



Agency for International
Museum Cooperation

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Press Kit

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FAQ on the Museum Agency

What does the Agency for International Museum Cooperation do?

The Agency for International Museum Cooperation (museum agency) fosters exchange between museums in Germany and partners worldwide. It connects and supports museum professionals who are interested in international projects or who are already engaged in cross-border collaboration. Its Services and International Programmes address exhibition projects, services for museums, dialogue and networking formats, and museum infrastructure. The museum agency develops these services through individual consultations, shaping them to meet the specific needs of each cooperation project – so that every project benefits structurally, comprehensively, and sustainably.

Who benefits from the museum agency's programmes and offers?

The museum agency acts as a contact point, service provider, and sparring partner for museums and museum professionals in Germany and abroad who wish to initiate or expand collaborations involving German partners. Other organisations and individuals working on international cooperation in a museum context are also welcome to contact the museum agency and make use of its services.

How does the museum agency make the work of museum professionals easier?

International collaboration often comes with unique challenges. From jointly developing and refining an idea to clarifying key conditions, connecting with suitable partners, and implementing specific projects, the museum agency focuses on individual, needs-based solutions. It takes on specific tasks, shares expert knowledge, and provides answers to practical questions that arise in museum work. The museum agency also designs and facilitates dialogue and training formats such as workshops and conferences that address current issues in the museum field.

Does the museum agency also provide financial support for international cooperation?

In addition to providing advice, networking, and support for the international work of German museums – one of its core areas of activity – the museum agency also develops programmes that fund international museum cooperation. Through the programmes “Open perspectives”, “Engage in dialogues” and “Set anchor points”, it supports the development of strategic museum partnerships, cross-border dialogue and networking initiatives, and research and information trips.

When was the museum agency founded, and what is its organisational structure?

The Agency for International Museum Cooperation was founded on 4 October 2023 by the German Federal Government as a federally owned non-profit GmbH. The sole shareholder is the Federal Republic of Germany, represented by the German Federal Foreign Office. The Supervisory Board includes representatives from the Federal Foreign Office, the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media, the Federal Ministry of Finance, and the German federal states. In future, an Expert Advisory Board will advise and support the museum agency in its work.

What is the museum agency currently working on?

Since mid-2024, the museum agency has been in its development phase – building up its infrastructure, team, and range of services. That autumn, it began carrying out pilot and model projects in international museum cooperation. Its services for museum professionals have been available since June 2025 and continue to evolve. Since autumn 2025, the museum agency’s three international programmes – “Set anchor points,” “Engage in dialogues,” and “Open perspectives” – have been accepting applications.

Services

With its range of services, the Agency for International Museum Cooperation accompanies international museum projects as a reliable partner through every stage of development. It offers support to museums in Germany and around the world, as well as to other organisations and individuals involved in international collaboration in the museum sector. The museum agency's activities are organised into five areas in which tailored offers are developed for museums and their international partnerships: international networking, strategic orientation, project guidance, implementation, and the sharing of professional expertise.

It's about global connections – finding the right partners and building long-term relationships.

The museum agency brings together professionals from around the world to foster long-term partnerships and develop concrete projects. It's a network that profits both sides: Drawing on in-depth knowledge of the international museum landscape and its institutional needs, it helps identify suitable partner museums in Germany and facilitates connections for cross-border collaboration. These may include joint exhibitions, touring shows, or research and targeted knowledge-sharing partnerships.

This offer is available for German and international partners.

It's the kick-off – refining visions and defining frameworks, from the project sketch to a practical roadmap.

In the early phase of international projects, the museum agency connects museum professionals with experts from museum and cultural management to refine ideas and strengthen project visions in workshop settings. Together, the partners define the strategic, conceptual, and organisational foundations of the project. This process includes preparing project outlines, analysing framework conditions, opportunities, and

challenges, and addressing questions of funding, intercultural collaboration, communication, and legal or customs requirements.

This is an offer for museums in Germany.

It's your process – accompanying structures and workflow so that projects advance efficiently.

International projects often extend over several years. The museum agency provides ongoing support through experts in museum and cultural management who help align project content and organisational structures with changing conditions, improve working and decision-making processes, and strengthen communication and collaboration among all participants.

This is an offer for museums in Germany.

It's taken care of – taking on complex tasks so museums can focus on their content.

For selected and particularly complex international projects, the museum agency assumes planning and organisational responsibilities tailored to each project's needs and specific context. This approach creates the space for museum professionals to focus on what matters most – their curatorial and content-related work.

This is an offer for museums in Germany.

It's your next level – sharing knowledge that advances international collaboration.

Together with experts from museums and cultural management, the museum agency develops training programmes to strengthen skills in international collaboration. Key topics include project management for international initiatives, customs and legal regulations in the cultural sector, funding strategies and opportunities, as well as intercultural communication and collaboration.

For more information about the museum agency's Services, visit:
museumsagentur.de/en/offers#services

International Programmes

As of now, museum professionals can apply for three funding programmes from the International Programmes division at the Agency for International Museum Cooperation. Through the programmes “Open perspectives”, “Engage in dialogues” and “Set anchor points”, the museum agency supports the development of strategic museum partnerships, cross-border dialogue and networking formats, as well as information sharing and research trips.

With these funding programmes, the museum agency builds on its core mission of strengthening exchange between museums in Germany and their partners worldwide. The programmes help museum professionals develop and realise joint projects across borders, learn from one another, share knowledge, and address relevant topics through international collaboration. The International Programmes aim to foster long-term cooperation and highlight German museums as active participants in the global cultural dialogue.

Open perspectives

The “Open perspectives” programme facilitates entry into international cooperation through information and research trips. It offers opportunities to meet potential partner institutions, exchange professional experience, and identify shared fields of interest. At present, museum directors, curators, and outreach or education professionals affiliated with a German institution can apply for the research trip “Expanding Audience Engagement and Dialogue in Contemporary Art between Germany and Türkiye”. From 17 to 21 November 2025, this trip will bring together museum professionals from Germany and Türkiye in Istanbul to exchange ideas on audience development and participation. Against the backdrop of German-Turkish history and held in parallel to the 18th Istanbul Biennial, it offers insights into audience engagement strategies of Turkish museums and art institutions.

Engage in dialogues

Within the framework of “Engage in dialogues”, the museum agency funds exchange formats that address current questions in museum practice and support the establishment and development of international partnerships. The programme particularly supports workshops, work meetings, and training sessions that – in on-site, digital, or hybrid form – bring together different perspectives in museum practice, reflect on existing approaches, test new forms of collaboration, and anchor museums more visibly within international discourse. With this programme, the museum agency helps build networks that endure beyond individual projects. Museums of all disciplines, exhibition venues with or without collections, and memorial sites in Germany, together with their partner institutions worldwide, can submit applications until 1 December 2025. A second call for applications will follow in spring 2026.

Set anchor points

Through “Set anchor points”, the museum agency funds positions dedicated to international development in museums – for example, roles in international partnerships, international development, or international exhibitions. Acting as an interface between museum management and partner institutions, these positions accompany international projects across departments. In practice, they advance key themes of international museum work such as access to collections, curating, communication, and the mobility of cultural assets, while involving partner organisations in exhibitions, research, and education. The programme is directed at museums and exhibition venues with collections in Germany that demonstrate professional excellence and a strong public profile. These institutions are strategically expanding their international collaborations and already engage in distinctive international activities. They regard international collaboration as an essential part of their organisational development and wish to integrate it actively into their administrative and operational structures. Applications can be submitted until 15 December 2025.

The museum agency is currently planning a fourth programme, “Find constellations”, to fund international exhibition projects. The programme will be launched next year.

Further information about the funding programmes, participation requirements, and application deadlines is available on the museum agency’s website: <https://museumsagentur.de/en/offers#international-programmes>

International Programmes: Pilot Projects

To refine and further develop its funding programmes “Open perspectives” and “Engage in dialogues”, the Agency for International Museum Cooperation is conducting pilot and model projects on key aspects and needs of international museum cooperation. Through workshops, exchange programmes, and professional events, the agency addresses topics and practical questions in museum work such as inclusion, outreach, resilience, decolonisation, infrastructure, security, and logistics. The online series of talks “Museum Mutuals” offers cross-programme insights into exemplary international collaborations across different museum disciplines. It explores common approaches and challenges in museological practice, with the aim of gaining insight and sharing knowledge.

A selection of pilot projects is presented here. A complete overview of all pilot and model projects is available online:
www.museumsagentur.de/en/current

Across Programmes: “Museum Mutuals”

In autumn 2025, the museum agency launched the online talk series “Museum Mutuals”. Each edition focuses on a specific topic or case study of collaboration between German museums and their international partner institutions.

The first edition, on 16 September 2025, brought together speakers from Museum Gunzenhauser in Chemnitz, the Kumu Art Museum in Estonia, and Museum MORE in the Netherlands. They discussed curatorial and practical challenges around the exhibition “European Realities”, which presented more than 300 works from 22 countries. A recording is available on the museum agency’s website in the “Current” section.

The second session, on 7 November 2025, features speakers from ACC – National Asian Culture Center (Gwangju), M+ (Hong Kong), and ZKM | Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe. They will discuss co-curating the trans-continental exhibition “Manifesto of Spring”, and how media art can act as a mediator in protest movements and public remembrance, opening spaces for cultural resistance.

The third session, on 2 December 2025, brings together speakers from the Porcelain Collection – Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, the Kyushu Ceramic Museum in Arita, and the Nezu Museum in Tokyo. Under the title “From Porcelain to Pixel: Reinterpreting Dresden’s Collection through Long-Term Collaboration”, they will discuss their cooperation on the digital documentation and accessibility of the collection.

Information on upcoming editions of “Museum Mutuals” is available online: www.museumsagentur.de/en/current

Open perspectives: First informational and research trips

The “Open perspectives” programme enables museum professionals to make personal contacts and explore future cooperation through information and research trips to dynamic museum regions. Initial programme trips took place in 2024 and 2025.

In November 2024 and February 2025, a delegation of German museum directors travelled with the museum agency to Chengdu, Chongqing, Deyang, Hong Kong, Beijing, and Shanghai. They gained insights into the museum and cultural scenes, exchanged views with colleagues on site, and discussed potential areas for collaboration.

In September 2025, representatives of the museum agency deepened professional exchange with colleagues in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. The diversity of Brazil’s museum landscape, its innovative curatorial and educational approaches, and its outstanding collections underscored the country’s important role in the international museum discourse. Looking ahead, the museum agency will foster collaboration with Brazilian institutions in Germany, further develop initial ideas with the visited museums, and support cooperation opportunities. A programme trip for 2026 is in preparation.

In November 2025, a research trip to Istanbul will bring together museum professionals from Germany and Türkiye to compare approaches to outreach and participation.

Alongside these trips, the museum agency is producing practical guides with country profiles. They provide an initial orientation to each museum landscape and offer guidance for cross-border cooperation.

Engage in dialogues: Partnership with the Ukrainian museum network OBMIN

The programme “Engage in dialogues” supports exchange formats that address current issues in museum work and strengthen partnerships. As part of a pilot project, the museum agency is supporting several activities of the Ukrainian museum network OBMIN as a partner.

Founded in 2022 in Warsaw, OBMIN is a platform for supporting and connecting Ukrainian museums. “Obmin” means “exchange” in Ukrainian. The network now includes 143 museums from across Ukraine.

The museum agency supported the OBMIN conferences in 2024 and 2025 in Warsaw and enabled expert contributions on the role of museums and cultural actors in reconstruction processes. It also designed a workshop within the Ukrainian-Polish-German cooperation “Cultural Guardians: A Cross-Border Cultural Heritage Programme”. Participants exchanged best-practice approaches with outreach specialists from German institutions on accessibility, multilingual offers, and inclusive storytelling.

Given the ongoing threats to cultural institutions in war and crisis zones, questions of museum resilience are gaining increasing attention. Initiated by OBMIN, the “Ukraine Culture Security Forum” will be hosted by the Federal Foreign Office and the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Berlin, from 22 to 23 October 2025. Experts from Ukraine, Poland, Germany, and France will discuss the role of culture in times of war, its integration into national security structures, and its use as a tool of hybrid warfare. They will also address how cultural institutions – especially museums – shape narratives and safeguard cultural heritage in wartime. The museum agency is involved as a content partner and contributes professional input to the forum.

Engage in dialogues: disaster preparedness and risk management – workshop in Nairobi

In October 2025, museum professionals from Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zambia, Belgium, UK, and Germany met at the Nairobi National Museum to develop strategies for disaster preparedness and risk management in museums. The workshop was organised jointly by the National Museums of Kenya, ICOM, the ICOM International Committee for Museum Security, and ICOM Africa.

Discussions focused on current threats to cultural heritage – from floods and fires to theft – as well as prevention, emergency response, and recovery. Using concrete case studies, participants developed practical solutions and strengthened their technical competencies.

The workshop fostered professional exchange and laid the foundation for a partnership network dedicated to protecting cultural heritage.

Engage in dialogues: Hosting the ICOM Working Group on Decolonisation

In June 2025, the museum agency hosted the ICOM Working Group on Decolonisation in Berlin within the “Engage in dialogues” programme. In cooperation with “inherit – heritage in transformation”, the Centre Marc Bloch, and ICOM committees from Barbados, Canada, France, the Netherlands, NATHIST, and ICOMON, the museum agency provided a platform for professional exchange among members of the world’s largest association of museum professionals. Alongside workshops and networking events, a public panel discussion with livestream took place on 4 June 2025.

In the Working Group on Decolonisation, ICOM members from various countries are collaboratively developing recommendations on how ICOM can more effectively integrate key issues of decolonisation into its work and establish new standards for the international museum sector.