

2006 Oregon Museums Survey

The Oregon Heritage Commission, with cooperation of the Oregon Museums Association, surveyed Oregon museums in 2006 about their current activities and future plans and needs. The results listed here are based upon surveys returned by approximately half of the known museums in Oregon, a high percentage of which are history or heritage institutions. For some questions, the results in Oregon are compared with results in the 2005 national study, “A Public Trust at Risk: The Heritage Health Index Report on the State of America’s Collections.”

Education

86 percent of Oregon museums serve K-12 schoolchildren.

Of those museums serving schoolchildren, **99 percent** do it at the museum. Twenty-seven percent also provide programming at schools.

Four of the five most common activities at museums relate to education: Guided tours for adults, guided tours for children, lectures/seminars, and operating a research library. The fifth most common activity is informal fundraising events.

Museum Visitors

Annual total: 3,401,652

Source of visitors (percentage):
 Non-Oregon 24.7
 Non-Local Oregon 27.2
 Local Visitors 48.1

Activities

Percentage of museums which perform the following activities each year:

Guided tours for adults	75
Guided tours for children	71
Fundraising events – informal	46
Lectures/seminars	43
Research library	43
Community heritage projects	42
Demonstrations	41
Publications	40
School curriculum/outreach programs	40
Family programs	37
Workshops/classes	34
Fundraising events – formal	29
Living history programs	22
Programs for children under 6 years	22
Concerts/performances	15
Teacher training	13
Programs for people with disabilities	11
Film series	8
Online exhibition	4
Online collections access	3

Partnerships

Percentage of museums which have used the following types of partners to develop programs, offer services, or promote their institution.

Newspaper	53
Other museums	53
Chamber of Commerce	46
Business/corporation	38
School/school district	33
Government agency	31
Travel/tourism group	30
Other cultural organizations	29
Culture-specific group/association	28
Library	27
Television/radio station	26
University/college	26
Publisher	10
Theater/performing arts group	10
Social services agency	4
None	1

Future initiatives

Percentage of museums which plan the following activities or initiatives in the next three years.

Develop a long-range plan	37
Launch a new website or online resource	35
Open a new permanent exhibition	32
Develop new collections/exhibition policies	28
Significantly expand operations/programs	27
Launch a capital campaign	21
Open a new building or expansion	21
Develop/revise by-laws	15
Develop/revise mission statement	15
Establish an endowment fund	13
Launch a planned giving program	13
Complete a capital campaign	11
Open to the public	3
Renovate buildings	3
Significantly reduce operations/programs	2

Training

In Oregon, museums where staff and volunteers:	
Have sufficient collections training and expertise	27
Need additional collections training	62
Don't know	7
No response	4

Nationally, 70 percent of heritage institutions say staffs need training for conservation and preservation.

Collections Preservation

In Oregon, the greatest needs for preserving and conserving collections (respondents could only list two)

Cataloging collections	51
Conservation treatment	33
Environmental controls	20
Preserving digital images	20
Condition surveys and assessments	15
Security	13
Developing finding aids	12
Integrated pest management	3

Nationally, the top three needs are collections cataloging and conservation, and environmental controls.

In areas that hold collections, what environmental controls do Oregon museums have? (Museums noted that in some cases, only part of their collections had the following.)

Monitored security system	58
Temperature controls	54
Light-blocking shades or curtains	33
Humidity controls	25
UV filtering on windows	23
None	15
UV filtering on lamps	10

Nationally, 62 percent of heritage institutions have temperature controls for their collections while 50 percent have humidity controls.

Financial

Oregon museums total annual income: \$91,828,169
Average museum income: \$524,945
Median museum income: \$26,208

Volunteers contributed 318,187 hours of work to museums in 2006. Using the minimum wage, this calculates more than \$2.5 million of effort.

For more information about this survey, contact the Oregon Heritage Commission at 503-986-0673 or heritage.info@state.or.us