

American Alliance of Museums

Best Practices for Virtual Advocacy Meetings

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ALLIANCE ADVOCACY FOR MUSEUMS



The Alliance:

- Monitors legislation and policy proposals
- Maintains relationships with federal agencies and congressional offices
- Ensures museums are at the table in key coalitions throughout the year
- Makes the case on Capitol Hill and advocates directly to Congress
- Empowers and mobilizes advocates on issues ranging from funding for federal agencies that support museums to charitable giving incentives
- Provides 24/7 barrier-free advocacy tools and resources to members, museum professionals, and museum supporters

Legislators do not know all the ways that museums are essential unless museum supporters engage in regular and on-going legislator and stakeholder education.

ALLIANCE ADVOCACY FOR MUSEUMS

- Museums, the vast majority of which are 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, are critical **education providers**, **community centers** and **economic drivers** in their communities.
- Museums are **vital economic engines**, contributing **\$50 billion** a year to the U.S. economy, generating **\$12 billion** in tax revenue to local, state, and federal governments and supporting **726,000 jobs** annually.
- The nation's museum community, while grateful for previous economic relief efforts, is facing an **existential threat** from the closures required to address the COVID-19 pandemic that **requires major responses** from the U.S. Congress beyond those contained in previous legislation.

LEARN MORE

[Museums Advocacy Day](#)

[Invite Congress to Visit Your Museum](#)

[Alliance Advocacy Alerts](#)

[Alliance Policy Issues](#)

[Museum Facts](#)

[Museums as Economic Engines](#)

[Museums and Public Opinion](#)

[Advocacy Resources](#)

[Alliance Advocacy](#)



What's at Stake

STEM
Education
Funding
(NSF, NIH,
NOAA,
NASA)

Nonprofit
Status

Cultural
Property

Education
Policy

Higher
Education
& PSLF

IMLS
Funding &
Pandemic
Relief

Federal
Regulations

NAGPRA

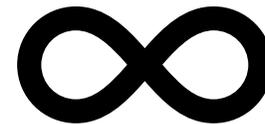
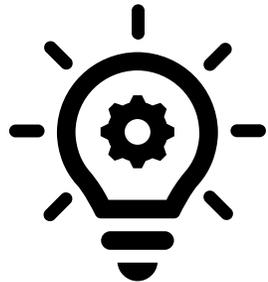
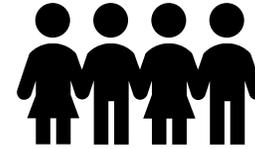
NEH &
NEA
Funding

Historic
Preservation
Funds

Charitable
Giving



What We Can Do...



Advocacy is ***everyone's*** job.
Our ***unified voice*** is powerful.
Your voice as a constituent is
your superpower!

***What do elected officials think
of museums?
That's up to us.***



Tools You Can Use Today...

Policy Issues

Contact Congress

Invite Congress
to Visit Your
Museum

Economic Impact
Statement

Educational
Impact Statement

Introduce Your
Museum to Your
Legislators

Tools You Can Use Today...

Alliance
Advocacy Alerts

Advocacy
Resources

Online Advocacy
Programs

Getting to Know
Legislators

Communicating
with Legislators

75 Advocacy Ideas
in 75 Minutes

Museums as Economic Engines

A NATIONAL REPORT

An Economic Impact Study for the American Alliance of Museums
December 2017



Museums as Economic Engines

In 2017, the American Alliance of Museums partnered with Oxford Economics to study the museum sector's significant contribution to the US economy.

Source: Oxford Economics, IMPLAN, 2017.



Museums in the United States contribute nearly \$50 billion dollars annually to the nation's economy.

State	GDP
1. California	\$6.6 billion
2. New York	\$5.4 billion
3. Texas	\$3.9 billion
4. Illinois	\$2.7 billion
5. Florida	\$2.3 billion

Top 5 States by GDP Contribution

\$12b taxes

Even though many museums operate as nonprofits, they generate significant tax revenues to federal, state, and local governments.



726,000 jobs

Each year, the museum sector supports important jobs for people in every corner of the nation.



Download the full report at <http://aam-us.org/EconomicEngines2017>

Museums as Economic Engines

In 2017, the American Alliance of Museums partnered with Oxford Economics to study the museum sector's significant contribution to the US economy.

Source: Oxford Economics, IMPLAN, 2017.

\$1.54 billion

The total financial impact that museums have on the economy in Ohio



25,973 jobs

Important jobs within the state are supported by the museum industry each year.



\$1.04b income

Museums provide substantial wages and other income to the state's residents annually.



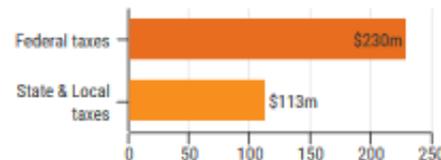
\$343m taxes

Even though many museums operate as nonprofits, they generate significant tax revenues to the federal, state, and local governments.

89%

Regardless of political persuasion, 89% of Americans believe that museums provide important economic impacts back to their communities.

Source: AAM's Museums & Public Opinion 2017



Download the full report at <http://aam-us.org/EconomicEngines2017>



American
Alliance of
Museums



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Museums



Museum Facts

Museums Are Economic Engines

Museums support more than
726,000

American jobs.

Every direct job at a museum supports an additional job in the economy. This is a higher rate than many other industries.



Museums contribute

\$50 billion

to the U.S. economy each year.

Museums and other nonprofit cultural organizations return more than \$5 in tax revenues for every \$1 they receive in funding from all levels of government.

The economic activity of museums generates more than \$12 billion in tax revenue, one-third of it going to state and local governments. Each job created by the museum sector results in

\$16,495

in additional tax revenue.

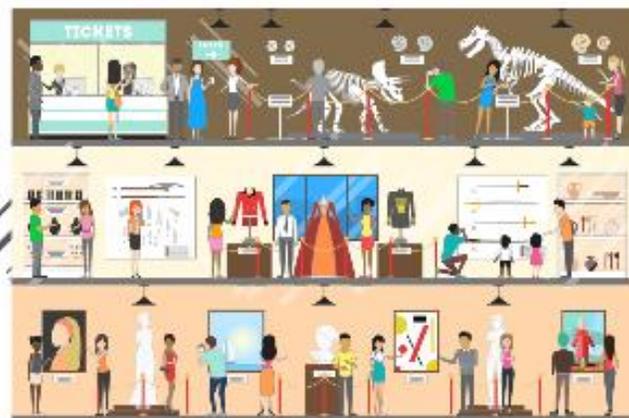


People Love Museums

More people visited an art museum, science center, historic house or site, zoo, or aquarium in 2018 than attended a professional sporting event.



American Alliance of Museums | www.aam-us.org



Museums Are for Everyone

Museums are committed to ensuring that people of all backgrounds have access to high-quality museum experiences. In 2012, 37% of museums were free at all times or had suggested admission fees only; nearly all the rest offered discounts or free admission days.



Museums Partner with Schools

Museums help teach the state and local curriculum, tailoring their programs in math, science, art, literacy, language arts, history, civics and government, economics and financial literacy, geography, and social studies.



Museums Are Trusted

The American public considers museums the most trustworthy source of information in America, rated higher than local papers, nonprofit researchers, the U.S. government, and academic researchers.





Do what you can,
where you are,
with what you have.

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American
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Museums

Ways to Advocate Today

New Survey Data: [National Snapshot of COVID-19 Impact on United States Museums](#)

New Free Resource: [Download the **new** AAM Guide to Working With a New Congress](#)

New Advocacy Toolkit: [Speaking Up: Museum Advocacy in Action Toolkit](#)

Now Available: [Updated Guide to Election Year Activities](#)

AAM's full suite of [Advocacy Resources](#), including:

- [Advocacy as a best practice for museums](#)
- [Communicating with Legislators](#)
- [Getting to Know Your Legislators](#)
- Creating a [Year-Round Advocacy Plan](#) and much more.

Join us for [Museums Advocacy Day 2021 \(Virtual\)](#) – Feb. 22-23!



Advocacy & Lobbying Guidelines

- [Lobbying Guidelines for Public Charities Fact Sheet \(Independent Sector\)](#)
- [Bolder Advocacy – Guidelines for 501\(c\)\(3\) Charities](#)
- [Bolder Advocacy – Yes, Nonprofits, You Can Lobby](#)
- [Bolder Advocacy – Resource Library](#)

VIRTUAL ADVOCACY BEST PRACTICES

Tried and True Tips & Resources

Whether meeting with legislators and their staff in-person or virtually, there are best practices to help ensure your in-person or virtual advocacy is effective.

Making Your Case When Meeting with Elected Officials

When meeting with elected officials, do your homework, be concise, compelling, specific, and honest. Share key data and personal examples and do not be shy to “make an ask” – legislators and staff expect you to.

Ten Rules for Engagement

Whether connecting with lawmakers and staff virtually or in-person, always remember your manners, tell the truth, and treat the staff with respect. Make advocacy a year-round habit and reward good work when lawmakers show support for your museum. You can make a difference and engage your members, board, and staff in advocating for your museum and the field.

VIRTUAL ADVOCACY BEST PRACTICES

New Normal – Virtual Rules of the Road

- **Keep in mind the virtual activity at hand** – a town hall or open constituent call is different than a virtual meeting with individual advocate/s or constituents.
- **As always, keep your communications clear, simple, and direct.** Sharing your priorities helps lawmakers and staff understand your needs as a constituent. Continue to share letters, photos, infographics, and fast sheets that help make your case.
- **Building rapport is more important than ever.** Just like us, Congressional offices and staffers have been getting used to an entirely new normal. You can always start a conversation or meeting by thanking staffers for their continued service and asking how they, their offices and their families are doing.
- **Flexibility remains key.** Different staff and offices may have different preferences or rules for participating in virtual meetings. Honor the wishes (for example, if they prefer to participate online, by video or by phone) of each office per their request.

VIRTUAL ADVOCACY BEST PRACTICES

New Normal – Virtual Rules of the Road

- **Materials Matter.** The “Send-Ahead” is the new “Leave-Behind.” Have a set of key materials – about the field, about your museum, about your work – ready to share. In the virtual format you can share those ahead of time to inform the conversation. Think carefully about the role of video in your visit. Video can be compelling. Make sure you have the capacity to play it without technical difficulties and that you have let other advocates in the meeting know you plan to play video ahead of time. A recorded video can also be a powerful way to reinforce your message when shared following a meeting.
- **Not brand new, newly important.** For advocates and elected officials, many of these digital and virtual activities are not entirely new, but since last March we are using them at new rates and with new urgency, and we’re all getting more familiar over time. Similarly, your pre-existing connections to offices – from your own activities, through your leadership or board & trustees, etc. – can be particularly helpful in connecting with offices during this time.

VIRTUAL ADVOCACY BEST PRACTICES

Invite Congress to Visit Your Museum Virtually

<https://www.aam-us.org/programs/advocacy/invite-congress-to-visit-your-museum/>

- Inviting local, state, and federal elected officials and their staff members into your museum is a powerful way to show them the unique work museums do – especially during these unusual times.
- As the world adjusts to new realities and ways of doing business caused by COVID-19, federal, state, and local legislators are eager to connect with the constituents and communities they represent across all available platforms.
- Since 2012, #InviteCongress has been a national fieldwide effort to encourage and empower museums of all types and sizes to invite their federal, state and local legislators and stakeholders into museums to see what museums are and do first-hand.
- While it remains to be seen when in-person events and meetings with constituents can safely resume – AAM encourages museums to take advantage of impactful virtual, video and telephone opportunities to connect with legislators.

As the 117th Congress gets underway, museum advocates must continue to make the case for federal, state and local support for museums to legislators.

VIRTUAL ADVOCACY BEST PRACTICES

Invite Congress to Visit Your Museum Virtually

<https://www.aam-us.org/programs/advocacy/invite-congress-to-visit-your-museum/>

AAM's updated Invite Congress to Visit Your Museum How-To Guide includes detailed, step-by-step instructions for planning, preparing for, and holding a meeting with lawmakers and their staff, virtually or in-person.

Find your legislators and templates for inviting them to meet, as well as tips for following up on your request, preparing plans and materials for your meeting, running the meeting, and following-up on your meeting.

You will also find advice and resources for making your case and sample timelines for site visits or virtual meetings, as well as further information about how best to engage with legislators and constituents during this time.

The start of a new legislative session is an excellent time to reach out to lawmakers to introduce yourself, your work, and your museum!

COVID-19 AND MUSEUMS

Even as museums are experiencing closures and dire losses in revenue, they have been meeting increased demand for their services and working to safeguard and support their communities in critical ways.

- Museums are contributing to the ongoing education of our country's children by providing lesson plans, online learning opportunities, and drop-off learning kits to teachers and families.
- Museums are using their outdoor spaces to grow and donate produce to area food banks; and maintaining these spaces for individuals to safely relax, enjoy nature, and recover from the mental health impacts of social isolation.
- Museums have donated their PPE and scientific equipment to fight COVID-19 and provided access to childcare and meals to families of health care workers and first responders. In the face of dire financial distress, they are even raising funds for community relief. Museums are pivotal to our nation's ability to manage through the pandemic and recover from it as our nation opens back up.

COVID-19 ADVOCACY FOR MUSEUMS

- There's never been a more critical time to advocate for museums and your role in the field.
- The Alliance has been working hard to advocate for the museum field and provide you the resources needed to let your legislators know the impact the pandemic has had on you and your museum, and how museums are continuing to serve the community even while closed.
- In 2020 **nearly 60,000 messages** were sent to Congress over the Alliance's online advocacy tools – messages that continue to be critical to securing important financial relief and resources for museums.



COVID-19 ADVOCACY FOR MUSEUMS

- [Find your legislators & their social media information](#)
- [Learn more about Financial Relief and Resources](#)
- [Advocating for Museums During COVID-19](#)
- [Download your state's economic impact](#)
- [Access latest Alliance Advocacy Alerts](#)
- [Engage your board in advocacy](#)
- [Get Nonprofit Voter Resources](#)
- [Write a Letter to the Editor](#)

Also Available: [Alliance COVID-19 Resources and posts](#), [TrendsWatch: Building Resilience in a Time of Crisis](#), and [Speaking Up: Museum Advocacy in Action Toolkit](#)

RESOURCES FOR MUSEUMS

Financial Relief and Resources

Directory of resources

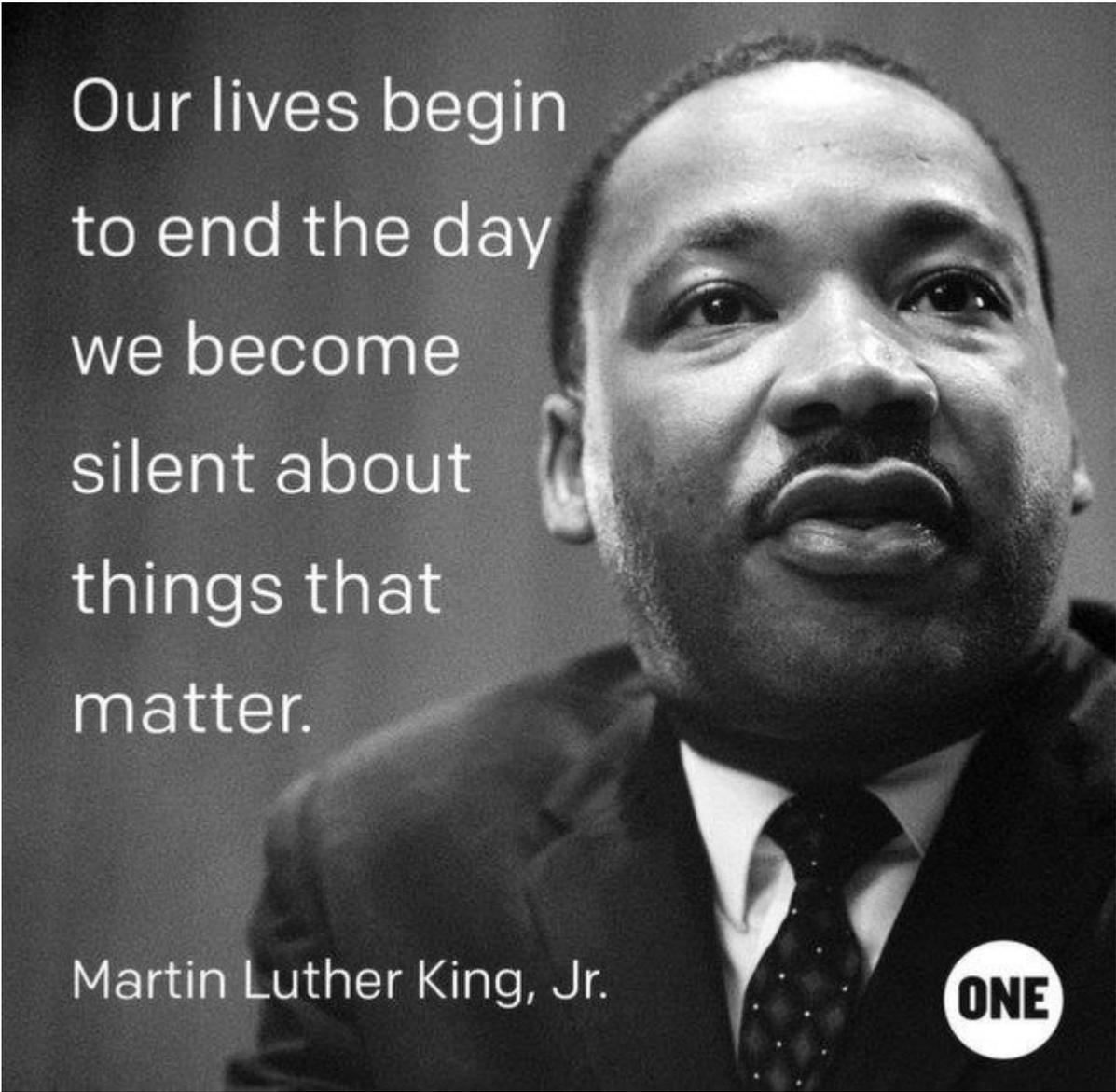
- [Equity considerations for crafting financial strategies](#)
- [Legislation related to COVID-19 and museums](#)
- [Philanthropy](#)
- [Financial resources for nonprofits](#)
- [Examples of museum adaptations](#)
- [Long-term financial strategies](#)
- [Financial relief and resources for museum workers](#)
- [Other resources](#)

DEAI RESOURCES FOR MUSEUMS

Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion

- [Racism, Unrest, and the Role of the Museum Field](#) (online recording)
- [Racial Equity and Inclusion Plan Primer](#)
- [Centering Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion](#)
- [Blog Post: For Museum Leaders Who Want to Do Better](#)
- [Blog Post: What Juneteenth Means This Year](#)
- [Blog Post: The Phillips Collection's Plan for Advancing Racial Equity](#)

[*More Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion Resources*](#)



Our lives begin
to end the day
we become
silent about
things that
matter.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

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