

Museum policy
statements
– Towards 2020



Museums

Museums in Denmark contain exceptional collections of artistic, cultural and natural heritage.

Museums actualise this knowledge and make it accessible and relevant. This applies universally to museums of all types and sizes. Museums are significant cultural participants in Danish society and are spread across every part of the country. They contribute locally, regionally, nationally and internationally to democracy and cultural identity, offering important insights, learning and beneficial experiences.

Museums create growth and development opportunities and represent a significant part of the Danish national economy.

Museum policy statements

The Association of Danish Museums hereby presents a number of museum policy statements. These are not intended to be a complete catalogue, but an outline of some significant challenges that we believe should be addressed in the near future.

The Association of Danish Museums supports a diverse Danish museum sector and strives to ensure that both the similarities and differences between natural, art and cultural history museums are taken into consideration.

KULTURARV



SAUTEL
1866



Conservation of cultural heritage

Objects and works are the main justification for the existence of the museums.

- Society should focus on the conservation of natural, artistic and cultural heritage.
- Attention should be given to the vast and publicly-unseen task of registering and conserving our heritage. The Danish government should lead the way in operating high-quality, shared and up-to-date professional databases.
- Through a national strategy, the Danish government should take responsibility and create incentives for building new energy-friendly museum storage facilities across the country that match the needs of museums.
- More focus should be given to the coordination of collections, lending practices, disposal and deaccessioning.

Research in museums

Collections and knowledge are the starting point for research in museums.

- Research is a fundamental task for all museums owned or funded by the government.
- Framework conditions are necessary to ensure that all museums are able to carry out research on equal terms.
- Methods of evaluating research must be transparent.

Accessibility and social responsibility

Museums are visible and significant participants in society, actively contributing to the development of society, taking social responsibility and promoting citizenship.

- The Association of Danish Museums must secure policies that support long-term development initiatives, promotes citizenship and involves new community groups.
- The Association of Danish Museums must contribute to initiatives that ensure that the potential of museums as partners is recognised, and economically prioritised, in relation to inclusion, and in areas such as welfare, education, healthcare, etc.

Museums and education

Museum collections and knowledge must be integrated in learning, culture and all levels of education.

- Knowledge in museums must be actively put to use in all aspects of lifelong learning and education.
- Museums must play a central role in all levels of education. To achieve this, teaching skills must be upgraded within the education system as well as in museums.
- Challenges such as longer opening hours and transportation to and from museums must be addressed, and additional focus should be given to documenting the impact/outcome of learning in museums.

Museums generate tourism

Exhibitions and the dissemination of knowledge by museums contribute significantly to attracting tourists across the country.

- Alongside other attractions, museums are a key foundation for tourism. Museums should be recognised to a much greater extent as significant partners in the development of tourism and the experience economy.
- As the legal representative of museums, the Association of Danish Museums is a significant participant in shaping national tourism strategies and ensuring greater synergy and impact.
- To unlock the full potential of museums in tourism, challenges such as longer opening hours, language accessibility and general visibility such as signage, information boards, etc., should be addressed.

Government commitment to museum operations across the country

All Danish citizens should have equal access to high-quality cultural offers, including museums.

- The government commitment to nationally recognised museums must be secured in view of continuity and in order to preserve our cultural, artistic and natural heritage.
- An analysis of government subsidies and their distribution across the country should be undertaken. The analysis must take into consideration the complex nature of the Danish museum sector, including the professional competency, quality, academic breadth, geographical distribution, history and diversity of museums.

- The Association of Danish Museums would like to see the foundation of a Cultural Research Institute. This institute would be best placed to undertake analysis of government subsidies and their distribution, and of the overall importance of museums to the society.
- Danish demographics speak against attendance as an indicator of government subsidies to museums. A one-sided focus on visitor numbers could make museums reject experimentation and innovative thinking.

Deaccessioning from collections

Danish museums have a long history. Varied collection strategies and the state of preservation of some collections mean that works and objects can to some extent be deaccessioned from collections.

- Qualified and professionally sound deaccessioning should be smooth and unbureaucratic. In future, museums should still be able to deaccession objects to other museums or for the purposes of dissemination. Subsequently, disposal should be considered.
- Sale in connection with the deaccessioning of objects/works is an objectionable practice that threatens to damage the credibility of museums. In our museums, cultural heritage is beyond financial circulation. Funding bodies, donors and foundations must be assured of this.

Skills development

Professional and socially relevant museums require highly educated museum employees.

- With its wide range of training offers, the Association of Danish Museums seeks to ensure a high level of skill and professionalism in the museum workforce through skills development and training.
- The Association of Danish Museums coordinates the exchange of knowledge and experience between museums for the benefit of all.
- To ensure high professional standards and professional museum operations, museum employees and managers should have access to relevant training opportunities.



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Who we are

The Association of Danish Museums was established in 2005. We represent the majority of Denmark's museums and conservation centres. Our members include natural, art and cultural history museums across the country, and we represent both small and large museums.

The Association of Danish Museums is the leading voice and meeting place for museums. We organise training, networks and conferences for all museum employees.



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