

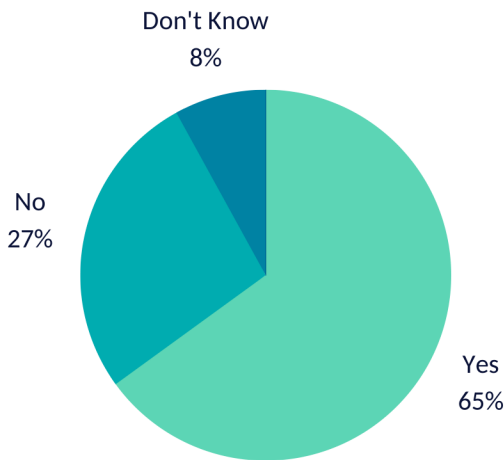


# LOCAL MUSEUMS FACT SHEET

"My local museum is a safe haven that I can enjoy by myself, with my partner or friends. I appreciate that throughout my life I can continue to visit the museum and walk away with a new understanding of something [...] If it wasn't for the museum, I may have never recognized my passion for the environment."

- Survey Respondent

## Are you aware of local museums in your community?



A local museum has a collection that normally includes objects of local significance, and tells a community or region's story. Such museums are often small and run by volunteers.

**83%** agree that local museums are a place to know the history of a particular area

**77%** agree that local museums are a reminder of the achievements and discoveries closer to home, bringing communities together

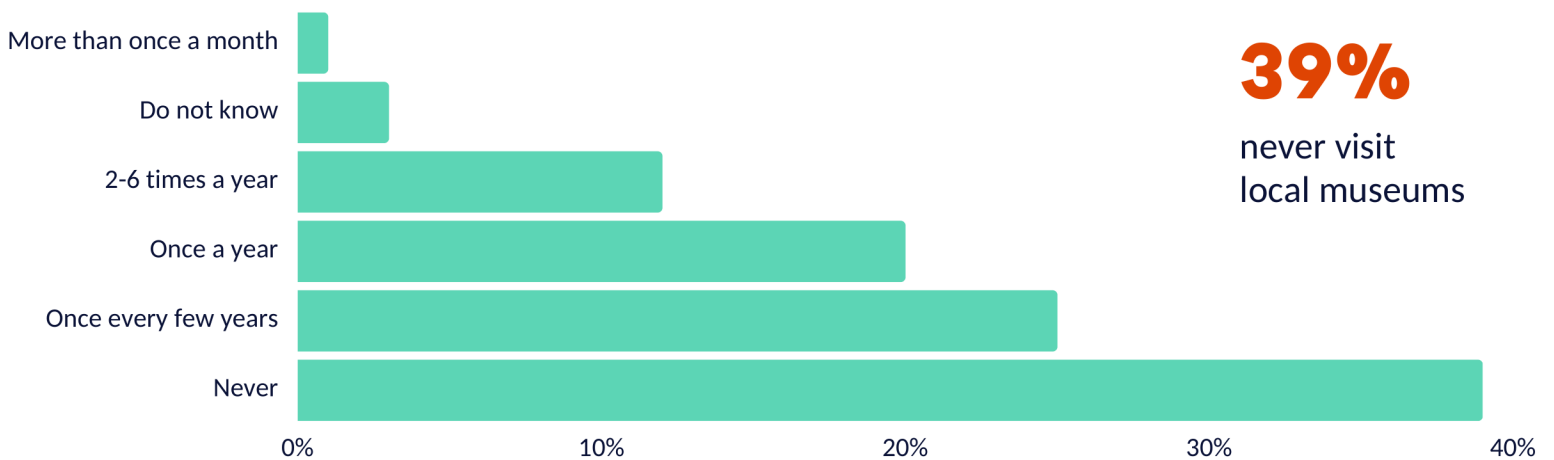
**74%** agree that local museums bring value to their community

**70%** agree that local museums provide a sense of community

"Museums can be catalysts for change, especially in rural communities - they can play an economic, cultural, or social development role - sponsoring projects, partnering with other entities, and promoting a narrative for change."

- Survey Respondent

## In the last 2 years, how many times have you visited a local museum in your community?



**39%** never visit local museums

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# ROLE AND VALUE OF MUSEUMS FACT SHEET

“Museums can be catalysts for change, especially in rural communities - they can play an economic, cultural, or social development role - sponsoring projects, partnering with other entities, and promoting a narrative for change.”  
- Survey Respondent

## Top two most valuable functions of museums:

- 1 Museums are places to educate people about history and the natural world.
- 2 The museum is a place to preserve history.

**96%** agree that the museum is a place to learn and be inspired

**95%** agree that the museum is a place to preserve and care for art and objects, and to tell their stories

**93%** agree that museums help them understand other cultures and communities

**88%** agree that museums give us information and perspective on important cultural and social issues

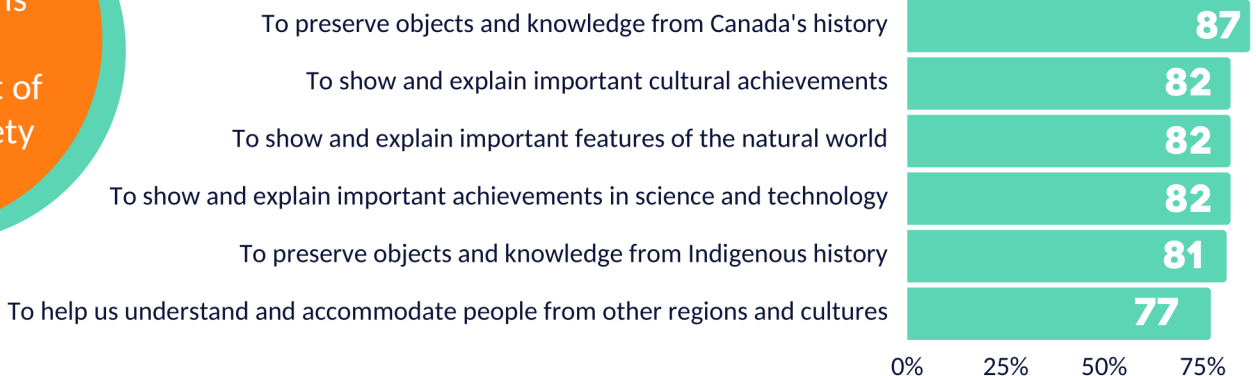
## THE MUSEUM IS A...

- Place for family outings (89% agree)
- Safe space (88%)
- Community space (84%)
- Place for recreation (82%)
- Space to think or be alone (78%)
- Place for public gathering (75%)

“I like that museums are there even if I don't go. They do so much work caring for and preserving heritage, that I don't particularly need them all to provide a service for me in order for me to feel they are worthy.”  
- Survey Respondent

**3 IN 4**  
think museums are a very important part of Canadian society

## The following functions that museums serve are important:



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# MUSEUMS ACTIVATE FACT SHEET

**Museums encourage participation.** Museums are active and playful spaces, where visitor interaction and creativity are encouraged. Visitors should be encouraged to engage with perspectives at the museum, while also being inspired to contribute their own. A museum is also a school for the senses, where visitors can connect with their tactile, sensory, and emotional sides. Museums can surprise, delight, and astonish visitors by the many meanings, connections, and sensations they provoke.

**93%**

agree that museums spark curiosity, provoke wonder, and promote creativity and a 'love of learning'

**1 IN 3**

consider the programs available before planning a visit to the museum

**95%**

agree that museums give them personal enjoyment

"Museums need to be more pluralistic spaces that embody the dynamic tensions that we experience in our real, everyday lives."

- Survey Respondent

"Museums are experiential. It is not about the specific topic that I am learning about, it is about the (often social) experience of exploration, discovery, meaning-making, etc. I see museums as a place where people are given permission to think, engage with ideas, delight in the authentic, and make memories with friends or family."

- Survey Respondent

**50%**

agree that the museum should be progressive and teach us new ways of thinking

**2 IN 3**

agree that museum tours are important to their overall museum experience

**82%**

agree that museum learning programs (demonstrations, docent talks) are important to the overall museum experience

**79%**

agree that activities for children (interactive exhibitions, discovery programming, day-camps) are important to their overall museum experience

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# MUSEUMS ADVOCATE FACT SHEET

**Museums take a stand.** Museums can be credible advocates for causes that are aligned with their values. By supporting mission-centric causes, museums can live out their values and effect meaningful social change in their communities.

**88%**

agree that museums give us information and perspective on important cultural and social issues

**2 IN 5**

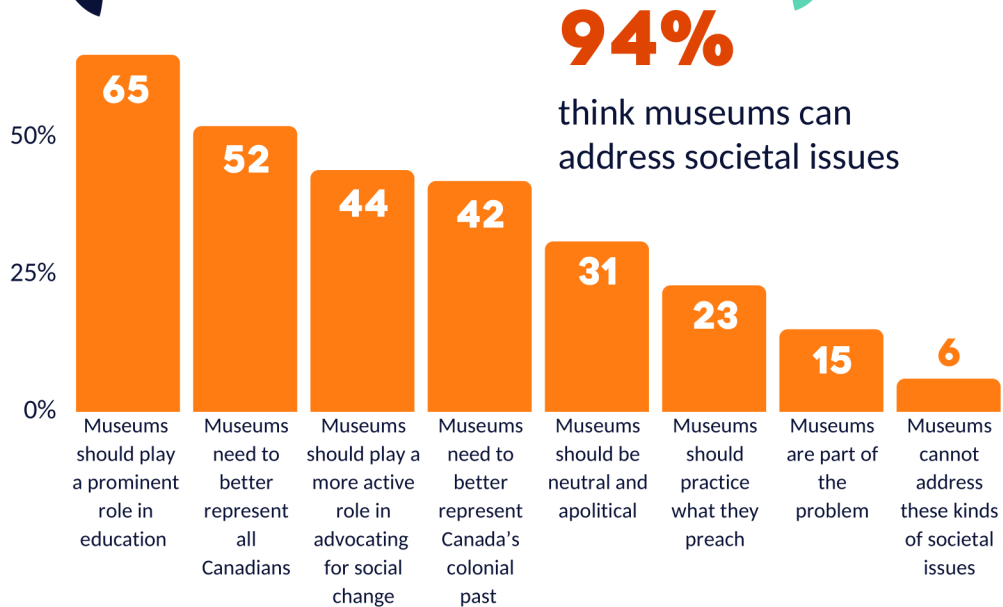
agree that museums should take a stand in their presentation of exhibits to challenge the status quo

## MUSEUMS HELP PEOPLE UNDERSTAND AND POSITIVELY ADDRESS...

- Inclusion and Accessibility (70% agree)
- Technological and digital advancement (68%)
- Indigenous Reconciliation (67%)
- Racial Injustice (63%)
- Globalization (62%)
- Gender Inequality (53%)
- Socio-Economic Inequalities (53%)
- Wellness, well-being, and mental health (53%)
- Climate Change (51%)
- Economic or employment uncertainty (32%)

“If local museums were less risk averse in their exhibitions, and more willing to tackle so-called controversial topics, they would feel more relevant.”  
- Survey Respondent

“[Museums] can be advocates for social change [...] Can be venues for community cohesion. Can have a much more profound educational mission.”  
- Survey Respondent



**How can museums address societal issues?**

“I am discouraged by the lack of inclination within museums and museum policy-makers and funders, to re-think museums as catalysts of change across the living culture. This would require the re-imagining of how museums operate, what they do and how they measure success and cultural impacts.”

- Survey Respondent

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# MUSEUMS AMPLIFY FACT SHEET

Museums provide a platform. As trusted public institutions, museums are in a position to amplify the voices of their community. By giving voice to and centering diverse community perspectives, museums can see themselves as conduits of ideas rather than the source. Representation of the community leads to increased community relevance.

**93%**

agree that museums help them understand other cultures and communities

**YET ONLY...**

**57%**

agree that museums tell stories that reflect my values and those of the community I live in

**56%**

agree that museums fulfil my cultural needs in their exhibitions, collections, and programs

**54%**

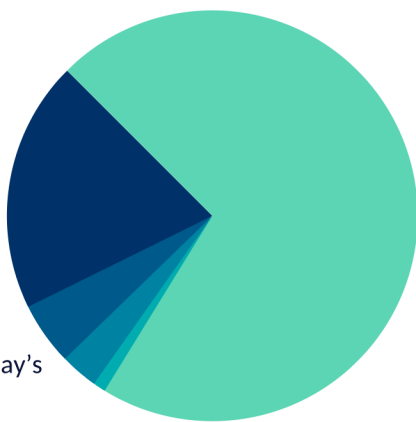
agree that museums reflect my interests in their exhibitions, collections and programs

"I'd view museums in a more positive light if they take their diversity, equity, and inclusion statements seriously, which means committing dollars and changing entrenched systems."

"I like visiting museums to see the results of work with outside groups that are not often given space within institutions like museums."  
- Survey Respondents

## Can museums help you learn about the world around you?

Yes. They reflect today's world and help you learn. 20%



Yes. They don't always reflect today's world, but they do help you learn. 72%

I'm not sure. 5%

No. They don't reflect today's world. 3%

No. They reflect today's world, but don't help you learn. 1%

## Top two responses to "If \_\_\_\_\_, they would be more important to life":

**1** museums told stories that are important to me

**2** museums told stories that are important to different communities

"Museums need to confront their complacency in colonialism and change their practices to create space for minorities to feel safe, seen, and heard [...] Bring the Indigenous experience to the front - historic and contemporary. Bring the non-white experience to the front. Bring in the voices of LGBTQ+ to the front. Bring the youth in, bring the homeless in, bring [the] group that is missing in to tell their stories and share their perspectives [...] It would start conversations that need to happen in a safe and trusted space."  
- Survey Respondent

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# MUSEUMS COLLABORATE FACT SHEET

Museums need their community. Community access, engagement, and collaboration are foundational for responsible museum work. As the production, distribution, and control of information continues to shift, museums are no longer the sole holder of knowledge. By collaborating with and empowering communities, museums show that they value collective expertise rather than attempting to maintain ownership of our shared cultural narratives.

**84%** agree that museums are community spaces like public libraries

**76%** agree that museums give people a sense of belonging and membership in a community

**58%** agree that museums should have dialogues with local communities to develop programs that resonate with community interests

**49%** agree that community members should be involved in designing material and exhibits for museums

“Museums need to be more responsive to their local communities, as well as to their place in the national and international milieus. Museums are not mirrors - they are culpable in the interpretation and engagement of community knowledge. Museums need to use their agency toward community partnerships and co-creative projects.”  
- Survey Respondent

“For me lasting experiences have come through museum exhibits curated by the communities being curated about. In those exhibits, you can physiologically *feel* that there is an emotional, non-voyeuristic story being told and shared beyond resilience.”  
- Survey Respondent

**1 IN 3** want to participate in community engagement sessions conducted by museums

**1 IN 3** would participate in a brainstorming session where they can share their ideas for exhibits

**1 IN 4** would like to volunteer with a museum

**1 IN 5** would like to donate to a museum

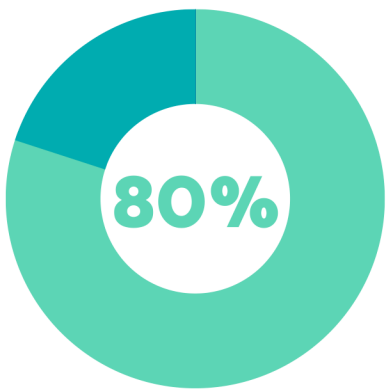
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# MUSEUMS COMMUNICATE FACT SHEET

Museums have something to say. Canadians trust museums to tell the truth about our shared history. Museums are a place for dialogic learning where ideas are communicated openly with the goal of creating dialogue that leads to empathy and mutual understanding. Museums can be civic spaces for productive and respectful discourse at a time when seemingly irreconcilable points of view dominate our daily lives.



Museums are a highly credible source of information

95%

agree that the museum is a place to preserve and care for art and objects, and to tell their stories

93%

agree that museums help me understand other cultures and communities

60%

think museums are experts in storytelling

“Museums are places for dialogue and places for informal education.”  
- Survey Respondent

## AN IMPORTANT FUNCTION OF THE MUSEUM IS TO SHOW AND EXPLAIN...

- Important cultural achievements (82% agree)
- Important achievements in science and technology (82%)
- Important features of the natural world (82%)

40%



Museums should provide **MORE** 'interpretation' on the material it presents

22%



Museums should provide **LESS** 'interpretation' on the material it presents

““Museums provide a place to use history to look at what is happening now, and to experience these truths (or to notice absences) in an environment that actually wants to hear everyone's thoughts and perspectives and create discussion around them.”

- Survey Respondent

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# MUSEUMS LEARN FACT SHEET

**Museums are learners too.** Museums encourage lifelong learning for their visitors and themselves. Through an openness to growing, adapting, and revising, museums acknowledge multiple ways of knowing and build a reciprocal relationship with their community. Our stories are always evolving, and our understanding and interpretation of those stories must evolve as well.

96%

agree that the museum is a place to learn and be inspired

87%

agree that museums advance knowledge as research institutions

83%

agree that local museums are a place to know the history of a particular area

81%

agree that like educational institutions, museums provide a platform for learning

"Museums tell the story of people and places. They are wonderful resources for learning and research and to allow people of similar interests to learn from each other."

[Museums] should continue to reach out to diverse groups and learn from their perspectives."

-Survey Respondent

68%

agree that local museums can be a place to engage with the community

49%

agree that community members should be involved in designing material and exhibits

58%

agree that museums should have dialogues with local communities to develop programs that resonate with community interests

1 IN 4

think museums should practice what they preach

"The walls of the museum should be porous - allow ideas to flow in and out. When a community views the museum as 'their' place then you have made progress."  
- Survey Respondent

"I want a museum to open itself up to scrutiny and examine the role it plays in society."  
- Survey Respondent

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# MUSEUMS INSPIRE FACT SHEET

Museums inspire change. A visit to a museum should change the way you see the world around you.

## MUSEUMS ARE INSPIRING PLACES BECAUSE...

93%

Museums spark curiosity, provoke wonder, and promote creativity and a 'love of learning'

87%

Museums are educational institutions that are great for kids

82%

Museums inspire personal development and 'well-roundedness'

86%

Museums develop and sustain specific interests

81%

Museums are good for mental health and provide restful and calm places

84%

Museums improve the quality of life in a community

76%

Museums give people a sense of belonging and membership in a community

"I visited a museum when I was in my first year of university. It changed the course of my studies. Having come from a smaller place, it opened me up to new ways of looking at what should or could be included in a museum."

- Survey Respondent

"I see museums as spaces in which I can learn and transform my own understanding of the world around me. I appreciate locally-curated exhibits that disrupt my own understanding of the community and world in which I live. I am more likely to visit a museum if I feel there is something that may inspire me to positively change the way I engage with my community."

- Survey Respondent

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