial role in addressing contemporary societal issues, tracing and responding to the current developments and trends by tackling diverse and challenging areas such as globalisation, migration, polarisation, inequality, populism, gender equality, ageing societies, decolonisation, and climate change. They are platforms where restorative justice, intercultural and intergenerational dialogue, and cultural diplomacy principles can be applied.”<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> [http://icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/ICOM\\_STRATEGIC\\_PLAN\\_2016-2022\\_ENG.pdf](http://icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/ICOM_STRATEGIC_PLAN_2016-2022_ENG.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> <https://icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/ICOM-code-En-web.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> <https://icom.museum/en/news/icom-establishes-new-working-group-on-sustainability/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/OECD-ICOM-GUIDE-MUSEUMS-AND-CITIES.pdf>, p.12

## An example museums and climate empowerment

Civic engagement, education, research and public participation are already included in a wide range of big-picture agendas and initiatives. For example, education, training, public awareness, public participation, access to information and international co-operation are specifically mentioned in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992) and the Paris Agreement (2015).<sup>14</sup> Urgent climate action is the focus of SDG 13, and climate change relates more or less explicitly to all 17 SDGs. Museums are specifically mentioned in the Workplan for the Paris Agreement (which was agreed by the countries that are signatories to the Agreement in 2018), acknowledging the important role

that museums can play in “enhancing the implementation of education, training, public awareness, public participation and public access to information so as to enhance actions under the Paris Agreement”.<sup>15</sup> Yet, most museums will be unaware of this, so opportunities for institutional, sectoral and public empowerment are not currently being maximised. We need to find mechanisms to connect policy aims with delivery on the ground, and mechanisms to share expertise, communicate successes, and amplify messages and actions that will secure a sustainable future. Connecting with the SDGs can help museums of all kinds to connect with and support sustainable development, and work in partnership with other sectors and with society. This Guide is intended to make it easy for them to do so.

<sup>14</sup> [https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/action\\_for\\_climate\\_empowerment\\_guidelines.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/action_for_climate_empowerment_guidelines.pdf), p.2-5.

<sup>15</sup> [https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cp24\\_auv\\_L.3\\_edu.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cp24_auv_L.3_edu.pdf)

## Why the SDGs need museums

The SDGs are a call to all sectors of society. They need museums' involvement to succeed, as museums have unique resources and key roles to play.

**1. Museums preserve cultural and natural heritage** in the form of collections and associated knowledge. These form the basis of a wide range of learning and research programmes that can support the SDGs, and the preservation of cultural and natural heritage beyond museums.

**2. Museums reach very large numbers of people for formal and informal learning**, and already deliver many programmes that align with the SDGs. They foster many people's interest in, concern for, and ability to address issues relating to the SDGs. Museums can play a crucial role in enhancing public education and participation with the SDGs.



**3. Museums can support cultural participation.**

Cultural participation helps ensure that all people of all abilities, and from all backgrounds, have the opportunity to participate fully in society. As museums provide services for people, they can contribute to many SDGs by ensuring that their services consider and are accessible to the full breadth of society. Museums can bring people together, from similar backgrounds and interests, and from different backgrounds and interests, promoting fair, tolerant and just societies.

**4. Museums are trusted by large numbers of people,** and this trust can help further the SDG Agenda. Museums can support people to explore challenges relating to the SDGs, and to promote fair, tolerant and just societies. Trust enables us to go from the known to the unknown.

**5. Museums can make a significant contribution to local economies,** notably in areas of poverty or where particular groups of people are marginalised, helping address social and economic inequalities.

**6. Museums make a significant impact through their operations and use of resources;** they can make a direct contribution to the SDGs through their activities relating to personnel, finance and operations, enhancing positive impacts and steadily reducing negative impacts.

**7. Museums can participate in, facilitate and initiate cross-sectoral partnerships** and play a leading role in pursuit of the SDGs. Museums enjoy a great deal of freedom, and can use this freedom to support positive interactions between different stakeholder groups and to address real-world challenges (both local and global). In many societies, arguably no sector is better placed or better able to do this, helping bridge the gap between policy/strategy and people's individual lived experience, and providing opportunities for people to input into the development of policies and strategies that affect the lives of them and others.



How are the SDGs relevant to museums?

## Why museums need the SDGs

**T**he SDGs are a global framework, with increasingly strong buy-in from a wide range of sectors, notably from funding agencies and governments. Museums can benefit from engaging with the SDGs. Connecting with the SDGs will help museums in the following ways:

- 1. Shape their programmes to provide people interested in social and environmental topics with educational and participatory activities.** Engaging with the SDGs will enable museums to support people who are interested in issues relating to the development of a fair, just and tolerant society, and a healthy and protected natural environment. Working with the SDGs in mind will help museums and the public connect with a global story of positive change, tailored and delivered to local circumstances, empowering people of all ages and abilities to contribute to this story of change.

**2. Put their unique resources to good use in pursuit of positive social and environmental outcomes.** Museums are filled with amazing objects and collections that reflect the richness of culture and nature, and that can inspire reflection and develop understanding of the past, present and possible futures. Museums can make use of their unique resources, for example collections, collections-related information and knowledge, as a basis for a wide range of programmes in support of the SDGs. In doing so, these resources should be better understood, valued, developed and safeguarded, as well as contributing positively to the SDGs.

**3. Play a significant and distinctive part in an ambitious global agenda.** The aims of the SDGs speak directly to some of the key features of museums, and present an unparalleled opportunity to participate in an agenda that will benefit people locally and globally, and help safeguard the natural environment. The SDGs are an invitation that museums can easily accept, and that museums will benefit from through their distinctive contribution, individually and collectively.

**4. Build partnerships and collaborations.** The SDG Agenda provides a common framework, language and Goals for interested parties (at all levels) to connect and work together on shared interests. This is especially important in connecting sectors that are not familiar with one another's work or potential. This will give museums opportunities to form new collaborations with government, industry, academia and the community, and create public value from new forms of partnership. Equally, the framework can help identify common interests across different areas of museums, helping to drive cross-disciplinary partnerships, collaboration, and innovation in pursuit of the SDGs, and helping partners access and create funding opportunities.

**5. Create and demonstrate impact.** Engaging with the SDGs can help museums create impact by directing their activities to an external, real-world agenda in support of local and global wellbeing. The SDGs can help museums articulate and demonstrate the impact of their activities to a wide range of stakeholders, notably those in other sectors who are also using the SDGs as a framework. Playing their part in the SDGs will help museums to build upon and enhance public trust in them.

## Culture and cultural institutions for the SDGs

A number of guides exist on the role of culture in the SDG Agenda. These include:

- ‘Culture for the 2030 Agenda’ (UNESCO 2018)<sup>16</sup>
- ‘ICOMOS Action Plan: Cultural Heritage and Localizing the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)’ (ICOMOS, 2017)<sup>17</sup>
- ‘UNESCO moving forward the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’ (UNESCO 2017)<sup>18</sup>
- ‘Culture in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): A Guide for Local Action (United Cities and Local Governments, 2018)<sup>19</sup>
- ‘Sport and the Sustainable Development Goals: an overview outlining the contribution of sport to the SDGs’ (UN Office on Sport for Development and Peace, 2018)<sup>20</sup>
- ‘Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals: Journey to 2030’ (UN World Tourism Organisation, 2017)<sup>21</sup>

<sup>16</sup> <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000264687>

<sup>17</sup> [https://www.icomos.org/images/DOCUMENTS/Secretariat/2017/ICOMOS\\_Action\\_Plan\\_Cult\\_Heritage\\_and\\_Localizing\\_SDGs\\_20170721.pdf](https://www.icomos.org/images/DOCUMENTS/Secretariat/2017/ICOMOS_Action_Plan_Cult_Heritage_and_Localizing_SDGs_20170721.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> <https://en.unesco.org/creativity/sites/creativity/files/247785en.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.uclg.org/en/media/news/culture-sustainable-development-goals-sdgs-guide-local-action>

<sup>20</sup> [https://www.un.org/sport/sites/www.un.org.sport/files/ckfiles/files/Sport\\_for\\_SDGs\\_finalversion9.pdf](https://www.un.org/sport/sites/www.un.org.sport/files/ckfiles/files/Sport_for_SDGs_finalversion9.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> <http://www2.unwto.org/publication/tourism-and-sustainable-development-goals-journey-2030>



## How other sectors are using the SDGs

Guides exist for the implementations of the SDGs in a number of other sectors, but not specifically for museums. Some of these have strong resonance with the current Guide, and this will facilitate cross-sector working and partnership. These include:

- ‘Getting started with the SDGs in Universities: A guide for universities, higher education institutions, and the academic sector’ (SDSN Australia/Pacific, 2017)<sup>22</sup>
- ‘The SDG Compass: A guide for business action on the SDGs’ (Global Reporting Institute, United Nations Global Compact & World Business Council for Sustainable Development, 2015)<sup>23</sup>
- ‘Getting started with the SDGs in Cities: A guide for stakeholders’ (Kanuri et al., SDSN, 2016)<sup>24</sup>
- ‘Getting started with the SDGs: A guide for stakeholders’ (SDSN, 2015)<sup>25</sup>

Among these, the first named has a particularly strong relevance to museums, and this Guide has used some of the same basic structure, as museums and universities have a great deal in common as knowledge-based institutions, many museums are associated with universities, and as museums can draw upon and support research for a variety of purposes in support of the SDGs.

<sup>22</sup> [http://ap-unsdsn.org/wp-content/uploads/University-SDG-Guide\\_web.pdf](http://ap-unsdsn.org/wp-content/uploads/University-SDG-Guide_web.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> <https://sdgcompass.org/>

<sup>24</sup> <http://unsdsn.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/9.1.8.-Cities-SDG-Guide.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> <http://unsdsn.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/151211-getting-started-guide-FINAL-PDF-.pdf>

# Museums' contributions to the SDGs

Museums can play a critical role in supporting the achievement of the SDGs, working with one another, with their stakeholders, and with other sectors. Museums already contribute positively to many of the SDGs, but they also have negative impacts.



**I**ndividually and collectively, museums make large impacts, both positive and negative.

**As there are around 55,000 museums in the world, their impact is probably comparable to that of a small (possibly not so small) country. Imagine the difference to the world if all museums committed to steadily enhancing their positive impacts and reducing their negative impacts?**

In order to realise their potential, museums, museum networks and individual museum workers need to understand how they can contribute towards the SDGs. The SDGs are made up of 17 Goals and 169 targets.<sup>26</sup> That is just too many to remember. Also, some Goals are more directly relevant to museums than others. For example, education and research are explicitly recognised in a number of the SDGs and museums have a direct role in addressing these, notably for people outside of formal educational programmes, or as an accompaniment to formal education. Protection of cultural and natural heritage is also explicitly recognised in the SDGs, as are participation in society and cultural life.

However, museums can contribute to the SDGs in much broader ways, and they can support the SDGs overall. The following six steps, and seven key activities, are offered as a plan that should be relevant for most museums, museum workers, networks, funders and other stakeholders.

<sup>26</sup> For details of the SDGs, targets, and background information see <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>

## STEP 1

Understand the SDGs to be an integrated programme of 17 Goals for the benefit of people, planet and prosperity (the three dimensions of sustainability), in pursuit of and supported by peace, and enabled by partnerships.

Crucially, understand that the SDGs are about strengthening and enhancing human and environmental rights, and achieving a more sustainable future.

## STEP 2

Consider what position[s] you should be taking in relation to the overall SDG Agenda, and what part you should be playing to achieve the SDGs. Positions could include:

- Communicate up to date science and information linked to the SDGs
- Provide public access to a range of resources linked to the SDGs
- Present a range of views on sustainability issues and the SDGs
- Enable people to examine sustainability and sustainable development as connected cultural, political, technological, economic and scientific issues
- Provide information on how people might adapt their lifestyles and consumer choices to address the SDGs
- Provide a forum for individuals, communities and organisations with an interest in sustainability to address the SDGs





- Play a part in networks of individuals, communities and organisations with an interest in addressing the SDGs
- Promote collective action for the SDGs
- Participate in SDG-related research
- Lead opinion to address the SDGs
- Take a critical stance on sustainability policy and decisions linked to the SDGs
- Lobby on sustainability issues

Different museums, museum types and role types will be more comfortable with particular positions from this list. However, it is worth remembering that business-as-usual will not support positive change, and 'comfortable' is not necessarily a position that will help a museum, or even an individual museum worker, in the long-term. You could ask your stakeholders what roles they need or want you to take.<sup>27</sup>

Ask what level of ambition you (and/or your institution) should be expected to have for the SDGs in terms of your mission and values: should you be a follower or a leader, locally or globally, and what part should you be playing in networks?

Consider the benefits to you/your institution of supporting the SDGs, and the risks of not supporting them. Remember that the SDGs are an invitation that do not require permission to adopt, and have been set out as an invitation to all sectors to participate in. You just need to want to do it, or at least recognise the importance of doing it. Remember the SDGs are not about justifying who you are, but are a statement of intent of the difference you want to make for the world, and an ongoing commitment to enhance your positive impacts and reduce negative impacts.

<sup>27</sup> The list of institutional positions is adapted from the work of Fiona Cameron and colleagues, who explored the possible roles of museums as agents for addressing climate change. See, e.g. Cameron, F. R. (2012). Agencies, climate change and the museum for a complex world. *Museum Management and Curatorship* 27(4): 317-39.

## STEP 3

Consider how you and your museum (or network, organisation or partnership) contribute to each Goal currently, both positively and negatively, and identify which SDGs connect most with the subject area of your museum or your work. Those SDGs represent your key contribution to the achievement of the SDGs, ensuring at the same time that in contributing to those SDGs you are not impeding others.

## STEP 4

The following seven activities are suggested as a very impactful way for museums to contribute to the SDGs. This list is not exclusive, but should apply to the great majority of museums, museum-related organisations and their partners. This list is also scalable, so applies to individuals, institutions, networks, and people at all levels in an organization. As with the SDGs themselves, the seven activities should be considered alongside one another, to try to ensure that activity in one area is not negatively impacting on other activities.

## The seven activities

1. **Protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage, both within museums and more generally**
2. **Support and provide learning opportunities in support of the SDGs**
3. **Enable cultural participation for all**
4. **Support sustainable tourism**
5. **Enable research in support of the SDGs**
6. **Direct internal leadership, management and operations towards the SDGs**
7. **Direct external leadership, collaboration and partnerships towards the SDGs**

These are covered in greater detail below. The seven key activities are mapped against the targets of the SDGs at the end of this booklet. They link fairly explicitly to 56 SDG targets, which is 33% of all 169 targets.

## STEP 5

Develop an action plan to enhance positive contributions to the SDGs and reduce negative contributions based on the seven activities above, spanning the gap between 'where you are now' and 'where you want to get to'. Incorporate this into your organisational development, monitoring and reporting cycle, and communicate it both internally and externally.

## STEP 6

Review and renew your action plan regularly, and repeat this six-step process. Enjoy it and celebrate it. Don't wait, start now if you haven't already started. The future needs you.



# 1.

**Protect and safeguard  
the world's cultural and  
natural heritage, both  
within museums and  
more generally**

# 1. Protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage, both within museums and more generally

**H**eritage is whatever is passed from one generation to another, and is strongly connected with the concept of sustainability.

**Cultural heritage** generally includes artefacts, monuments, buildings and sites that have a diversity of values to people (e.g. symbolic, historic, artistic, scientific and/or social significance). Natural heritage generally includes plants, animals, ecosystems, geological structures, and landscapes.

**Natural heritage** is found in the wider environment, nature reserves, zoos, aquaria and botanical gardens.

**Intangible cultural heritage** is defined in the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage as “practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills - as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith - that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognise as part of their cultural heritage...”<sup>28</sup>

<sup>28</sup> <https://ich.unesco.org/en/what-is-intangible-heritage-00003>



Protecting and safeguarding cultural and natural heritage forms the basis of a discrete and explicit SDG target, SDG 11.4, 'Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage'.

**Museums are fundamental to the achievement of this target**, along with other collections-based institutions, cultural sites, monuments, and natural heritage. However, as individual museums (and museum workers and networks) are part of wider museum, cultural and heritage sectors, all museums should consider how they support the world's cultural and natural heritage through their various activities, just to ensure that they are not inadvertently doing damage to forms of heritage beyond their immediate subject area. All museums should consider how they are helping build resilience and adaptive capacity for the heritage in their buildings, for broader heritage in culture and nature, and in communities locally and globally.

Target 11.4 is closely linked to the achievement of many other SDGs, because collections in museums serve as the basis for a wide range of activities, notably learning (SDG 4) and research and innovation (SDG 9). They, in turn, help contribute to other SDGs. For example,

natural history collections in museums directly contribute to SDG 11.4, and through SDGs 4 (education) and 9 (research and innovation) they can contribute to SDGs 2 (sustainable agriculture), 13 (climate action), 14 (life in water) and 15 (life on land), by ensuring the protection and safeguarding of natural heritage in nature. Museums can also help to protect and safeguard cultural and natural heritage by providing opportunities for people to express, experience and participate in expressions of their culture and the culture of others (supporting SDG 10, reduced inequalities).

So, museums help protect and safeguard collections and, through the effective and sustainable use of their collections for education and research, and the exhibitions, events and other programmes they stage, they contribute to the protection and safeguarding of cultural and natural heritage in the wider world. Museums have an important role in working to reduce conflict, and are themselves threatened in times of conflict. They also have an important role in tackling illegal looting, both historical and contemporary, and in preventing illegal trade in endangered species. All of these activities contribute to the SDGs.

# 2.

**Support and provide  
learning opportunities  
in support of the SDGs**

## 2. Support and provide learning opportunities in support of the SDGs

**E**ducation, whether as part of formal education or lifelong learning, is crucial for the achievement of the SDGs, and is included among the SDGs (explored further on the following page).

‘Education for Sustainable Development’ (ESD) is a widely recognised term that “empowers learners to take informed decisions and responsible actions for environmental integrity, economic viability and a just society, for present and future generations, while respecting cultural diversity. It is about lifelong learning, and is an integral part of quality education. ESD is holistic and transformational education which addresses learning content and outcomes, pedagogy and the learning environment. It achieves its purpose by transforming society.”<sup>29</sup> Education should cover all of cognitive/intellectual, attitudinal/ values and behavioural/action aspects. It is not enough for people to know about problems and challenges: they need to care about them and be empowered to be part of the solution.

<sup>29</sup> ‘Roadmap for Implementing the Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development’ (UNESCO, 2014), <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002305/230514e.pdf>



SDG	SDG target
 <p>Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all</p>	<p>4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development</p>
 <p>Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns</p>	<p>12.8 By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature</p>
 <p>Goal 13: Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages</p>	<p>13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning</p>
 <p>Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</p>	<p>16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels</p> <p>16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements</p>

ESD has a crucial role to play in addressing climate change and its impacts, building individual and collective abilities (knowledge, attitudes and actions) to reduce personal and collective climate impacts and to adapt to climate change.<sup>30</sup>

**Museums can incorporate ESD into all of their educational programmes, for all ages and abilities.** Two especially useful documents that outline key learning objectives for the SDGs (and in terms of knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviour) and for climate change education are, respectively:

- ‘Education for Sustainable Development: Learning Objectives’ (UNESCO, 2017)<sup>31</sup>
- ‘Action for Climate Empowerment: Guidelines’ (UNFCCC, 2017)<sup>32</sup>

UNESCO also has a wide range of resources available for each SDG.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>30</sup> ‘The Role of Climate Change in the Classroom’ (UNESCO, 2013), <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002197/219752e.pdf>

<sup>31</sup> <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000247444>

<sup>32</sup> <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000246435>

<sup>33</sup> <https://en.unesco.org/themes/education/sdgs/material>

IT IS NOT ENOUGH  
FOR PEOPLE TO KNOW  
ABOUT PROBLEMS  
AND CHALLENGES:  
THEY NEED TO CARE  
ABOUT THEM AND BE  
EMPOWERED TO BE  
PART OF THE SOLUTION

# 3.

## Enable cultural participation for all

“EVERYONE HAS  
THE RIGHT FREELY  
TO PARTICIPATE IN  
THE CULTURAL LIFE  
OF THE COMMUNITY”

### 3. Enable cultural participation for all

**C**ulture is enshrined in Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: “everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits” (education is also a human right, enshrined in Article 26 of the UDHR).

The right to participate in cultural activity is therefore a human right: to defend the right to cultural participation is to defend human rights, and to deny the right to cultural participation is to deny human rights. People should have the right “to know, understand, visit, make use of, maintain, exchange and develop cultural heritage and cultural expressions, as well as to benefit from the cultural heritage and cultural expressions of others.”<sup>34</sup>

<sup>34</sup> [http://www.unesco.org/culture/culture-sector-knowledge-management-tools/10\\_Info%20Sheet\\_Right%20to%20Culture.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/culture/culture-sector-knowledge-management-tools/10_Info%20Sheet_Right%20to%20Culture.pdf)

Yet, while cultural access has been transformed in many ways by the internet and by transformations in many museums, the right to culture is increasingly threatened as a result of gross inequalities in income, social status and opportunity; to people who are migrants or refugees (whether fleeing political conflict or the impacts of climate change); and by intolerance and censorship. Working to ensure that people of all backgrounds and abilities have the opportunity to engage with the diversity of culture and cultural expressions, including from their own culture and social group, is crucial for individuals' own lives and in pursuit of peaceful communities and societies.

**‘Enable cultural participation for all’** helps achieve a number of SDGs and SDG targets, for example it contributes directly to SDG target 10.2, “By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status” and SDG target 11.7, “By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities”.

Enabling cultural participation for all can help contribute to poverty reduction (SDG 1), enhance health and wellbeing (SDG 3), promote gender equality (SDG 5), promote sustainable communities (SDG 11), support justice and access to information for all (SDG 16), and support partnerships for the SDGs (SDG 17).



Disadvantaged or marginalised groups, of all kinds, should be especially supported (or their particular needs taken into consideration) by museums, to ensure that the SDG principle of 'leave no-one behind' is achieved. To give some examples of how the SDGs relate to particular groups of people/peoples:

- Disabled people, by definition, face particular challenges in relation to sustainable development and the SDGs. Disability is specifically mentioned in targets for SDGs 4, 8, 10, 11 and 17.<sup>35</sup> UN DESA has developed a specific guide on 'Disability and Development Report: realizing the Sustainable Development Goals by, for and with persons with disabilities'.<sup>36</sup>
- LGBT people are subjected to discrimination in many countries, with discriminatory laws and threats of violence, which results in lower incomes and often poor physical and mental health, and prevents them from fulfilling their potential. Tackling this discrimination is necessary to tackle poverty as a whole, and ensure they are not 'left behind'. Stonewall International has produced a guide that highlights some of the ways that LGBT people have been disadvantaged in relation to the topic of each SDG, and how specific actions for the SDGs can help advance LGBT equality and rights.<sup>37</sup>
- Indigenous peoples have specific rights, outlined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).<sup>38</sup> The SDGs relate strongly to the rights contained in the UNDRIP.<sup>39</sup> Indigenous peoples are specifically mentioned in SDGs 1, 2, 4, 5, 10 and 16. Many groups will be especially affected by climate change (SDG 13); they are also crucial to achieving the SDGs as many groups are stewards of their natural environment, supporting ecosystem services, sustainable use of natural resources, tackling climate change and supporting biodiversity conservation (relevant to SDGs 2, 4, 12, 13, 14 and 15).

<sup>35</sup> [https://iddcconsortium.net/sites/default/files/resources-tools/files/2030\\_agenda\\_comprehensive\\_guide\\_for\\_persons\\_with\\_disabilities.pdf](https://iddcconsortium.net/sites/default/files/resources-tools/files/2030_agenda_comprehensive_guide_for_persons_with_disabilities.pdf)

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2018/12/UN-Flagship-Report-Disability.pdf>

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/system/files/sdg-guide.pdf>

<sup>38</sup> [https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouseoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP\\_E\\_web.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouseoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> [http://nav.indigenounavigator.com/images/Documents/Tools/Navigator\\_UNDRIP-SDGs.pdf](http://nav.indigenounavigator.com/images/Documents/Tools/Navigator_UNDRIP-SDGs.pdf)

# 4.

## Support sustainable tourism

## 4. Support sustainable tourism

**S**ustainable tourism has been defined as “tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.”<sup>40</sup>

Well-managed tourism can contribute very positively to the three dimensions of sustainability, promoting and safeguarding the natural environment, providing jobs and income to communities. However, tourism can also have serious negative impacts, notably through greenhouse gas emissions from flying that contribute to climate change, and where local communities’ rights and heritage are not respected or where natural heritage is used in unsustainable ways. The United Nations World Tourism Organisation has produced a useful overview of how tourism contributes to all 17 SDGs, and how tourism can be developed to be more sustainable.<sup>41</sup>

The term ‘responsible tourism’ was adopted by some in the tourism industry, to be better understood across the sector. The 2002 Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism set out the aims of responsible tourism as tourism that:

- minimises negative economic, environmental, and social impacts
- generates greater economic benefits for local people and enhances the well-being of host communities, improves working conditions and access to the industry
- involves local people in decisions that affect their lives and life chances
- makes positive contributions to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage, to the maintenance of the world’s diversity
- provides more enjoyable experiences for tourists through more meaningful connections with local people, and a greater understanding of local cultural, social and environmental issues
- provides access for physically challenged people
- and is culturally sensitive, engenders respect between tourists and hosts, and builds local pride and confidence.<sup>42</sup>



**By supporting sustainable tourism,** museums can create a wide range of benefits to themselves, communities (local and otherwise) and the environment, all of which support the SDGs.

‘Support sustainable tourism’ contributes directly to SDG target 8.9, “By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products”. Developing reporting methods to enhance the contribution of tourism to the SDGs is included in SDG 12, and the contribution of tourism to marine conservation in islands and least developed countries is included in SDG 14.

WELL-MANAGED  
TOURISM CAN  
CONTRIBUTE VERY  
POSITIVELY TO THE  
THREE DIMENSIONS  
OF SUSTAINABILITY

<sup>40</sup> ‘Making Tourism More Sustainable’ (UNEP and UNWTO, 2005), p.11-12, <http://www.unep.fr/shared/publications/pdf/DTix0592xPA-TourismPolicyEN.pdf>

<sup>41</sup> See ‘Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals’ (UN World Tourism Organisation, 2015), <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/9789284417254>

<sup>42</sup> ‘Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism’, <https://responsibletourismpartnership.org/cape-town-declaration-on-responsible-tourism/>

# 5.

**Enable research in  
support of the SDGs**

## 5. Enable research in support of the SDGs

**R**esearch, like culture and education, is very much part of the ‘how’ of the Goals: it is one of the main means by which the Goals will be achieved. Research, knowledge creation, and innovation across all disciplines - sciences, social sciences and humanities - are fundamental for the achievement of all of the SDGs.<sup>43</sup>

Research and innovation are the subject of SDG 9, “Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation”.

**Museum collections are a distributed research and knowledge infrastructure**, preserved and developed for the long-term and supporting a wide range of educational, research and innovation-driven activities (see also 1. Protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage above). Ensuring this infrastructure is developed to meet the needs of present and future researchers is vital to supporting the SDGs.

Resilient infrastructure is the subject of SDG 9.1, and SDG 9.4 is aimed at retrofitting infrastructure (which would include collections facilities) to reduce its negative environmental impacts, make more use of renewable energy and increase energy efficiency, but resilience would also relate to long-term usability of collections as a research infrastructure.

<sup>43</sup>See ‘Getting started with the SDGs in Universities’ (SDSN Australia/Pacific, 2017), <http://ap-unsdsn.org/regional-initiatives/universities-sdgs/university-sdg-guide/>

Science is explicitly mentioned in a number of targets, most notably SDG 9.5, “Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including, by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development workers per 1 million people and public and private research and development spending”. Goal 2 (2.A) requires investment into “agricultural research”; ensuring healthy lives (Goal 3, 3.B) requires “research and development of vaccines and medicines”, and establishing sustainable consumption and production patterns (Goal 12, 12.A) means supporting “developing countries to strengthen their scientific and technological capacity”.

Goal 14 (14.A) has the target “increase scientific knowledge, develop research capacity and transfer marine technology...”

**Museums have a key role to play in supporting the field of heritage science**, which seeks to enhance the understanding, care, use and management of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage so it can enrich people’s lives, both today and in the future.<sup>44</sup>

Heritage science relates directly to SDGs 9.1, 9.4, 9.5 and 11.4 and other Goals and targets linked to the protection and safeguarding of cultural and natural heritage, education, and cultural participation for all.

<sup>44</sup><https://www.iccrom.org/section/heritage-science>

## Museums can support research in support of the SDGs in a number of ways, drawing on their collections, practices and operations:

1. They can help provide access to researchers to research-useful collections, whether for traditional disciplinary or novel approaches, and help communicate the results of research to their various audiences and stakeholders. Collections, collections facilities and access to collections information need to be developed to meet the needs of current and future researchers.

2. They can help researchers and policy makers better understand how to achieve the SDGs through humanities and social sciences research, for example by being a test-bed to explore how people can be involved in policy development and/or public activity in support of the SDGs.

3. They can support heritage science, which supports the protection, safeguarding and sustainable use of cultural and natural heritage in museums.

4. They can support developing countries to make effective use of collections and collections information for research to benefit those countries, and to protect and safeguard cultural and natural heritage in those countries.

5. Some museums will undertake research themselves, and this could be directed towards the advancement of the SDGs, or use the SDGs as a framework for communication and reporting.

# 6.

**Direct internal  
leadership, management  
and operations to support  
the SDGs**

## 6. Direct internal leadership, management and operations to support the SDGs

**M**useums can contribute directly to the SDGs through the decisions they make, small and large, and at all levels.

Leadership, management and operations are considered together here, to emphasise the importance of connecting museums' visions and missions with the culture and activities of museums themselves.

This ensures a clear streamlining of museums', and museum workers', identity, values and activity.

Museums can make very important contributions to a number of SDGs through their operations and processes, outlined on the following pages.

## To give some examples:

1. Taking leadership and management decisions (at all levels) that apply the SDGs to the institution itself and the daily work of staff, that support the SDGs and the seven activities listed above, and that ultimately enhance the human and environmental rights of those impacted by museums and their work.

2. Supporting staff at all levels to contribute directly and indirectly to the SDGs through their own work.

3. Having effective training and recruitment processes can help contribute to SDGs around poverty, equality and employment.

4. Directing procurement processes towards sustainability, by promoting the uptake of products from local suppliers to reduce waste and promote local culture, choosing suppliers and products with lower negative and greater positive social and environmental impacts.

5. Retrofitting (or developing) buildings to reduce unnecessary waste of energy, take-up sustainable energy sources, and contribute to climate action.

6. Having effective policies, procedures and support around staff travel, to reduce negative environmental impacts to contribute to climate action.

7. Having effective policies, procedures and support to steadily reduce waste of all kinds.

8. Being accountable for decisions that support and impede the SDGs, through building the SDGs into reporting and monitoring systems.

9. Working at all times to ensure that positive contributions to the SDGs are enhanced, and that negative contributions are steadily reduced.



# 7.

## **Direct external leadership, collaboration and partnerships towards the SDGs**

## 7. Direct external leadership, collaboration and partnerships towards the SDGs

**M**useums and museum workers regularly work in partnership, across their own sector[s], and with other sectors. They have tremendous freedom in the partnerships and collaborations they develop, and can direct their activity to building partnerships to better support the SDGs, contributing to a huge range of initiatives.

By aligning their work with potential partners, new opportunities will be created, which will enhance social and environmental outcomes, and benefit all partners including museums. Effective partnerships produce better results than can be achieved alone, and create new opportunities that cannot be achieved in isolation.

**All museums, museum workers and networks should consider how their work could complement the work of others and other sectors to create public value to advance the SDGs.** Museums with collections from other countries and communities can use these to build partnerships that connect local and global dimensions in pursuit of the SDGs. Aligning museum policies with policies in other sectors can help create opportunities to accelerate action for the SDGs. This helps to achieve Goal 17, 'Partnerships for the goals'. Notably:

- SDG 17.14, 'Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development'
- SDG 17.16, 'Enhance the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilise and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in all countries, in particular developing countries'
- SDG 17.17, 'Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships'

OECD and ICOM have produced a guide on the potential of museums in local development, 'Culture and Local Development: Maximising the Impact, guide for local government, communities and museums'.<sup>45</sup> Although not framed around the SDGs, this guide is very useful for exploring the relationship between museums and local policy development and delivery.

The Partnering Initiative and UN DESA has produced a very useful guide entitled 'Maximising the Impact of Partnerships for the SDGs: a practical guide to partnership value creation'. This guide provides useful tools for developing different kinds of partnership, and for amplifying the impact of partnerships for positive social and environmental outcomes.<sup>46</sup>

EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS  
PRODUCE BETTER  
RESULTS THAN CAN  
BE ACHIEVED ALONE,  
AND CREATE NEW  
OPPORTUNITIES THAT  
CANNOT BE ACHIEVED  
IN ISOLATION.

<sup>45</sup><https://icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/OECD-ICOM-GUIDE-MUSEUMS-AND-CITIES.pdf>

<sup>46</sup> [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2564Partnerships\\_for\\_the\\_SDGs\\_Maximising\\_Value\\_Guidebook\\_Final.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2564Partnerships_for_the_SDGs_Maximising_Value_Guidebook_Final.pdf)

# How to play your part

Every museum, every museum worker,  
and every museum network has a part  
to play in achieving the SDGs.



**E**veryone has a part to play in helping achieve the SDGs, and different museum roles have distinctive parts to play. If we revisit the list of seven suggested key activities for museums to undertake to support the SDGs:

1. Protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage, both within museums and more generally
2. Support and provide learning opportunities in support of the SDGs
3. Enable cultural participation for all
4. Support sustainable tourism
5. Enable research in support of the SDGs
6. Direct internal leadership, management and operations towards the SDGs
7. Direct external leadership, collaboration and partnerships towards the SDGs

**Museum workers could contribute to these seven key activities in the following ways (noting that this list is not exhaustive or exclusive):**

**Curators** can readily support all seven activities, for example by (1) caring for and developing collections to support the SDGs, and making them available in sustainable ways; (2,3) developing exhibitions and collections linked to the SDGs, that support education and cultural participation for all; (4) supporting tourism in support of the SDGs through exhibitions and other activities; (5) facilitating the use of collections for research, and making collections and collections information widely available (notably online), to support the SDGs. (6) Curators can ensure that all their activities promote sustainability through the resources they use and decisions they take and (7) they can build partnerships and collaborations to support the SDGs.

**Conservators** can make a distinctive contribution through (1) caring for collections and making them available to support learning opportunities and cultural participation (2,3). Conservators can support research for the SDGs (5), and can make a distinctive contribution through ensuring the chemicals and other resources they use as part of conservation treatments are not harmful to the natural environment (1,6).<sup>47</sup>

**Educators and staff working directly with visitors** can create opportunities for people to encounter intangible cultural heritage (1), and to take part in educational programmes linked to the SDGs (2). They can ensure that programmes promote cultural participation for all (3). Events can help promote sustainable tourism (4). Educators can support research that seeks to advance education for sustainable development and activity to accelerate action for the SDGs (5).

<sup>47</sup> See, especially, Sustainability in Conservation for advice <https://www.sustainabilityinconservation.com/>



**Leaders and managers** can support all seven activities, through the decisions they make in terms of providing financial and human resources; decisions around vision, mission and programmes of work (6) that support all seven key activities; and in the partnerships and projects they support, initiate and participate in (7).

**Marketing teams** play a key role in promoting learning opportunities (2), through ensuring they promote cultural participation for all (3), promoting sustainable tourism (4), communicating museums' internal and external work in support of the SDGs to the wider world, and promoting the SDG Agenda (6,7).

**Financial and commercial teams** support education (2), cultural participation for all (3) and sustainable tourism (4), through the services they provide and the products they stock and sell, ensuring that museums are accessible in terms of economic and cultural considerations (3). They can build external partnerships with suppliers in support of the SDGs (7).

**Facilities teams** play a key role in working to reduce negative environmental impacts and implement sustainable energy sources, and reducing waste of all kinds (6).

Ensuring that all seven activities are delivered and developed in harmony with one another will also help to ensure that museums themselves have a sustainable future.





**Those whose decisions affect museums also have an important role to play:**

**Museum networks and sector support organisations** play a key role in resourcing, supporting and communicating the range of ways that museums, museum workers and museum networks support the SDGs. They influence political decisions that affect the funding, policy connections and future of museums, and they provide funding directly themselves. They should support skills development and ensure funding is in place to support all seven activities and the range of museum roles. Museum networks and sector support organisations should advocate for the importance of all seven activities as foundations for museums' roles in contributing to sustainable development. They should stay abreast of developments outside the museum sector and empower their members and networks to participate in big-picture initiatives that further the SDGs. They should support museums to enhance their positive impacts and steadily reduce their negative impacts.

### **Museum funders and policy makers**

should also recognise the importance of all seven activities as the foundation of museums' contributions to the SDGs, and ensure that appropriate funding, and accompanying policy decisions, are in place to support museums, museum workers and museum networks to play their fullest part in contributing to the SDGs, working as a sector and in partnership with other sectors. Ensuring that activity that supports the SDGs is reported, recognised and showcased is also important, and will help to enhance museums' contributions to the SDGs, and the achievement of the SDGs overall.

The seven activities are broken down in further detail on the following pages, showing how they contribute towards particular SDGs and SDG targets.



How the seven suggested key activities contribute to the SDGs

Key activity	SDGs	SDG targets
<p><b>1. Protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage</b></p>	<p><b>Goal 2.</b> End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture</p>	<p>2.5 By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed</p>
	<p><b>Goal 11.</b> Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</p>	<p>11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage</p>
		<p>11.B By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels</p>
	<p><b>Goal 13.</b> Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts</p>	<p>13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries</p>

How the seven suggested key activities contribute to the SDGs

Key activity	SDGs	SDG targets
<p><b>1. Protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage</b></p>	<p><b>Goal 14.</b> Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development</p>	<p>14.1 By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution</p>
		<p>14.2 By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans</p>
	<p><b>Goal 15.</b> Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss</p>	<p>15.1 By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements</p>
		<p>15.5 Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species</p>
		<p>15.7 Take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products</p>

How the seven suggested key activities contribute to the SDGs

Key activity	SDGs	SDG targets
<p><b>1. Protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage</b></p>	<p>Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss</p>	<p>15.C Enhance global support for efforts to combat poaching and trafficking of protected species, including by increasing the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities</p>
	<p>Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</p>	<p>16.4 By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organised crime</p>
	<p><i>And Goals and targets specific to the subject area and context of each museum</i></p>	

How the seven suggested key activities contribute to the SDGs

Key activity	SDGs	SDG targets
<p><b>2. Support and provide learning in support of the SDGs</b></p>	<p><b>Goal 4.</b> Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all</p>	<p>4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development</p>
	<p><b>Goal 12.</b> Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns</p>	<p>12.8 By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature</p>
	<p><b>Goal 13.</b> Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts</p>	<p>13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning</p>
	<p><b>Goal 16.</b> Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</p>	<p>16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels</p>
		<p>16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements</p>
<p><i>And Goals and targets specific to the subject area and context of each museum</i></p>		

How the seven suggested key activities contribute to the SDGs

Key activity	SDGs	SDG targets
<p><b>3. Enable cultural participation for all</b></p>	<p><b>Goal 1.</b> End poverty in all its forms everywhere</p>	<p>1.4 By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance</p>
	<p><b>Goal 3.</b> Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages</p>	<p>3.4 By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being</p>
	<p><b>Goal 5.</b> Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls</p>	<p>5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere</p>
	<p><b>Goal 10.</b> Reduce inequality within and among countries</p>	<p>10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status</p>
	<p><b>Goal 11.</b> Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</p>	<p>11.7 By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities</p>

How the seven suggested key activities contribute to the SDGs

Key activity	SDGs	SDG targets
<p><b>3. Enable cultural participation for all</b></p>	<p><b>Goal 16.</b> Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</p>	<p>16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements</p>
		<p>16.B Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development</p>
	<p><b>Goal 17.</b> Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development</p>	<p>17.17 Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships</p>
	<p><i>And Goals and targets specific to the subject area and context of each museum</i></p>	

How the seven suggested key activities contribute to the SDGs

Key activity	SDGs	SDG targets
<p><b>4. Promote sustainable tourism</b></p>	<p><b>Goal 8.</b> Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all</p>	<p>8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products</p>
	<p><b>Goal 12.</b> Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns</p>	<p>12.B Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products</p>
	<p><b>Goal 14.</b> Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development</p>	<p>14.7 By 2030, increase the economic benefits to Small Island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism</p>
<p><i>And Goals and targets specific to the subject area and context of each museum</i></p>		



How the seven suggested key activities contribute to the SDGs

Key activity	SDGs	SDG targets
<p><b>5. Enable research in support of the SDGs</b></p>	<p><b>Goal 2.</b> End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture</p>	<p>2.A Increase investment, including through enhanced international cooperation, in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension services, technology development and plant and livestock gene banks in order to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries, in particular least developed countries</p>
	<p><b>Goal 9.</b> Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation</p>	<p>9.1 Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all</p>
		<p>9.4 By 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, with all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities</p>
		<p>9.5 Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including, by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development workers per 1 million people and public and private research and development spending</p>

How the seven suggested key activities contribute to the SDGs

Key activity	SDGs	SDG targets
<p><b>5. Enable research in support of the SDGs</b></p>	<p><b>Goal 11.</b> Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</p>	<p>11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage</p>
	<p><b>Goal 12.</b> Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns</p>	<p>12.A Support developing countries to strengthen their scientific and technological capacity to move towards more sustainable patterns of consumption and production</p>
	<p><i>And Goals and targets specific to the subject area and context of each museum</i></p>	

How the seven suggested key activities contribute to the SDGs

Key activity	SDGs	SDG targets
<p><b>6. Direct internal leadership, management and operations towards the SDGs</b></p>		
<p>Employment</p>	<p><b>Goal 4.</b> Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all</p>	<p>4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship</p>
		<p>4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.</p>
<p>Employment</p>	<p><b>Goal 5.</b> Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls</p>	<p>5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere</p>
		<p>5.5 Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life</p>

How the seven suggested key activities contribute to the SDGs

Key activity	SDGs	SDG targets
6. Direct internal leadership, management and operations towards the SDGs		
Employment	<b>Goal 8.</b> Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value
		8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment
Employment	<b>Goal 10.</b> Reduce inequality within and among countries	10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status
		10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard
		10.4 Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality

How the seven suggested key activities contribute to the SDGs

Key activity	SDGs	SDG targets
<b>6. Direct internal leadership, management and operations towards the SDGs</b>		
Employment	<b>Goal 16.</b> Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	16.B Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development
Use of resources	<b>Goal 6.</b> Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	6.3 By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally
Use of resources	<b>Goal 8.</b> Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	8.4 Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, with developed countries taking the lead
Use of resources	<b>Goal 12.</b> Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	12.2 By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources

How the seven suggested key activities contribute to the SDGs

Key activity	SDGs	SDG targets
<b>6. Direct internal leadership, management and operations towards the SDGs</b>		
Use of resources	<b>Goal 12.</b> Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	12.3 By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses
		12.4 By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimise their adverse impacts on human health and the environment
		12.5 By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse
Use of resources	<b>Goal 14.</b> Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	14.1 By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution

How the seven suggested key activities contribute to the SDGs

Key activity	SDGs	SDG targets
<b>6. Direct internal leadership, management and operations towards the SDGs</b>		
Procurement	<b>Goal 12.</b> Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	12.6 Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle
		12.7 Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities
Facilities	<b>Goal 4.</b> Ensure inclusive and equitable education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	4.A Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all
Facilities	<b>Goal 6.</b> Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	6.4 By 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity

How the seven suggested key activities contribute to the SDGs

Key activity	SDGs	SDG targets
<b>6. Direct internal leadership, management and operations towards the SDGs</b>		
Facilities	<b>Goal 7.</b> Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	7.2 By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix
Facilities	<b>Goal 9.</b> Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	9.4 By 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, with all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities
Facilities	<b>Goal 13.</b> Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related disasters
Ethical and responsible leadership and management	<b>Goal 13.</b> Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	13.2 Implement climate change measures into policies and planning
Ethical and responsible leadership and management	<b>Goal 16.</b> Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all



How the seven suggested key activities contribute to the SDGs

Key activity	SDGs	SDG targets
<b>6. Direct internal leadership, management and operations towards the SDGs</b>		
Ethical and responsible leadership and management	<b>Goal 16.</b> Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels
		16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels
		16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements
Ethical and responsible leadership and management	<b>Goal 17.</b> Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development	17.14 Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development
		17.19 By 2030, build on existing initiatives to develop measurements of progress on sustainable development that complement gross domestic product, and support statistical capacity-building in developing countries
	<i>And Goals and targets specific to the subject area and context of each museum</i>	

How the seven suggested key activities contribute to the SDGs

Key activity	SDGs	SDG targets
<p><b>7. Direct external leadership, collaboration and partnerships towards the SDGs</b></p>	<p><b>Goal 17.</b> Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development</p>	<p>17.9 Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the sustainable development goals, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation</p>
		<p>17.14 Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development</p>
		<p>17.16 Enhance the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilise and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in all countries, in particular developing countries</p>
		<p>17.17 Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships</p>
	<p><i>And Goals and targets specific to the subject area and context of each museum</i></p>	



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#### Curating Tomorrow publications

1. Museum Collections and Biodiversity Conservation (2019)
2. Museums and the Sustainable Development Goals (2019)



