



Network of European  
Museum Organisations

## **NEMO POLICY STATEMENT**

### ***Who we are***

The Network of European Museum Organisations (NEMO) was founded in 1992 as an independent network of national museum organisations representing the museum community of the member states of the Council of Europe. Together, NEMO's members speak for over 30.000 museums across Europe.

### ***Our vision***

Museums safeguard material evidence of the manmade and natural world for current and future generations. They are the guardians of our cultural heritage and they act as warehouses of the mind. Their collections hold a rich variety of stories and offer interpretation of our history, present and future. Nowadays, Europe is closely connected by modern technologies and transport systems but remains divided by cultural differences. Museums can facilitate dialogue because they stimulate us to think, learn and reflect; to celebrate differences and discover affinities.

### ***Our mission***

It is vital that cultural heritage has a strong voice in Europe. Museums need to be increasingly visible as institutions serving their communities. NEMO's mission is to ensure museums are an integral part of European society by promoting their work and value to policy-makers and by providing museums with information and opportunities for networking and cooperation.

### ***Our actions***

NEMO informs its members and the museum sector at large of current and prospective European policies on culture and museums, and of the funding opportunities offered by various EU programmes, thereby helping museums to work and act at European level. In order to achieve this NEMO liaises with relevant European Union (EU) institutions and regularly publishes news about EU programmes, as well as interviews with key officials and politicians.

NEMO enables museums to network and share best practice at European level. It helps museum professionals to collaborate on multilateral projects through its website, networks and online partner search.

NEMO works with other cultural organisations in Europe to emphasise common causes and objectives and to show how cultural activities can be strengthened by working together. It works in particular with Culture Action Europe, the International Council of Museums (ICOM), Europa Nostra and the European Heritage Alliance 3.3.

### ***Our strategic focus***

For the coming period, NEMO will focus on four key strategic areas that it considers to be important for the museum sector in Europe over the next few years: social value, collection value, educational value and economic value. This focus has been translated into an action plan for 2013-15.

All of these strategic areas align with the objectives of Europe 2020, the EU strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. They also contribute to NEMO's mission to help develop a comprehensive overall strategy for cultural heritage, an obligation stipulated in article 3.3 of the Treaty on European Union.



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## **SOCIAL VALUE**

### ***Vision***

Museums are for and about people. They reflect the history and identity of all citizens. Collections are owned and funded by the public. For museums to be truly accountable to past, present and future generations, they must work with and for all sections of the communities they serve.

### ***Mission***

To highlight the value of museums to society by contributing to agendas on health, social justice, poverty, education, tolerance and understanding.

### ***Concerns***

Museums are not automatically regarded as agents capable of contributing to or having an impact on agendas outside the cultural arena.

### ***Objective***

Museums must learn to understand and exploit their potential to contribute to the wider social agenda. Those who fund or influence museums must recognise what museums can do outside their traditional roles and include them in a much wider range of thinking and activity.

## **COLLECTION VALUE**

### **Collections**

#### ***Vision***

Collections are at the heart of museums' existence; without them, there would be no museums. They provide a window to the world and represent our joint European heritage. Collections explain where we come from, who we are now and who we might become.

#### ***Mission***

Collections should be as widely accessible as possible to all citizens in Europe and beyond.

#### ***Concerns***

Museums in Europe have large and beautiful collections that cannot always be shown to the public. In order to maximise the benefit of these collections, museums must ensure that objects are displayed within a well-defined context. At present, collections mobility, knowledge of pan-European collections and financial resources in museums are insufficient to allow maximum public access to collections.

#### ***Objective***

Wider public access to collections and the knowledge and inspiration they offer enables museums to play a more central part in the diverse civil society of Europe. NEMO would like to see physical, legal and funding barriers reduced to encourage the mobility of objects. This will allow citizens in and outside Europe to benefit from these collections.



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## **Digitisation**

### ***Vision***

The digital shift has had a significant impact on society, and museums have their own role to play in this process. Digitisation has the potential to add considerable value to the work of museums. Through digitisation, museums can engage with a wider and more diverse audience and play an increasingly interactive and educational role within society.

### ***Mission***

To ensure that museums can fully exploit the added value of the digital shift.

### ***Concerns***

Digitising an object alone has limited value. It is the information about the object, its context and the links that can be made to other objects or ideas that creates lasting impact. At present, copyright management hinders museums in making their collections fully accessible to society.

### ***Objectives***

- In order to map out and exchange digital content and ensure it is sustainable for future generations, European standards are necessary. Standards of meta-data must be included to ensure that data can be easily accessed by search engines.
- It should be recognised that museums are non-commercial institutions in service to society. The role museums play in supporting education and research must also be taken into account. Museums should not, and cannot, pay to make their collections available online. NEMO is lobbying for a common, Europe-wide licensing and copyright agreement.
- NEMO would like to promote a model of umbrella networks that take care of funding allocations, in order to enable smaller museums to benefit from existing EU funding for digitisation.
- Copyright management should help museums make their collections available online to all citizens.

## **EDUCATIONAL VALUE**

### **Learning**

#### ***Vision***

Museums exist and prosper through the impact their collections have on personal growth. Museums are learning institutions, offering formal and informal learning to people of all ages by inspiring and engaging them. Museums can enable individuals to grow in confidence and creativity and help people understand the world and their place within it.

#### ***Mission***

To support museums to reach their full potential as learning environments. To ensure that the EU understands and promotes the role museums play in formal and informal learning.

#### ***Concerns***

Learning (and those in museums who facilitate it) must not be seen as an isolated activity. All museum programmes and initiatives have a learning aspect. NEMO wants to broaden educational work into a core activity that can be targeted at different audiences.

#### ***Objectives***

- Museums should be encouraged to use their collections to address a variety of audiences as beneficiaries of educational activity, especially vulnerable groups.



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- As key deliverers of lifelong learning, museums should be an integral part of official learning curricula.
- Through their collections and stories, museums can play a connecting role between vulnerable groups and society. EU-funded programmes that work with older citizens and those on the margins of society should, where appropriate, include museums in their delivery.

### **Professional development**

#### ***Vision***

NEMO believes it is the quality of people working with and for museums that makes the difference to the services they offer Europe's communities. Mobility of museum staff and exchange of expertise are key to increasing understanding and trust between institutions, and also form the basis for effective collections mobility. In addition, the interaction of professionals across the continent results in exhibitions and programmes that offer a greater insight into other European cultures and collections and the context in which people live and work.

#### ***Mission***

To contribute to the professional development of museums and their staff in Europe and beyond.

#### ***Concerns***

Museum work is often poorly paid (and sometimes not paid at all) and there is little opportunity for museum professionals to visit other museums and meet colleagues who are dealing with similar problems and opportunities.

#### ***Objectives***

- Professional development initiatives should make it possible for museum staff to be seconded to other institutions. This enables them to learn about techniques and approaches that can be applied on their return to ensure quality and targeted programmes.
- To contribute to building an infrastructure that supports mobility of museum professionals at European level.
- The European Commission's new framework programme, Creative Europe, should encourage the mobility of individual professionals and dissemination of good practice in the museum and cultural heritage fields.
- To help all countries, particularly those where museum work and policy is at a developing stage, to stimulate and put into practice innovative working methods that enable museums to operate more effectively in a transforming society.

## **ECONOMIC VALUE**

### **Urban regeneration**

#### ***Vision***

Museums are often at the heart of successful urban regeneration initiatives. They help regions to assert their identities, bring back investment and consumers and enhance the quality of life in urban areas. They can help revive and diversify the local economy and the competitiveness of their environment.

#### ***Mission***

To ensure that museums are recognised and supported as key assets to urban regeneration and enhancing quality of life.



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### **Concerns**

EU structural funds are inadequately tailored to tap into the potential that museums have for urban development. Museums, for their part, do not make sufficient use of these funds.

### **Objectives**

- To help museums make better use of EU structural funds in order to contribute to a flourishing environment and community.
- To broaden these structural funds so that museum projects and activities are included in their funding strands.

### **Cultural Tourism**

#### ***Vision***

With the remarkable variety of cultural heritage across Europe, the onset of globalisation offers significant opportunities for economic growth. A large part of that heritage is represented in the collections of European museums, which draw tourists from across Europe and around the world. The huge influx of tourists that museums attract is one of their most important contributions to local economies, and is becoming a growing industry in Europe at large.

#### ***Mission***

To ensure that museums are recognised and supported as key assets to a flourishing tourism industry.

### **Concerns**

The EU does not sufficiently acknowledge and support the contribution of museums to cultural tourism as an aspect of economic growth in Europe.

### **Objectives**

- EU policy aiming at strengthening the development of the hospitality industry should take museums into account.
- Collective European marketing aimed at attracting tourists from both inside and outside Europe should make museums a central focus and should collaborate with museums in order to strengthen its effectiveness.
- The EU should do more to stimulate collaboration between European museums to develop new experiences, create common brands or collectively produce exhibitions for the European and external market.

### **Creativity and Innovation**

#### ***Vision***

Creativity and innovation are fundamental dimensions of human activity and essential to economic prosperity. Museums nurture creativity and innovation: they form a collective memory and create a sense of direction, and they act as a space for reflection on the present and a source of inspiration for new creative and innovative concepts.

#### ***Mission***

To enable museums to foster an environment where ideas can be encouraged and exchanged between all sections of society, and to nurture the inspiration and vision that so often sparks creativity and innovation.



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**Concerns**

The role of museums as both an incubator and source of creativity and innovation is not well recognised. More than ever, Europe's future depends on the imagination and creativity of its people. If the role museums play in this context is not recognised, important opportunities will be lost.

**Objectives**

- The EU should acknowledge the importance of heritage, cultural diversity and the free exchange of knowledge to inspiring creativity and innovation, and the significant role museums play in this process.
- Creativity is at the heart of culture, design and innovation and every citizen has the right to use their creative talent. NEMO wants to ensure that museums have a role to play in European projects that strengthen creativity and innovation.



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## **ACTION PLAN 2013-2015**

### ***Social Value***

- NEMO will collate and promote national museum sector initiatives that look into the many dimensions of values that museums have to individuals, society and the economy.
- NEMO will join forces with other civil society organisations in order to actively engage with and develop new paradigms that will be relevant to society in future.
- NEMO will help share best practice among museums that is meaningful to their communities and society and reflects the speed of social change.
- NEMO will work to convince other agencies and stakeholders of the role museums can play in tackling social change.

### ***Collection Value***

- NEMO will continue to help disseminate the work of the Open Method of Coordination Group, which is examining how to simplify the process of lending and borrowing.
- NEMO urges the EU to recognise the importance of a European approach towards full indemnity (non-insurance) in member states for all collections, thereby saving substantial insurance costs that could be better spent on museum security or other operational or exhibiting costs.
- NEMO will continue to emphasise the importance of collections management standards in assessing the essential requirements for due diligence, particularly in researching the provenance of objects.
- NEMO will investigate options for European deaccessioning guidelines.
- NEMO supports and works with projects such as Europeana and other initiatives pursued by the Directorate General for Education and Culture and the Directorate General for Information, Society and Media, and will continue to encourage museums to digitise their collections.
- NEMO will cooperate with European heritage stakeholders to ensure that the copyright issues that limit opportunities to digitise collections are quickly resolved. Digitising museum collections is for the greater good and should not involve substantial and long term costs.
- NEMO will continue to work with other stakeholders towards a Europe-wide agreement on copyright.
- NEMO advocates that the role of museums must become an integral part of the Digital Agenda of the EU.



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***Educational Value:***

- NEMO advocates that small and medium-size museums, which have the closest contact with communities and play an important role in lifelong learning, need a mechanism to enable them to take part in European programmes.
- NEMO will continue to actively support pilot projects aimed at improving the functioning of mobility in the museum sector and to liaise with other EU-funded projects that have mobility of culture professionals at their core.
- NEMO will inform its members and the wider European museum community of existing funding opportunities for mobility in the museum sector and will contribute to professional development by facilitating networking opportunities and sharing best practice.
- NEMO will help develop professional and sustainable museum policies, especially in countries where museum standards are at a developing stage.
- NEMO will continue to liaise with the European Museum Forum (EMF), an organisation that promotes excellence in European Museums. The EMF administers the European Museum of the Year Award (EMYA), a prestigious accolade within the museum sector.
- NEMO will continue to liaise with the European Museum Academy (EMA), an organisation that stimulates and promotes European professional standards and development through seminars and workshops. The EMA supports several prizes: the European Museum Prize, the Micheletti Award and (together with Hands On!) the International Children's Museum Award.
- NEMO will continue to liaise and work with ICOM, Culture Action Europe, Europa Nostra and the European Heritage Alliance 3.3.
- NEMO will investigate the need for European professional standards (job profiles) in museums.

***Economic value:***

- NEMO will join forces with other players in the cultural heritage field, such as Culture Action Europe, Europa Nostra and the European Heritage Alliance 3.3, in order to tap into and strengthen the museum sector's potential and needs.
- NEMO will lobby the EU to recognise the contribution of museums to cultural tourism and urban regeneration and take this into account when developing new policies and funding programmes.
- NEMO will encourage museums to engage in European programmes aimed at developing sustainable tourism and will make information about policies and programmes available to museums.
- NEMO will promote the physical and digital accessibility of museum collections to all parts of society, so that individuals can experience collections and take inspiration from them, particularly those who are active in the creative industries (e.g. designers, educators, writers, researchers and marketers).
- NEMO will support the EU's Creativity and Innovation manifesto (launched in 2009) and promote it to museums.