

THE FUTURE OF MUSEUMS AND MUSEOLOGY PRACTICES IN A CHANGING WORLD DOHA, QATAR 1-3 DEC 2024

International Conference: Call for Contributions

Qatar Museums, the International Council of Museums (ICOM)'s national committee for Qatar, and the ICOM-Arab Regional Alliance, in collaboration with the International Committee for Museology (ICOFOM), are pleased to invite papers and workshop proposals for a hybrid (in-person and online) conference on the overarching topic of *The Future of Museums and Museology Practices in a Changing World*, to be held from 1-3 December 2024 in Doha, Qatar.



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CONFERENCE TOPIC

The conference is offered at a time of global crisis and turmoil, but despite these shared international challenges and diplomatic hurdles, what unites us in the global museum community is a shared desire to safeguard our heritage and build a better future for our world and our young people, regardless of political or social perspectives.

One of the conference's overarching aims is to highlight the ways in which young people not only represent our communities and countries' future, but crucially, they must be involved in the discussions and decision-making processes on how to solve present-day issues and tomorrow's concerns. Young people around the world are rightly anxious about the impact of climate change and the slow progress to speed up the transition to a sustainable future, demonstrated by the Fridays for Future movement, global youth leaders, and most recently, the call to action to museum professionals at the ICOM 26th General Conference in Prague, Czechia. There is a need for greater involvement of young professionals and young people, in general, to become agents of change in museums, emphasising the role that museums can play in addressing the climate emergency and diverse narratives. In empowering the museum field across the Arab region to lead the transition to sustainability, the conference will provide a platform for discussing museology practice across the region and impact change globally.

Within this framework, it is essential to expand, deepen, and increase discussions on museology, how we curate, and how we scholars examine and teach museology in our universities and the education sector. Adaptation, innovation, and meeting the demands of changing audiences will require delving into new research and exploration of critical issues, including the use of new technologies such as artificial intelligence, co-curation, balancing historical perspectives and sociological understandings, and sharing intergenerational knowledge, among other historical and contemporary cultural readings and preservation globally. This gathering in Qatar aims to promote a sustainable museum sector in a changing world, highlighting the shared challenges and solutions across the Arab region and beyond. The conference seeks to better prepare museums for a shared sustainable future based on the United Nations Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), explored through the themes below.

Each thematic session will be chaired by a distinguished museum professional from the Arab region and/or ICOM. We invite ICOM members, experts working in the field of museums and heritage, and anyone interested in the discipline of museology research, civil society representatives, and other stakeholders, including the private sector, to propose a contribution in one of the following formats:

- a quick-fire informal image-based presentation of 3 minutes;
- an academic research poster highlighting initiatives and programmes (size A1);
- an individual paper of 15 minutes each; or
- a participatory workshop of 90 minutes.



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CONFERENCE THEMES

1. *The Future of Museums Through Good Practice*

In what ways should we train, educate and build the capacities of future museum professionals across the ICOM-Arab region and highlight good practices and initiatives in Qatar and globally? Prompting discussion on the importance of developing a diverse skill set, including exhibit design, curation, conservation, as well as youth and community outreach. In addition, this thematic session will explore different educational models and partnerships that could help build a robust network of museum professionals in the region.

2. *The Future of Museums Through Resilience and Accessibility*

This thematic session will explore the ways in which museums in the Arab region can contribute to community resilience and improve accessibility. It will debate the role of museums in addressing global challenges such as the climate emergency and provide a platform for examples of successful projects and programs with a particular focus on the UN's Agenda 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In addition, it will reflect on Qatar's role within the region and globally, highlighting recent significant events such as the Doha Expo 2023, celebrating innovation, culture, and sustainability – as a catalyst for positive global change.

3. *The Future of Museums Through Technology and Innovation*

Focused on the ways in which museums in the Arab region can use new technologies to enhance visitor experiences to engage with audiences, and how museum studies can build capacities in the sector's next generation, this thematic session will discuss the latest trends in museum technology, including virtual reality, augmented reality, interactive virtual exhibits, artificial intelligence, and the metaverse. The session will prompt a discussion of how to use technology ethically and inclusively and how to measure the impact of technology on museum visitors and scholars.

CONFERENCE CONTRIBUTION PROPOSALS

Please submit your contribution proposal using the QR code or go to <https://bit.ly/dohamuseumconference2024> online form, and submit the following information:

- Title of your contribution proposal;
- Confirm if you will present in-person or virtually;
- Personal contact details;
- Brief biography (max 250 words);
- Brief abstract (max 500 words);
- Organisation Affiliations (or if independent/freelance); and
- Social media accounts (optional).



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CONFERENCE OUTPUTS

The organisers will jointly produce recommendations for the wider ICOM-Arab region museum sector based on the discussions and insights generated during the conference. These recommendations will promote a sustainable museum sector that addresses the shared global challenges of climate change, cultural preservation and the future of museology studies in the region. In addition, a report summarising the key elements from the discussions will be prepared and published on the conference website, providing a valuable resource for museum professionals and stakeholders. We are confident that the outputs from the conference will contribute to advancing the museum field across the Arab region and beyond.

CONFERENCE LANGUAGES

The main language of the event will be Arabic, with translation available in English.

KEY DATES

Date	Activity
31 July 2024	Deadline for submission of proposals
31 August 2024	Sessions confirmed and successful speakers notified
September 2024	Sessions announced on the Qatar Museums, ICOM-Qatar, ICOM-Arab Regional Alliance and ICOFOM website and social media channels.
September – October 2024	Registration Opens
November 2024	Registration Closed
1-3 December 2024	Conference

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact the organising committee via dohaicofom@gmail.com and for conference logistics, please email icofomdoha24@icom.org.qa

