

REIMAGINING INDIA'S MUSEUMS FOR THE 21st CENTURY



Insights and Recommendations
from the All India Museum Summit for
Presentation to the Ministry of Culture, Government of India



Report by:
Center for Art and Archaeology (CA&A)
American Institute of Indian Studies
(AIIS)



OBJECTIVE OF THE REPORT

This report is based on presentations given by professionals from museums, conservation and academia within the broad field of museology at the All India Museum Summit, July 2019 at India International Centre, New Delhi. The paper aims to serve as a review of the current status of Indian museums and its impact locally and globally. It identifies the potential development areas, recommends best practices and suggests specific changes to procedures and policies that would support and advance the contributions that museums make to the nation and India's standing internationally.



Left to Right: Susan Bean, Chair CA&A; Sumathi Ramaswamy, President AIIS; Arun Goel, Secretary MoC, GOI; Kenneth Juster, US Ambassador to India and Purnima Mehta, DG AIIS



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ABOUT THE ALL INDIA MUSEUM SUMMIT 2019

At the All India Museum Summit (AIMS), 22 – 24 July 2019, creative and dedicated professionals demonstrated the dynamism of the institutes that they represent across the spectrum of art and cultural heritage museums. The three-day proceedings, sponsored by the Embassy of United States of America in New Delhi and organized by the American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS) through its Center for Art and Archaeology (CA&A), highlighted three critical developments related to museums that if properly supported and facilitated can be major contributions to India's future at home and in the world, and decisively move museums from the position they once held as “Keepers of the Past” to becoming “Substantial Contributors to the future”.

- First, the Indian population is becoming **attuned to the cultural legacy** and wishes to be physically and intellectually connected to the tangible and intangible heritage.
- Second, **museums are becoming public forums** where both domestic and international visitors can interact with India's art and culture, and with each other, to think and talk about the relevance and role of India's artistic and cultural riches in contemporary life.
- Third, **museums can be instrumental in advancing India's cultural standing internationally** as other rising nations have realized in recent decades, e.g. Korea and China¹.

The main objective of the Summit was to assess the progress and needs of museums, and to convey this to the Ministry of Culture along with suggestion of action steps that could advance the contribution that India's museums make to public education and cultural enrichment for all the people, as well as to promote international understanding and advance India's standing in the world.

¹ [South Korea Embarks on a Museum Building Boom, Aiming to Open 186 New Museums by 2023](#)



SUMMARY

The Government can play a significant role in tapping into India's rich cultural resources to create a favorable impact at individual, socio-cultural and international level. The Ministry of Culture (MoC) has embarked upon various ambitious projects such as the 14-point Museums Reform Agenda², commissioning and implementation of the digitization program – Jatan³ in national museums, proposing the draft amendment of The Antiquities and the Art Treasures Act and introducing various schemes and grants for supporting museums. Yet there is an even wider scope to enhance these efforts and this report culls out areas where the government can reap large benefits through interventions involving varying degrees of planning, deliberation and collaboration. This report has been categorized into three broad categories to address the three critical development areas mentioned before. A summary of insights and recommendations is presented in this section.

MANAGE ART AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

1. Digitize holdings and make their inventories available online. This also requires the standardization of digitization procedures and metadata that matches benchmarks seen in modern museums abroad. While the process is ongoing, the government can also look at speeding up the process by investing more financial and human resources. In addition to centrally protected museums, state and regional museums should also be included to leverage the digital technologies, network and reach masses.
2. Put in place preventive conservation standards with respect to object handling, display, storage and disaster management.
3. Reassess the Antiquities and Ancient Treasures Act to appropriately delineate cultural heritage and facilitate constructive trade.
4. Make physical assets and intellectual pursuits as accessible as possible. Loan reserve collection from museums for exhibitions. Ease policies and procedures regarding access to collection. Enhance publications based on collections that are available in a variety of print and audio-visual formats and in wide-ranging Indian languages.
5. Introduce educational interventions and campaigns that are over time able to raise the perception of humanities and arts to the same level as sciences in India and encourage esteem and careers in the field.

² [Note](#) by former Culture Secretary on the essence of 14-point museum reforms agenda

³ Information on [Jatan](#) on CDAC website



STRENGTHEN MUSEUMS TO MAKE GREATER CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL LIFE

1. Encourage/seek private funding and corporate philanthropy keeping in mind the ethical implications of such engagements.
2. Explore streams to generate income and footfall through avenues such as cafés, restaurants, gift shops and theaters.
3. Overhaul museum security standards.
4. Regulate pay levels for museum staff and revise recruitment requirements so that posts are filled by the right skill sets. Potential economic impact of investment in the field of museums can be studied through a study that considers the indirect and induced impact of employment in this field.
5. Pass over authority of museums from the government to an independent board of trustees that manages the strategic overview and appoint a Director for day-to-day administration and fund raising for the museum.

DEVELOP MUSEUMS AS STANDARD BEARERS OF INDIA'S STATUS IN THE WORLD

1. Recreate museums as national public forums. This can be achieved by making it mandatory for all government museums to have a dynamic web presence and organizing online outreach activities for education and exhibition purposes.
2. Set and implement an updated standard for museum facilities such as trained docents, audio guides, narrative labeling, functional washrooms, water coolers, amenities for differently abled etc. and create interesting gallery spaces with internet technology driven services including digital kiosks, dynamic mobile apps, free wi-fi to improve visitor experience.
3. Recognize audience as equal stakeholders and create a scope for community-led exhibitions.
4. Support international collaborations by easing loan procedures and exhibit Indian culture and heritage globally.



INSIGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

MANAGE ART AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

Short Term Goals

1. Lead Nationwide Documentation and Digitization of Collections

Digitization needs to be integrated into the core activities of museums along with conservation and curation. All objects in all public museums in India must have their entire collection digitized. Creating good quality digital assets in the form of 2D or 3D images of collections with concomitant metadata must become a core function of any museum. In the event of catastrophic loss as in the case of the Natural History Museum in New Delhi, digital records could serve as the only records and allow continued research. Once collections are digitized, the digital assets can be used to facilitate exhibition planning, loans, conservation, educational programs and museum publications, research, online dissemination and access. The following areas must be considered:

- Give special training in documentation, scanning, accessioning and cataloguing of cultural objects following universal digitization standards.
- Create **comprehensive specialized inventorying** of the holdings of each museum in India by curators who are trained to use the required software (for instance, Jatan). Team managing data entry **must undergo a training module** that should include at least twelve-week courses in the respective fields. For example, professionals digitizing the archaeological collections must get training on the subjects of (i) Indian numismatics, (ii) Indian manuscript painting, (iii) Indian sculpture and iconography, (iv) Archaeological assemblages from Proto history to the later medieval period (v) Modern and contemporary Indian art (vi) Textiles and decorative arts. This will ensure that a pipeline of experts is created and prevent a skill vacuum.
- Create **digital dexterity** for all those who are required to access the digital material for research, curation and dissemination.
- Make long term plan for collaboration with data centers or experts to engage them for their technical expertise for collection management and **digital preservation**.
- Train specialists in **the standardized vocabulary and transliteration systems** that are internationally accepted. This level of necessary/ basic education is severely lacking and hampers all other specialized curatorial work, exhibition making and public communication.
- Create **multi-dimensional narratives** for the digital assets.
- **Build skill internally** by collaborating with professional bodies to train museum staff to be self-dependent in pursuing this endeavor over time.

2. Encourage Preventive Conservation

One of a museum's primary duties is collection care. Preserving objects implies granting the public access to its culture and heritage and continue research on it. Unfortunately, conservation and preventive conservation are ideals that are not sufficiently realized in even some of the national museums. Some recommendations in this area are:



- Initiate **standardized procedures** for efficient collection care.
- Avoid repercussions of onboarding inadequately skilled practitioners by creating a manual of criteria for requisite training before engagement in conservation projects at any level.
- Design a **uniform curriculum for training in conservation**.
- Customize conservation practices in India to converge scientific reasoning with indigenous systems of care that are rooted in tradition. Economic viability of heritage will be a by-product of this process due to a revival of traditional arts and crafts.
- Recognize **conservation practice as a specialized profession**. The tendering process creates a chain of sub-contracting the job that does not ensure that the requisite skills are at hand. Recruitment and service protocols for conservationists in the public sector must be amended keeping in view that conservation is a specialized and trans-disciplinary field. This should also be supplemented with improvement in working conditions and pay levels.
- Mandate a functional **conservation laboratory** with trained conservators to maintain object health in all public museums.
- **Research in conservation technology and techniques** pertinent to Indian material culture and share it with professionals in the field through a common platform.
- Set up a **national body of conservators** and allied professionals that has enough regulatory authority to control all the conservation related activities in the country. This could be similar to the Indian Medical Council or the Bar council whose constituents are representatives of the professional community with a nominal representation of the government. Such a body could evolve a common platform for training in various levels and a minimum standard for professional practices. The body can design a comprehensive **conservation policy or manual of best practices**.

3. Reassess the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act

The Antiquities and Art Treasures Act is based on a singular view of what makes an 'antique' and India's heritage. Currently the law has been framed under ASI's agency alone. It needs to develop in conjunction with other disciplines such as litterateurs, historians, anthropologists, curators etc. The Act must be revised to adapt to the contemporary realities of what comprises cultural heritage. Some recommendations are:

- Reconsider what constitutes an antique and is a cultural treasure that warrants the nation's attention and protection.
- Make it easier for families to come forth and register their heirlooms and antiquities since the current cumbersome process has been a deterrent and led to the smuggling of antiques by discouraging domestic trade. Encouraging legitimate trade will effectively curb smuggling.
- Unburden the ASI from extra responsibilities outside its core competence of preservation and maintenance of public antiquities. Create empowered agencies to deal with antiques.
- Negotiate MOUs with foreign governments to reduce and prosecute thefts and trafficking and repatriate stolen items that land up overseas.



Long Term Goals

1. Enlarge physical and intellectual access to resources

Public museums must improve access, both physical and intellectual, to their assets. Some initiatives that can be taken in this area include:

- Enable access to physical assets such as the artifacts, building and grounds by **improving facilities** especially for the differently abled.
- **Innovative storage** options should be adopted for safe keeping and easy accessibility of the antiquities not in display. For example, implementing the learning from the Vivekananda Memorial Program for Museum Excellence, The Salar Jung Museum at Hyderabad modernized its storerooms that can be a prototype for further improvements.
- **Distribute reserve collections** as long-term loans to upcoming museums to ensure that the objects get visibility and encourage scholarship. This can be overseen by an expert committee.
- **Communicate narratives of history and culture in a responsible manner.** Research must be reviewed amongst peers before it is circulated in the public domain. This would require different tiers of publications in the national museums, as well as at the level of every overarching state organization which has a conglomerate of museums within it. Research should be at two levels:
 - a) Scholarly publication: The publication of the holdings of the major museums to the highest levels of international scholarship needs to be made available not just in English but also in at least one major Indian language. Such publications need to be undertaken as joint ventures along with leading publishing houses with a demonstrable internationally lauded academic standard.
 - b) Mass Media: Short books, films, documentaries and in-gallery multimedia communication need to be developed in multiple Indian languages.

2. Create Awareness and Instill Pride in Cultural Heritage through Educational Interventions

Prioritization of cultural heritage and museums necessitates acting at the foundation such that the younger generation can connect and care for the heritage. This inevitably includes **educational interventions** that strive to build a support system for interest and skills in the humanities. There is a social and cultural bias against careers in arts in general which in turn has an impact on the quantity and quality of human resources in this field. While the MoC has taken some initiatives to support cultural education in India, a more focused effort is needed. The Ministries of Culture and Human Resource Development may jointly consider making a central policy relevant for the arts and systemic pedagogical changes in schools. The government can consider these points:

- Make students aware at secondary and higher levels of the widest possible range of subjects available and they must be offered quality education and wide number of **market-driven courses** in disciplines relevant to the museum sector.



- Consider allocating a higher budget and setting up **scholarships** to encourage the study of art history, museology, exhibition design and related fields.
- Introduce undergraduate/professional courses in museology and heritage management in all universities and colleges.
- Periodically revise the **curriculum for disciplines in this field** such as museology, conservation and art history in teaching institutes with routine orientations organized for the faculty.
- Recruit for certain professional courses such as conservation on the basis of an **evaluation of aptitude** rather than on percentages in college exams.
- Create an **institute for heritage management**, similar to the IIT and IIM schemes. Government support for capacity building and developing human resources that can take on the challenge of preserving and interpreting India's vast cultural legacy is essential. Such courses need to include skills development for contemporary museum needs, including community programming, marketing and social media, and critical questioning of colonial interpretation strategies.
- Create opportunities for engagement in the field as a part of schools' extra-curricular activities.



STRENGTHEN MUSEUMS TO MAKE GREATER CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL LIFE

Short Term Goals

1. Encourage Public-Private Partnerships

The public museums are often financially stressed and need to create more revenue streams to fulfill the goals listed in this report. Papers presented at the Summit unanimously conveyed the idea that most successful museums have been able to upturn footfall and engage diverse audiences through a **private-public partnership model**. The museum sector offers a great potential for partnerships as can be observed in cases such as Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS), Mumbai and Drishyakala Museum, Delhi. The benefits for museums that have engaged in such partnerships have been in terms of better infrastructure solutions, more flexibility and creativity in displays and exhibitions, creation of employment in the specific and related sectors while invoking private sector skills. The government in such cases has also enjoyed efficient management and speedier implementation while minimizing financial outgo. Different ways of engaging in ethical public-private partnerships are:

- Onboard **private consultants** to conceptualize and implement a revenue model. Bihar Museum, Patna is exemplary of optimizing expertise available within and outside India. For the project, the government roped in the Canada-based Lord Cultural Resources, L&T, Japan's Maki and Associates and Indian firm OPOLIS for building's unique architecture, Singapore-based Kingsmen Group as the exhibition fabricator and Lopez Design for the museum's design and branding. This international collaboration has led the museum to align with international standards and create a unique enterprise.
- Sign **MoUs between private and government entities**. Often a museum is set up by a foundation but handed over too early to government, which as yet does not have protocols for training of government employees to maintain high standards and be familiar with museum ethics. This simple collaboration of the government with private expertise to upgrade and manage collections for a minimum of ten years would allow introduction of best practices, training of manpower and maintenance of right standards.
- Cultivate **private donors** and seek **commercial sponsorships** within an ethical framework. By devolving power, the government must encourage museums to explore collaborations with private organizations for specific projects or developments. Apart from this, various Trusts/Foundations may set up endowment funds to provide financial support to various museums that are in need of talent. This would call for an active establishment of fund raising as a necessary skill and **training of fundraisers** with understanding for specific mandates.
- Leverage the space of CSR funds⁴.

⁴ [Preserving heritage, still an alien CSR concept'](#)



2. Support Entrepreneurial Endeavors

Museums are cultural hubs for the community where locals connect to the shared culture and with one another over the shared experience. It must be the prerogative of the museums to create experiences that enhance the visitor experience and one of the modes is through redefining its space to connect with a large section of society and provoke and inspire it. Museums must project themselves as social gathering places where experiencing culture is one of the physical social pleasures that can be shared with friends and not as temples of learning for a distinguished class of people. Some of the ways to move in this direction are:

- **Upgrade buildings** sensitively and thoroughly with a qualified architect in charge in collaboration with the ASI or CPWD as the particular type of building demands. This could spread the fund support across institutes and bodies.
- **Offer unused government owned venues** for collaborations with the private sector so that collections get housed and accessed by the public or for training purposes or event as and when needed.
- Capitalize assets such as impressive structures of museums by **renting out space** for corporate gatherings, ceremonial occasions, weddings or film shoots.
- Establish facilities such as a **museum shop, theatre and café** or restaurant that can be critical sources of generating revenue and footfall. Success stories such as the Crafts Museum⁵, Delhi that reveal that these auxiliary features cater to market expectations of quality and design and can significantly increase footfall must be studied and emulated. These investments could eventually help to create additional community connections to the museum.

3. Overhaul Museum Security Standards

Museum security requirements pertaining to antiques and artefacts should be assessed and overhauled to curb theft. Remove charge from individuals to a complete digital system.

- **Indemnifying the museum premises and personnel** is necessary to be able to foster a constructive working environment, not based on the fear for assuming responsibility. Museum functioning is currently arrested for fear of damaging or loss of any artifact. Personal accountability of staff has led to misuse of the present regulations to harass staff members with legal action and impose stay-orders on various functions of the museum. Any indemnification should be accompanied by standard surveillance cameras to be emplaced in all storage areas as well as galleries so that any suspicion on the cause of or place of damage or theft can be reviewed.

Long Term Goals

1. Invest in Human Capital

Due to lack of encouraging remuneration and autonomy in this field, the younger generation is deterred from taking up careers in this field. As a result, the current recruitment crisis for trained personnel in

⁵ [‘UNDERSTATEMENT: What about the craft of marketing?’](#)



India has not been countered despite the creation of courses on Museology or Art History. The museum-scape can be turned around only if well-paid and trained museum curators are entrusted with decision-making authority. The following points can be considered:

- Commission a study on **economic impact of museums and cultural institutes**⁶ in India to quantify the economic contributions made by museums. This kind of analysis will reveal: a) the direct economic impact of museums created through revenue collection from its operations, employment and compensation in the sector etc. b) the indirect impact from the museum sector accrued through contributions made by the suppliers of this establishment such as museum restaurants, legal or IT services sought etc. and in turn, supply chain of these suppliers c) the induced impact to evaluate economic activity supported by employees directly or indirectly involved in museum operations who spend on locally produced goods and services, for instance, utilities, groceries, entertainment industry etc. This report can be used to quantify the current and potential economic footprint of museum operations and to guide measures for expanding museum operations and creating more employment opportunities that would contribute to the economy. Museums can be nurtured to become profit-making entities if they're allowed to expand their revenue generation streams.
- Regulate **remuneration for professionals** in the field so that it is commensurate with 7th Pay Commission requirements and correct it to account for museum hours that are much longer and more demanding with fewer holidays. A standard norm for fixing salary structure on contract basis appointments could be derived in consultation with museum management experts depending upon the need of the museum and experience of the candidate etc.
- Update recruitment norms and generate training needs to come up international standards.
- Select and financially support a few museums across India to establish **region wise (East-West-Central-North-South) Nodal Training institutes**, wherein these institutes will together frame a policy and curriculum to provide advanced training to museum professionals in consultation with experts within India and abroad. The training and skill development program can be carried out in affiliation with the "Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana" (PMKVY). Five region wise renowned museums can cover the training program and thus the development of museum professionals across the nation.
- Organize **periodic training programs** for directors, conservators and archivists to keep them up to date on skills and knowledge are necessary. The Ministry may consider rejuvenating its existing scheme "Capacity Building and Training for Museum Professionals" and through it provide necessary funding to the museums, which are in need of trained staff to fill up the intellectual gap. More initiatives like the 'The National Culture Fund' must be developed and implemented.
- Develop museum employees through **fellowships or research allowances**. Tie-ups with grant making private organizations such as India Foundation for the Arts (IFA) can be explored to this cause.

⁶ [A similar 'Economic Impact Study for the American Alliance of Museums' December 2017](#)



2. Grant Autonomy to Museum Administrators

The public museums in India are regulated administratively, strategically and monetarily by the government that often results in lack of flexibility and creativity for the professional staff in addressing particular requirements of a museum. **Autonomy from governmental control is called for and professional trustees can be encouraged to design the vision and mission of the museums.** This would include:

- Put in place a carefully designed constitution that allows stakeholders to take part in museum governance such as selection of appropriate trustees who could take independent decisions.
- The board of trustees could oversee the general management and control of the museum and appoint the Director who would be responsible for the everyday management of the museum.
- The board of trustees should be held responsible for administering and raising funds and guiding the museum's policies.
- The policies and procedures related to operations of public museums, its mission and performance should also be made available to the public.



DEVELOP MUSEUMS AS STANDARD BEARERS OF INDIA'S STATUS IN THE WORLD

Short Term Goals

1. *Recreate Museums as National Public Forums*

Museums must work towards becoming national public forums for people from different backgrounds and precepts not only to learn and discover, but also to meet, discuss difficult subjects and build community. This involves museum curators to diligently curate content and bring it to the public domain. Some recommendations in this respect are:

- **Increase visibility by leveraging the internet.** Most museums do not have marketing strategies to increase visibility and footfall. Museum websites provide limited information about the collection and appear uninspiring to the modern contemporary viewer. National and state museums must mandatorily have a website for their museums. Public opinion surveys can help continuously improve and develop marketing strategy for better outreach and engagement of audiences.
- State the museum's overall **educational goals and activities**. Museums have an obligation to understand the characteristics and needs of different constituencies such diverse socio-economic groups, age groups etc. and take appropriate decisions at acquisition, display and interpretation levels.
- Develop interdisciplinary projects that advance **museums' educational potential** (for families, children, adults, across India and internationally). This must be followed by presenting museums as public forums, both within their physical institutes and through a robust online presence.
- Organize at least **one major exhibition in a year** in all public museums, with objects borrowed from other institutes, along with a requirement to participate in lending toward other similar exhibitions.
 - This will require all related departments of a museum to start operating in a timely manner, which is currently lacking, and thereby improve the capacity of the museums. For instance, conservation departments will be required to conserve and restore pieces to make them exhibition worthy in time (rather than prevent its exhibition on the grounds that it is not in a good state of conservation).
 - Any valuation and screening committee will also need to make its assessments well in advance rather than prevent its exhibition because it is convened only at the last minute.
 - Curatorial teams will be required to complete research and selection accordingly before exhibition designers and communications experts in the field of public relations can be brought on board.
- Keep exhibitions on display for at least a three-month duration and properly **advertise and promote** them, to generate public interest and bring in new audiences to the museum.
 - Publish thoughtful and well-designed catalogues that move the field forward.
 - Develop internal resources for art handling, insurance, shipping and packing shows within India so that museums can smoothly loan such exhibitions to one another. Eventually such shows could be developed to travel internationally.



2. Improve Visitor Experience

The audiences find it difficult to enthusiastically connect to India's past owing to the current state of Indian museums where the design is static and information is sparse. There is a large scope for indigenous assets of India to be recognized and appreciated within the Indian society as well as abroad. For instance, innovation in museum design is needed to cater to addition of new galleries and dynamic curatorial and visitor enhancement needs. The Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum in Mumbai is an exemplary example of a museum that has since its revitalization revealed merits of innovative design interventions in creating new experiences across constituencies. Curatorial requirements should be considered simultaneously with structural and technical needs of the building. The government's 2009, 14-point Museum Reform Agenda is a step in this direction, but it needs to be established with more vigour. The following areas require close attention:

- Create gallery spaces that meet international standards in terms of visual ambience, presentation, conservation requirements, information diffusion etc.
- Set and implement an updated standard for museum facilities such as audio guides, trained docents, narrative labeling, functional washrooms, water coolers, amenities for differently abled, free-wifi etc.

3. On-board public in museums initiatives

Engage the public as active stakeholders and co-creators of content for community-led initiatives. Museums should cede authority at some level and invite the public to mine the collection online and co-create projects / exhibitions.

4. Enable and Proactively Support International Exhibitions

The notion of partnerships and collaborations between India and other countries through travelling exhibitions, artifact loans, and invitation to foreign professionals to train or collaborate in other ways must be optimized. A few exhibits from Indian museums and collections have been a part of foreign expositions but this area needs more initiative. Recommendations include:

- Review and improve **procedures for object loans** between museums in the country to expedite secure movement of objects for exhibitions.
- An **insurance policy** for objects that need to travel should be established. The Ministry can authorize a few respected insurers to ensure transparency and efficiency and then periodically review the list to ensure that no vested interests develop. Insurance, packing and shipping practices followed by museums must be updated and modernized.
- Ease **loan procedures** to allow for intra-India, well curated exhibitions to take place with greater ease and frequency.
 - India needs to improve and streamline her international loan processes with US museums particularly (since they do not come under country to country cultural exchange treaties) to facilitate the development of more international exhibitions.
 - The dates of when the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Exhibitions (IMEC) and the National Screening and Evaluations Committee (NSEC) takes place should be reconsidered.



- The decision about insurance and conservation and what can / cannot travel needs to happen much earlier in the process, and it is recommended that it should happen a year out if possible, or at least prior to 3 months before the objects ship, so that all uncertainties are removed from the loan of the exhibition. This timeline also allows for conservation of objects to take place as required.
- A final review with domain experts can finally survey the objects at the end before shipping.
- Carry out a **collection assessment**. All 'national treasures' and 'national artists' categories over time should be re-examined since the lists made in the past were arbitrary.
- The MoC should facilitate museums to develop certain shows which otherwise would not materialize due to the insurance cost of the objects, e.g. involving rare sculptures, or "national" artists. Most private museums would find such exhibition difficult to develop, but if they do, again the MoC can play a role to assist such exhibitions and travel them widely to maximize their potential. To assist this cause, a list should be drawn up for (i) absolutely-priceless items that can and shall never leave India (ii) very rare items that may be considered for exhibitions abroad by a high-power committee that has senior representatives of the Ministries of Culture, External Affairs and Finance in addition to experts. Items from this list may be permitted to be exhibited abroad only if the host museums promise to reciprocate with an equally rare item to be exhibited in India (iii) others may be valued but with reference to international standards, not arbitrarily and not invariably at the last minute.
- Adopting an **indemnity system** will make it easier to share objects.
 - Form a team of experts to examine the most successful indemnity schemes that have helped museums in other countries to proudly exhibit their treasures across their home country or to other parts of the world, mainly on the strength of government or sovereign guarantees.
 - Tap in associations such as the International Council of Museums (ICOM) and International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS).
 - A new scheme and the reconstitution of the present National Screening & Evaluation Committee with sectoral experts, foreign exhibitions of Indian antiquities can be conducted under an organized framework and within sensible expenditures.



SUCCESS STORIES AND ACTION PROPOSAL

The museum sector in India has huge untapped potential that calls for a concerted effort and investment of resources to flourish and achieve the excellence towards these recommendations. Focused interventions will definitely accelerate growth in the sector and have an overarching positive impact. Cultural partnerships between Government of India and US museums in the form of focused programs, in the past, have created a space for information sharing, consultation and open exchange. Two examples of programs that have had positive outcomes are:

- a) AIIS' CA&A's involvement in the field of museums, heritage and archives by optimizing its relationship with world-class institutes such as The Art Institute of Chicago, The Getty and The Smithsonian Institution and enabling international collaborations. For instance, as a part of an initiative CHISA (Cultural Heritage in India and South Asia) organized in 2007 and 2012 by AIIS, the Smithsonian hosted ten South Asian professionals to train them in cultural heritage preservation.
- b) The Vivekananda Memorial Program for Museum Excellence, 2012-2016⁷ allowed government museums in India to develop in-house capabilities in the areas of collection care, modernization of storage and display showcases, creation of permanent and travelling exhibitions, digitization, and training of national and regional level museum professionals.

The AIIS' CA&A can further facilitate similar cultural projects between Indian and US museums, promote interventions as well as collaborate locally with government bodies to plan and execute capacity building activities for Indian professionals in the field. In view of the recommendations consolidated in the white paper, AIIS' CA&A can empower skill building in areas through workshops and programs:

1. Collections Management
2. Digitization and cataloguing
3. Curation: Developing exhibitions and permanent collection galleries

⁷ [Vivekananda Memorial Program on Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Culture](#)



LIST OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR AIMS 2019

| | | | |
|---|-----------------------|--|--|
| 1 | Bean, Susan | Chair, Center for Art and Archaeology, American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS); Associate, Peabody Museum, Harvard University; and Formerly Senior Curator for South Asian and Korean Art, Peabody Essex Museum. | American Institute of Indian Studies; Delhi/Gurugram; Harvard University, Cambridge, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem (Massachusetts) |
| 2 | Ghose, Madhuvanti | Alsdorf Associate Curator of Indian, Southeast Asian, Himalayan and Islamic Art | The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago |
| 3 | Mukherjee, Sabyasachi | Director General | Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS), Mumbai (Maharashtra) |
| 4 | Ahuja, Naman P | Professor | School of Arts & Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi |
| 5 | Kumar, Pramod KG | Managing Director | Eka Archiving Services Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi |
| 6 | Seth, Manvi | Head & Dean | Department of Museology, National Museum Institute, National Museum, New Delhi |
| 7 | Sinha, Vandana | Director | Center for Art and Archaeology, American Institute of Indian Studies, Gurugram |
| 8 | Vasudevan, Venu | Principal Secretary | Kerala Tourism, Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala) |



Delegates and participants at All India Museum Summit 2019



AIMS 2019 PROGRAM

ALL INDIA MUSEUM SUMMIT 2019: INDIA'S MUSEUMS IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM
July 22-24, 2019, Multipurpose Hall (Kamladevi Complex, Gate 1) India International Centre

Speakers with the session themes

MONDAY, JULY 22: REIMAGINING MUSEUMS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

INAUGURAL SESSION

- Welcome and Remarks: Sumathi Ramaswamy, President, American Institute of Indian Studies
Purnima Mehta, Director General, American Institute of Indian Studies
- Summit Introduction: Susan Bean, Chair, Center for Art and Archaeology
- Inaugural address: Arun Goel, Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Government of India (GOI)
- Keynote Address: Ambassador Kenneth I. Juster, U.S. Ambassador to India
U.S. Ambassador and Secretary Culture, GOI interact with each other and with participants over tea

INDIA'S NEW MUSEUMS: AIMS, CHALLENGES, STRATEGIES

Chair: Susan S. Bean, Chair, AIIA, Center for Art and Archaeology, formerly Senior Curator, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, USA

- Anjani Kumar Singh, Nodal Officer, Bihar Museum, Patna (Bihar)
- Harchandan Singh Bhatti, Artist & Ashok Mishra, Curator, Tribal Museum, Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh)
- Abhishek Poddar, The Museum of Art & Photography Foundation, Bengaluru (Karnataka)
- Mallika Ahluwalia, CEO & Curator, Partition Museum, Amritsar (Punjab)

SUPPORTING AND ADVANCING INDIA'S MUSEUMS

Chair: Madhuvanti Ghose, Curator, The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, USA

- Manvi Seth, Head & Dean, National Museum Institute, National Museum, New Delhi
- Ambika Bipin Patel, Head, Department of Museology, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara (Gujarat)
- Deepika Sorabjee, Head – Arts and Culture, Tata Trusts, Mumbai (Maharashtra)
- Venu Vasudevan, Principal Secretary, Departments of Archaeology, Museums and Archives, Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala)
- Karni Singh Jasol, Director, Mehrangarh Museum Trust, Jodhpur (Rajasthan)
- Madhuvanti Ghose, Curator, The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, USA
- Discussant: Jagdip Jagpal, Fair Director at India Art Fair, New Delhi



TUESDAY JULY 23: CONSTITUENCIES, AUDIENCES, ACCESS

INSTALLING EXHIBITIONS THAT ENGAGE THE PUBLIC

Chair: Naman Ahuja, Professor, School of Arts & Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi

- Jawhar Sircar, formerly Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Kolkata (West Bengal)
- Shobita Punja, Independent scholar and curator, New Delhi
- Amareswar Galla, Chief Curator, Amaravathi Heritage Town, Amaravati (Andhra Pradesh)
- Discussion

SPECIAL LECTURE

Formulating Modes of Perception and Participation – Museum Audiences and Beyond

Tasneem Mehta, Managing Trustee and Honorary Director, Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Mumbai City Museum, Mumbai (Maharashtra) Chair: Madhuvanti Ghose, Curator, The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, USA

REACHING AUDIENCES

Chair: Joyoti Roy, Head of Marketing and Communication, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS), Mumbai (Maharashtra)

- Sharath Nambiar, DakshinaChitra Museum, Muttukadu, Kanchipuram (Tamil Nadu)
- Bilwa Kulkarni, Assistant Curator (Education), Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS), Mumbai (Maharashtra)
- Jayanta Sengupta, Secretary & Curator, Victoria Memorial Hall, Kolkata (West Bengal)
- Sudhanva Ranade, Director, Raja Dinkar Kelkar Museum, Pune (Maharashtra)
- Discussant: Conrad Turner, Counselor of Cultural Affairs, Embassy of the United State of America in New Delhi
- General discussion

VISIT: DRISHYAKALA MUSEUM (RED FORT)

In a rare partnership, DAG has collaborated with ASI to create an art museum—*Drishyakala*—within Red Fort with four historical exhibitions that look at the arrival and development of realistic and modern art in India.



WEDNESDAY JULY 24: COLLECTIONS: CARE, MANAGEMENT, CONSERVATION

PREVENTATIVE CARE AND CONSERVATION

Chair: Anupam Sah, Conservation Head, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS), Mumbai (Maharashtra)

- Giri Kumar, Freelance conservator, Pune (Maharashtra)
- Sanjay Dhar, Freelance conservator, Former Head of Art Conservation Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) Gurugram (Haryana)
- Vinod Daniel, Chairman & CEO, AusHeritage & India Vision Institute, Chennai (Tamil Nadu)
- Discussion

REALIZING COLLECTIONS' POTENTIAL THROUGH RESEARCH

Chair: Annapurna Garimella, Art Historian/Curator, Jackfruit Research & Design, Bengaluru (Karnataka) & New Delhi

- Akansha Rastogi, Curator, Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (KNMA), New Delhi
- Suman Gopinath, Program Officer, India Foundation for the Arts, Bengaluru (Karnataka)
- Kristine Michael, Fellow, Indian Foundation for the Arts (IFA), Jaipur (Rajasthan)
- Discussant: Sumathi Ramaswamy, Scholar & President, American Institute of Indian Studies, Duke University, USA
- General discussion

DOCUMENTATION, DIGITIZATION AND ARCHIVES

Chair: Pramod Kumar KG, Managing Director, Eka Archiving Services Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi

- Binoy Kumar Sahay, Curator, National Museum, New Delhi
- Madhura Wairkar, Collections Manager, Piralal Museum of Art, Mumbai (Maharashtra)
- Diane Zorich, Director, Digitization Program, The Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C., USA
- Discussion

WRAP-UP MUSEUM SUMMIT 2019

- Concluding Remarks: Nirupama Kotru, Joint Secretary (Museum), Ministry of Culture, Government of India
- Vote of Thanks: Vandana Sinha, Director, AIIS Center for Art & Archaeology, and Susan Bean, Chair, AIIS Center for Art & Archaeology