

Museums in New York State

NEW YORK IS A CULTURALLY RICH STATE with museums ranging from world-renowned to small museums that embody the identities of the communities they serve.



With nearly **1,200** museums serving over **47 million** visitors a year, the impact of museums in New York is **extraordinary.**

MUSEUMS MATTER TO NEW YORKERS:

"Museums are community hubs that bring people together through education and a shared desire to learn."



"Having museums and libraries in a community is the greatest gift we can give to ourselves and others."



80% of New Yorkers are frequent, casual, or occasional museum-goers.



96% of New Yorkers think museums are educational assets in their communities.



Nearly **nine out of ten** New Yorkers think museums contribute to their community's economy.



Museums and public libraries are the most trusted *public* sources of information for New Yorkers.



Nearly 3 million K-12 students visit museums each year on field trips.



ART, HISTORY, NATURE, AND MORE!

OVER HALF OF MUSEUMS (53%) in New York State are **history museums**, embedded in communities throughout the state.

10% OF MUSEUMS are art museums, and another **9%** are **historic house museums**.

THE REMAINING 28% OF MUSEUMS include botanical gardens, zoos, natural history museums, historic sites, children's museums, and more.

SOURCE:

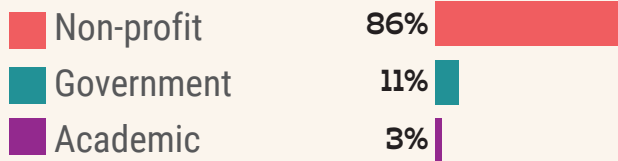
New York Study of Public and Private Museums, fielded 2025 by Wilkening Consulting on behalf of the State of New York.



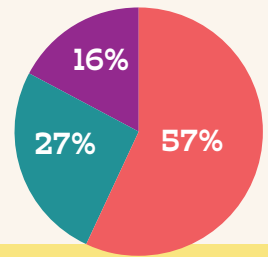
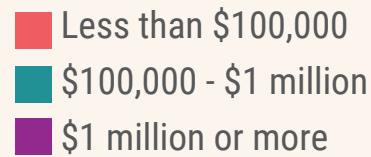
Wilkening Consulting
audience research | knowledge curation

Museums in New York State

5 OUT OF 6 MUSEUMS in New York State are private, non-profit organizations.



THE MAJORITY OF MUSEUMS, 57%, are small museums with operating budgets under \$100,000/year.



New York's museums employ nearly 33,000 people.



93% of museums depend on volunteers to greet visitors, help with collections care, raise funds, and more.



But a third of museums in New York State rely solely on volunteers for their operations.



Over 50,000 New Yorkers volunteer in New York's museums, donating over **2 million hours** of labor a year.

While New York's museums are valued, community assets to New Yorkers, museums are facing a number of challenges, including:

- Raising revenue for rising operating expenses, such as insurance, utilities, fair wages, and maintenance of historic structures.
- Limited capacity for baseline operations at small museums in particular, including collections management, educational programming, planning, and exhibitions.
- System-wide data collections and resources to strengthen both the museum sector and individual museums in best practices, audience engagement, impact and effectiveness, and more.

Every museum in New York contributes to the cultural vitality of New York. And New Yorkers agree about their value to their communities, as well as to their own lives:

"Museums are stewards of memory, knowledge, and shared human experience. They remind us that across time, culture, and geography, we are more alike than we are different. They spark curiosity in children, deepen understanding for adults, and create intergenerational dialogue. And when they hold to evidence, welcome complexity, and center human experience, they strengthen not only cultural understanding but the fabric of civil society itself."



SOURCE:

New York Study of Public and Private Museums, fielded 2025 by Wilkening Consulting on behalf of the State of New York.



Wilkening Consulting
audience research | knowledge curation