

TRUST AND RESPONSIBILITY TO COMMUNITY, PART 3: SUPPORTING CREDIBILITY AND TRUST IN MUSEUMS

A 2025 ANNUAL SURVEY OF MUSEUM-GOERS DATA STORY

These three things are also driving a great deal of public discourse as we all face a huge amount of information –

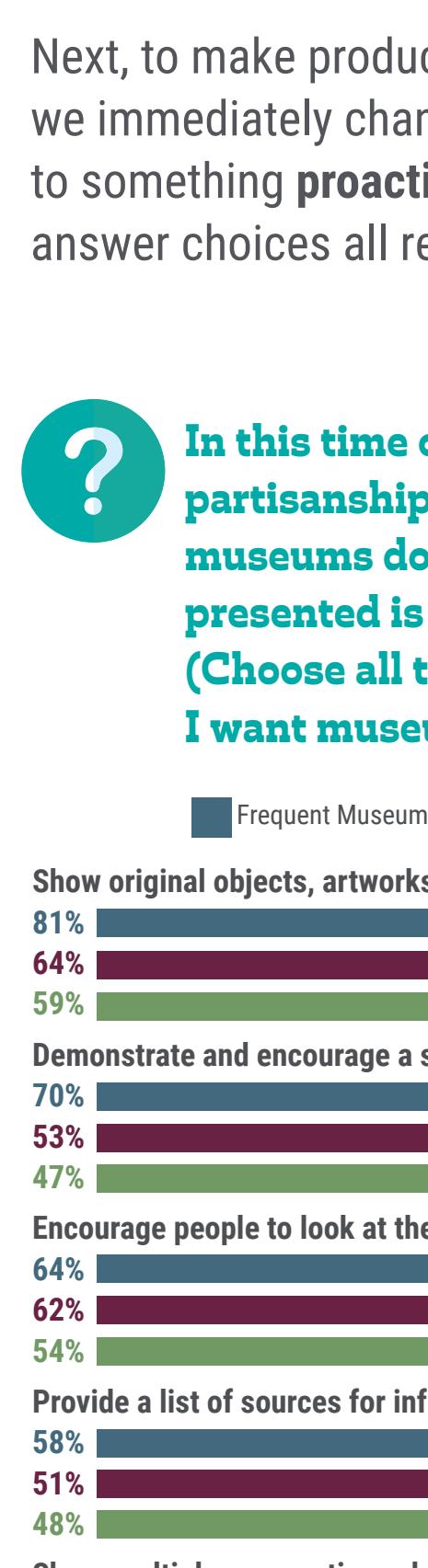
A stylized illustration of a classical building facade. It features a central entrance with a double door flanked by two large windows with blue panes. The building is supported by four columns and has a set of white steps leading up to the entrance. The facade is a light beige color with dark brown trim at the base and around the windows.

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An abstract graphic design featuring overlapping geometric shapes. The shapes are rendered in a minimalist style with solid colors: orange, yellow, black, and brown. The composition is dynamic, with the shapes partially hidden behind each other, creating a sense of depth and movement. The overall aesthetic is clean and modern, with a focus on color and form.

ums have long been held up as
f the most trustworthy sources of
nation (a subject we'll explore in
coming *Data Story*), but emerging
rns about credibility threaten to

A large, dark brown bear silhouette is positioned on the left side of the image, facing right. The bear is standing on a white surface. To the right of the bear is a yellow rectangular box. Inside the box, the text "Let's take a look at the question itself." is written in a black, sans-serif font.



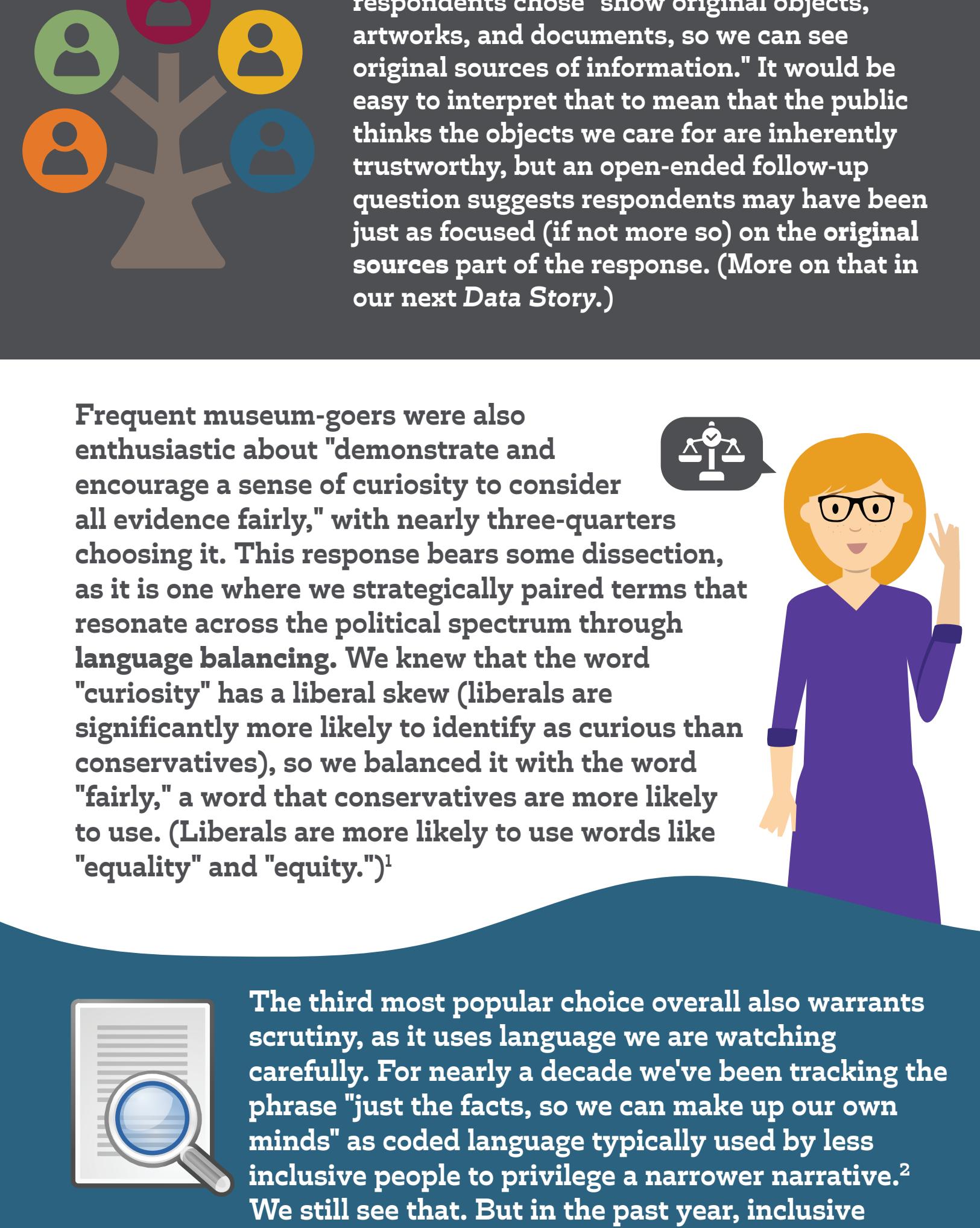
Information, AI, and what do you want to see help you feel information credible and trustworthy? (apply.)

Information

Museum Visits

Information	Museum Visits
0	0
25	25
50	50
75	75
100	100

be the best approach. But we also realized including AI would evoke very strong, negative, emotional responses from a significant number of respondents. That was worth poking. We'll look at what they said, and follow-up research on AI and museums, in an upcoming *Data Story*.



- **Provide clear, factual information.** Your visitors will appreciate clear, factual information that is easy to understand. This can include brochures, online content, and a bibliography for visitors to go deeper.
- **Encourage questions and feedback.** Encourage visitors to ask questions and provide feedback. This can be done through a question-and-answer session, a comment section, or a feedback form.
- **Model respectful listening.** Model respectful listening by actively listening to visitors' concerns and questions. This can be done through a listening session, a Q&A session, or a feedback form.

ur processes. Give clear credit to
cientists, historians, scholars,
rchers, educators, and creative
s involved in exhibitions and
ms. Not only does this provide
rency, but it helps visitors better
and how museum work is done.

up for your values. They are not
n important to museums, they are
m important to visitors too!⁴

these steps will not prevent
ck from everyone, they may
cantly strengthen visitor
confidence that museums
are working to earn and
maintain public trust.

"I find that museums often contain specialized knowledge that is hard to get in any other place, and I think their continued existence is absolutely critical to assist in the development of people's perspectives on the world and understanding of things they might otherwise never encounter. I believe they stand as a bulwark against propaganda, and alongside libraries, are some of the most important socially beneficial organizations that exist."

Wilkening, author

American
Alliance of
Museums

Wilkening Consulting
audience research | knowledge curation