

ITP Newsletter 2025, Issue 12

Call for submissions

We are asking all fellows to help put together our newsletter for 2025 – to share news, views and stories from across our global network.

The background

The ITP Newsletter takes you on a global journey through different institutions, collections, staff and audiences. It focuses on how culture and heritage can provide a platform for new thinking, inviting challenging conversations and addressing current issues – both local and global. It tells our fellows' stories and is guided by the projects and programmes being delivered by our global network.

This year

The ITP Newsletter 2025 will be our 12th issue. Our theme for 2025 will be ***Accessibility and inclusion***, as chosen by this issue's guest editor, Yanoa Pomalima Carrasco (Peru, ITP Fellow 2022, Senior Fellow 2024).

Remember, this is 'your' newsletter and provides a space to share your thoughts, news, projects and programmes.

Our remit

Across the ITP network, museums, galleries, and cultural institutions are undergoing various transformations. They seek to achieve their mission as polyphonic and inclusive spaces adapted to the interests and needs of our diverse audience. Cultural institutions are welcoming environments where communities feel represented, listened to, and valued. Fostering partnerships within a network of professionals and active collaboration with diverse community collectives that represent diversity is one of the strategic actions implemented by cultural organisations to open their doors to enhance the visiting experience and the sense of belonging for everyone. Inclusivity and accessibility are fighting to be a core value across the museum sector.

The newest ICOM definition defines museums as “not-for-profit, permanent institutions in the service of society that research, collect, conserve, interpret and exhibit tangible and intangible heritage, that are open to the public, accessible and inclusive, that is open to the public, accessible and inclusive, and that foster diversity and sustainability”. This statement helped to settle a base to incorporate more actions to raise awareness about the barriers created by society that stand in the rights of mentally, physically, ethnic or gender marginalised groups.

Museums and galleries, among other cultural institutions, are exploring new ways to implement programmes, activities and guidelines to promote social justice, address exclusion and develop accessibility resources. Many institutions are co-creating exhibitions to raise awareness about social-driven issues, including new voices in their narrative-building process, removing architectural barriers, creating tactile resources, designing audio descriptions, and experimenting with VR, QR and NFC technologies to enrich the visiting experience based on their visitor's needs. How can institutions design inclusive and accessible programmes? What strategies do we target? How do we test and evaluate our resources? How are we adapting to our

visitor's needs? How can we include them in the designing/developing process? How should we promote equity in our institutions?

In three sections – ***Accessibility and inclusion; Your collection in focus and Global perspectives*** – we'd like to hear from any of our fellows about their past experiences and/or current projects in their institutions or sectors of professional research fields. Fellows could discuss their institution and other museums, exhibitions, programmes, or events they have recently visited or attended. How are our institutions committed to diversity, inclusion and accessibility? How are we integrating accessibility and inclusion into our daily professional practices to benefit visitors and the staff? What is your organisation doing anything differently to address this need and bring about change? Who do you collaborate with to achieve that goal?

Send us your piece for the ITP 2025 newsletter to share it among our ITP network - we would love to hear from you!!

Accessibility and inclusion

[approx. 300 words]

Tell us how you, your museum or your sector are taking in consideration accessibility and inclusion. What projects are you working on or know of that help bring heritage and culture to diverse and inclusive audiences?

Here is a different example of a museum made for and with the visually impaired community in Madrid. The Museo Tiflológico is designed to be seen and touched (<https://museo.once.es/otras-webs/english>). It encourages everyone to explore the world with different senses while enriching all visitors' learning and exploring experiences.



Images source: Photos taken by Yanoa Pomalima, Madrid, October 2023

The Museum for the Blind, created and hosted by the Spanish Organization for Visually Impaired (ONCE), combines a fantastic display of models of famous monuments in Spain and around the world, a section about the history of the ONCE and the teaching strategies for visually impaired, and a selected display of artworks made by visually impaired artists.

Your Collection in Focus

[approx. 300 words]

Museums should ensure a remarkable visitor experience in a safe space for everyone. A pivotal goal to achieve this is to remove and reduce physical and intellectual barriers caused by the lack of inclusive programmes, accessible resources, and interpretive pedagogy. As social institutions, we must reimagine how to convey the stories of our collection to all our visitors. Tell us how you present an object or collection in your museum to be more accessible so it could engage diverse – and sometimes marginalised - visitors and provide them with a better museum experience. It could be an example of programs and exhibitions with tactile elements, audio descriptions, visual and sign interpretation, accessible digital content, quiet rooms or gallery access during quiet hours, curatorial design by diverse collectives, universal design, and inclusive hiring practices.

Global Perspectives

[approx. 500 words]

We would like to hear your thoughts and reflections in response to the following statement – ***Accessibility and inclusivity are core values across the museum sector.*** Please consider all aspects, from adapting or reinventing our spaces, opening our practices to collaboration with diverse collectives, designing new resources, and promoting inclusiveness between our staff.

But please also consider: How important it is to focus our efforts on becoming a more socially equitable institution? How do we know what our audience wants/needs to enhance their visit to our institutions? How do we ensure we don't leave behind some audiences? How do we afford/finance these projects?

Other sections in our newsletter – which will be more general for you or your institution – will be:-

Did you know that...?

[approx. 300 words]

Tell readers something they may not already know about the cultural sector in your country. Think about something new or unique to your institution, country or region - an interesting story you'd like to share.

Spotlight on....

[approx. 300 words]

An in-depth view of one of the museums/galleries/institutions in our ITP global network.

Bulletin Board

[100 words per submission]

Tell us what is happening in your institution, i.e., a new gallery, current exhibition, community work or a special event.

Global Network News, short descriptions updating us on your personal and professional news - awards, job changes, promotions, courses started and completed, and any information that you think the ITP alumni might be keen to know about.

IMPORTANT NOTE: - Please include three or four good quality, high-resolution photographs (these should be 300dpi or larger) with your submissions. Please send your images as separate email attachments NOT in your text. Please confirm that you have permission to use the images if you didn't take them. And finally, please make sure you send captions for your images PLUS any image credits you would like us to include.

The deadline for submissions is **31 January 2025** and should be sent to itp@britishmuseum.org.

We are looking forward to reading what's new with you and your institution!