

Museums' collections are held in trust for the whole of society.

Events, programmes and dedicated spaces give **access** and **opportunities** at **every stage of life...**

Museums offer opportunities to an increasingly young audience... Museums help people through **volunteering, learning new skills** and **reconnecting with society** despite difficult circumstances illness or disability.

Access for all

Many of the UK's 700,000 people with autism find it difficult to visit museums because of noise and crowds. The Science Museum's 'Early Birds' sessions allows them to visit the museum with their families in the early morning for tailored events.

In 2014, the National Autistic Society gave its Autism Access Award to the RAF Museum, a first in the cultural sector.

'The Drawing Room' is a monthly project at the National Portrait Gallery to allow those with disabilities to take part in drawing sessions in the gallery. The NPG works extensively with local disability charities to create events like these.

Leeds Art Gallery has been holding a weekly group, 'Queer Eye' looking at LGBT culture through the gallery's collections and 'Parallel Lives' exhibition, with participants from age 17 to 80.

The National Army Museum's 'Soldier's Art Project' has built connections between the museum and serving army personnel, resulting in new acquisitions. Participants were often drawn from lower socio-economic groups with less experience of visiting museums.

The Royal Albert Memorial Museum worked with 'Aftermath PTSD' and service people suffering from combat-related stress, using a British Museum touring exhibition on Native American warrior societies.

Since 2007, Manchester Museum and Imperial War Museum North have worked with the long-term unemployed to reshape lives through ten weeks of museum volunteering. In the last three years, 82% of 203 participants completed 80 hours of training, with 93% achieving a literacy qualification.

Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trust is growing its own volunteer base, as well as advising many other museums. Over 25% of its volunteers are under 30 and it has supported over 60 people to gain employment in the last 3 years following volunteering at its museums.

The National Museum of the Royal Navy runs a programme to encourage more people from BME backgrounds to work in the museum sector, including a roadshow to reach people who have never previously visited the museum.

Since 2012, the Wallace Museum has run a regular programme to teach refugees to become tour guides. Five continue to regularly give tours of the museum, and help to deliver an annual event for wider London refugee populations.

Evening events attract younger audiences to museums. The V&A's 'Supa World' explored the development of black action characters in comics, films and graphics, while teenagers visited the National Museum of Scotland on Halloween for 'Zombie Night'.

The National Portrait Gallery's 'Domino Effect' project is an annual programme working with local young people not in education, employment or training.

Employers can now see that I am someone who has a variety of skills. The support I received has not just helped me to build a future, but has helped me to turn my life around.

Participant on the National Portrait Gallery 'Domino Effect' Project

Museums provide a wealth of opportunities for older people...crucial with an aging population. Many museums provide workshops, collection loans and object handling to older people

I used to go to museums but not now; it's wonderful to see the Wallace Collection brought to me, I've learnt a lot. Visits out are rare; the loan box project enables us to go to places without going.
Care Home Resident, Norwich

